

How to Decide if Virtual Therapy is Right for You *in the Long Run* (After the Pandemic) The Pros & Cons of Long-Distance / Interstate Telehealth

Online therapy may be a good choice. There are also situations where online-only therapy is not recommended.

Long-Distance Online-Only Therapy	Advantages	Disadvantages
Accessibility Factors	<p>Good option for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographically remote areas • Clients with physical imitations or medical conditions that present obstacles to driving • Clients who have difficulty taking time out of a busy schedule to drive to appointments • Clients who have working devices, adequate internet service, and private personal space. 	<p>In some situations, access to face-to-face, local therapy will make a significant difference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may be harder for partners, family members, and children to participate as a way to support and individual's therapy goals. • Clients who struggle with loneliness and isolation may benefit from a return to direct human contact as soon as it's safe. • An online, long-distance therapist may cost more out-of-pocket if they are not in network with a regional insurance plan.
Symptoms and Concerns	<p>Research shows online therapy can be just as effective as face-to-face care when treating conditions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression • Panic Disorder • Social Anxiety Disorder • Generalized Anxiety Disorder • Other conditions served well by outpatient treatment <p>While online-only therapy may not always be appropriate for every client and every condition, it may be a useful first start and an adequate level of care for the maintenance of change. Talk to your potential provider if you have concerns.</p>	<p>Some clients and conditions are best served by local, in-person, close, direct treatment such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis Situations (suicidality, self-harm, homicidality) • Bipolar • Addictions • PTSD • Schizophrenia • Clients living in abusive environments <p>Online-only therapy may not be appropriate for severe illnesses requiring intensive care or in situations where privacy and safety are compromised. It may be beneficial as an adjunct or in areas where local treatment is inaccessible.</p>
Meaningful Change	<p>Some clients will benefit more from continuity of care than transition to a new local provider when a client or therapist moves away.</p>	<p>Even when a therapist-client relationship is effective, the benefit of transitioning to a new provider with different training and experience may be lost to the comfort of familiarity.</p>
Therapy Approach	<p>Some approaches such as client-centered and cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) do very well in an online format.</p>	<p>Techniques such as eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) may be a little more difficult to use online.</p>

For more information, visit: <https://www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/modes/distance-therapy>