



Valley Medical Group Patient Portal & Patient Communication

At Valley Medical Group (VMG), we are committed to providing high-quality care and effective communication. The VMG Patient Portal facilitates secure and efficient communication between patients and their healthcare providers while ensuring compliance with healthcare regulations.

Patient Portal Services

Patients with a VMG Patient Portal account may:

- View lab and radiology results
- Request appointments
- Make payments
- View upcoming appointments
- Update personal information
- Print useful paperwork and forms
- Communicate with their provider and clinical team by sending and receiving message

Account Registration & Assistance

Patients who do not have a portal account may register online by visiting the Valley Medical Group Homepage at vmgma.com and clicking on the patient portal link.

Appropriate Use & Communication Guidelines

1. Patient Portal Expectations

By using the patient portal, patients agree to:

- Use it for **non-urgent** medical concerns only.
- Be respectful and professional when communicating with VMG staff.
- Limit messages to necessary and relevant health inquiries.
- Understand that messages will be addressed during normal business hours as quickly as possible, but may be prioritized based on urgency.
- Understand that the portal is **not** a substitute for an office visit. New prescriptions, diagnoses, and complex inquiries may require a scheduled appointment. VMG staff will determine when communication regarding health concerns/issues is best addressed at an appointment, rather than via portal or telephone.
- Understand that the portal is meant to communicate with the care team about that patient; messaging in one patient's portal about a different person/patient is not permitted.

Respectful Communication

VMG is committed to fostering a respectful and professional environment for both patients and staff. **Rude, aggressive, or inappropriate** messages will not be tolerated. If this occurs:

- **Warning:** Patients will receive a verbal or written notification regarding inappropriate communication.
- **Formal Notification:** If inappropriate communication continues, a formal letter detailing concerns will be sent.

- **Portal Suspension/Discharge:** Continued inappropriate communication following a patient receiving the above notifications may result in loss of portal privileges or potential discharge from the practice.

2. Overuse of the Patient Portal

Excessive messaging that is **unnecessary, repetitive, or could be addressed in a single visit** will be managed as follows:

- **Reminder:** A message will be sent reminding patients of the patient portal and communication guidelines.
- **Warning:** If overuse of the patient portal continues, a formal letter detailing concerns will be sent to the patient.
- **Restriction:** Portal access may be temporarily limited if overuse of the patient portal for messaging persists.
- **Temporary Suspension:** Continued overuse of the patient portal for messaging may result in temporary loss of portal privileges.
- **Permanent Suspension:** Chronic overuse of the patient portal may lead to permanent loss of portal access.

3. Family Access & HIPAA Compliance

- Messages concerning the health of family members must **not** be sent through another patient's portal account.
- With appropriate HIPAA authorization, family members may be granted shared portal access, including:
 - Spouses assisting with medical coordination.
 - Adult children assisting elderly parents.
- Parents and legal guardians are granted access to manage children's portal accounts until the age of 13.

4. Emergency Situations

The patient portal is **NOT** to be used for emergencies. Patients requiring **immediate medical attention** should **NOT** use the portal.

- For **urgent medical matters**, call your Health Center directly.
- In a **medical emergency**, call **911** or go to the **nearest emergency room**.

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