

Empowering the Citizen Patient

Actionable Tips, Information & Resources to Support
Your Health & Health Care

Article #11

Healthy People, Healthy Communities
Tips and Tools for Tracking Your
Health Information



View All Articles Online at kbpacc.ca!

In this, the eleventh of our Empowering the Citizen patient series, Dr. Mindy Smith, a retired family physician shares insights and resources for accessing and tracking your health information.

Electronic Medical Records

I still remember when medical records were kept on paper. My uncle, a general practitioner, used small 3x5 cards to track patient information. Today, information technology has completely transformed healthcare, and Electronic Medical Records (EMRs) have become the standard for managing patient information for optimal care. These modern systems offer features like clinical decision support, drop-down menus for easier navigation, access to test results, and secure storage of your health data. And while a person's physical health records belong to the institution or clinic that created them, all patients have the right to access their personal health information.

Two Internet Portals to Access Your Health Information

Here in British Columbia, patients have two main

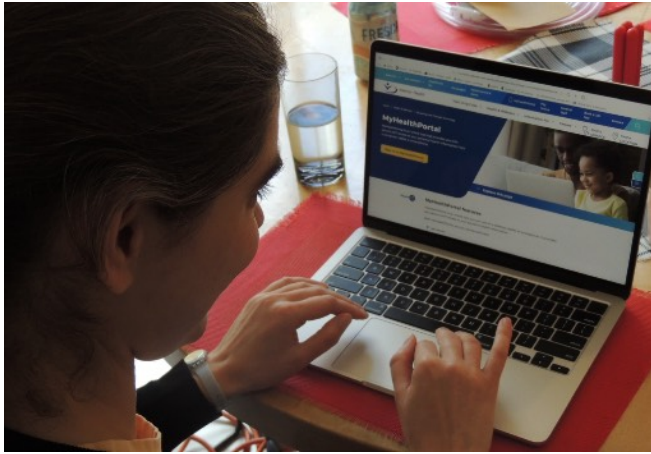


online portals they can use to access specific components of their health records. The first is the [Health Gateway](#) portal, available to anyone in BC aged 12 or older.

This site provides 24/7 secure access to your lab results, medications from BC pharmacies, vaccination records, and a list of your clinic visits and procedures. You can also see a summary of any hospital visits since 2021, and even manually add information on vaccinations you may have received elsewhere. Unfortunately, visits to clinics in the Interior Health Authority aren't available yet, but this information may become accessible as the system continues to improve. You can visit the Health Gateway at <https://www.healthgateway.gov.bc.ca/>

The second online resource, [MyHealthPortal](#), is specifically for residents of BC's Interior Health Region. This site provides secure access to personal health information, including hospital lab and imaging reports, medical history, and some reports from

clinicians. Appointment reminders are also sent through this system. Anyone 19 years and older, or those aged 12 to 18 years with the support of a healthcare provider, can access this portal. You can even update some of your health information, such as allergies or contact details, and share access with someone else. For more information, visit [MyHealthPortal](#).



It's Your Health Record

Although your primary and specialty healthcare providers control the clinic's

Emergency Medical Records, the information it contains belongs to you ([for Interior Health records click here to learn more](#)). Some clinics offer more direct access to patients of their records and appointment scheduling through their own patient portals which you should be able to find on your clinic's website. However, the availability of these features depends on factors like costs, internet access, clinic workflow, and clinician and staff training needs.

One challenge patients face is that different EMR systems often don't communicate effectively with one another. This lack of coordination can make it difficult for your health information to be shared between family practitioner clinics, specialists, and hospitals. That's why it's important for you to regularly review and stay informed about your personal health records to ensure accuracy and consistency across the healthcare providers you see.

The good news is that the Canadian government is working on this issue by funding [Canada Health Infoway](#), a non-profit aimed at improving digital health systems. The goal is to create a single nationwide EMR system that works seamlessly across all healthcare settings in Canada for patients to access and contribute to their comprehensive and longitudinal patient health record.

Hundreds of Apps Available to Help!

For those who have specific health needs or want to track their own specific personal health information, there are many apps you can download. For example, you can use

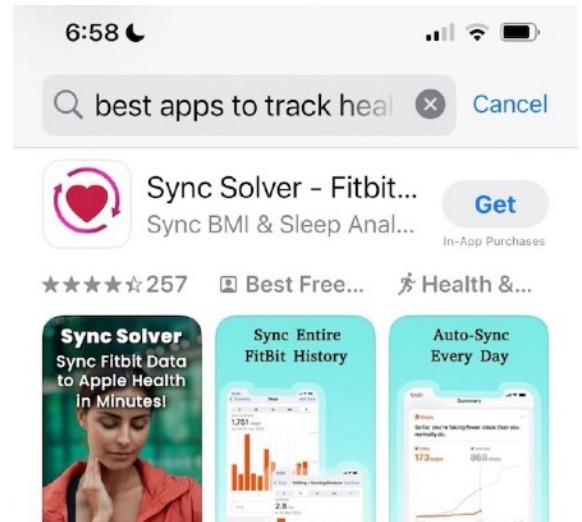


an app to track walking steps (included on most phones), fitness, medical symptoms, blood pressure and blood sugar, sleep, food intake and more. A quick search with any of these words will find multiple tracking apps in the App or Google Play Store. Even without a computer or Smartphone, you can track health information in a paper log or spreadsheet.

Whether you're managing a chronic condition or simply keeping an eye on your overall well-being, staying on top of your health information is important. With a continually increasing number of tools to access and track your health data, it's easier than ever to stay informed and take charge of your health—whether you're working with a healthcare provider or wanting to keep track of things on your own.

We hope these resources are helpful, especially for those of you who currently don't have a family doctor or nurse practitioner.

If you find a resource is no longer available or discover a new one, please let the PACC team know at kbpacc@kbdivision.ca. Together, as patients, partners, health professionals, we can continue to work together to support and improve our healthcare system.





**Get “Empowering the Citizen Patient”
Direct to Your Inbox!**