



What is a Patient Portal?

Vorvick, Linda. (2020). Patient Portals: An Online Tool for Your Health. Retrieved from MedlinePlus Website: <https://medlineplus.gov/ency/patientinstructions/000880.htm>.

Medline Plus, run by the US National Library of Medicine, has an encyclopedia of medical terms, with an excellent article about patient portals. Basically, “A patient portal is a website for your personal health care. The online tool helps you to keep track of your health care provider visits, test results, billing, prescriptions, and so on. You can also e-mail your provider questions through the portal.

Many providers now offer patient portals. For access, you will need to set up an account. The service is free. A password is used so that all of your information is private and secure.”

It goes on to say:

“With a patient portal, you can:

- Make appointments (non-urgent)
- Request referrals
- Refill prescriptions
- Check benefits
- Update insurance or contact information
- Make payments to your provider's office
- Complete forms
- Ask questions through secure e-mail
-

You also may be able to view:

- Test results
- Visit summaries
- Your medical history including allergies, immunizations, and medicines
- Patient-education articles
- Some portals even offer e-visits. It is like a house call. For minor issues, such as a small wound or rash, you can get diagnosis and treatment options online. This saves you a trip to the provider's office. E-visits cost around \$30.”

These are, of course, very general outlines of what these portals may do. In each case I found on the Internet, there were these important instructions (Lexington Medical Center FAQs: <https://www.lexmed.com/docs/patients/Online-Medical-Records-FAQ.pdf>)

How do I get access to a patient portal?

Your health care providers can provide you with instructions to set up your account.

There may be a couple of steps involved, including creating a secure password to make sure that only you have access to your health information.

Once your account is set up, you'll be ready to conveniently access your health information and medical records.

This is VITAL. Each doctor or medical center (hospital or office) may use a different kind of portal. The office is responsible to provide instructions for YOU to create an account so you may log in and do what you need to do.

EMAIL is still the most important thing YOU can have to access these types of services. Knowing your username and password (and keeping them safe) is essential. So much so, that here's a very fast rundown of getting an email account:

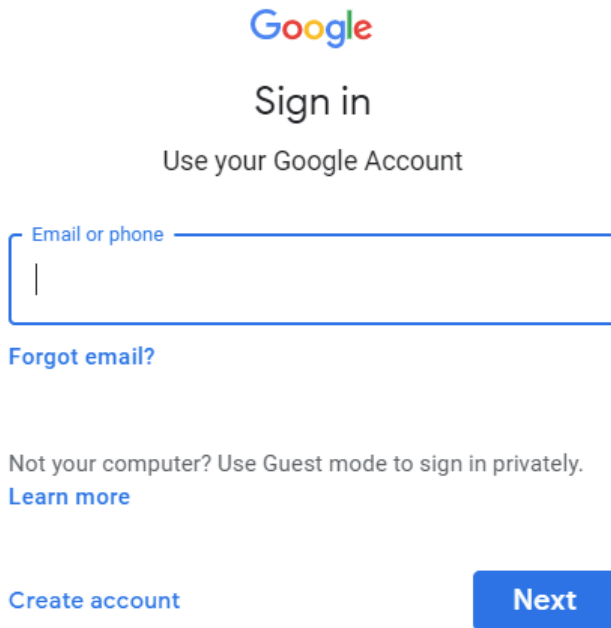
1. Pick a service, in this case, I'm using Google.
2. Go to the home page www.google.com
3. Click the Sign in button at the top right corner

Gmail Images



Sign in

4. Click Create an Account (for myself, not a business)



Google

Sign in

Use your Google Account

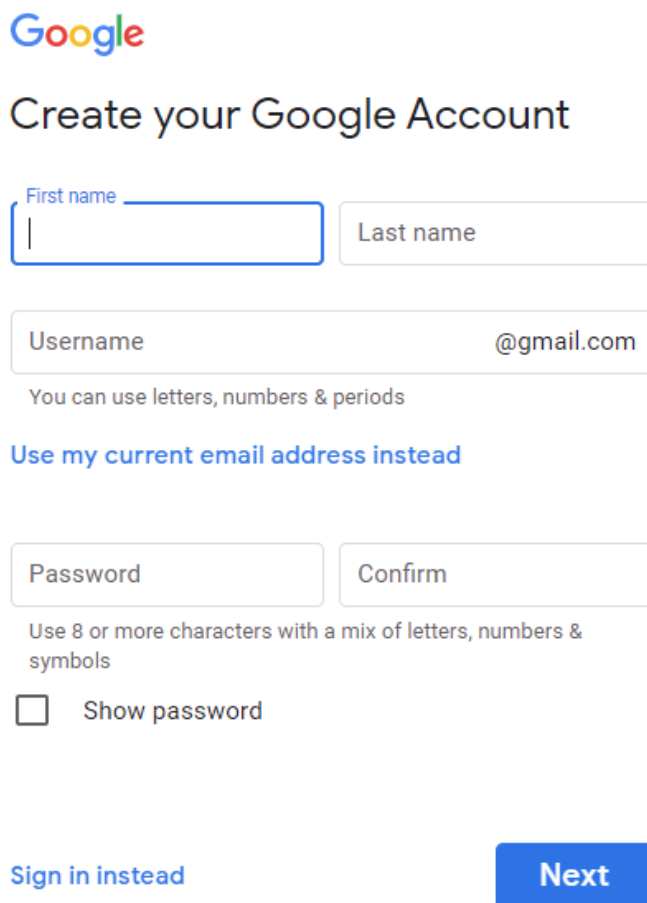
Email or phone

Forgot email?

Not your computer? Use Guest mode to sign in privately.
[Learn more](#)

[Create account](#) [Next](#)

5. Fill in the form on the screen AND WRITE DOWN YOUR USER NAME AND PASSWORD!



Google

Create your Google Account

First name

Last name

Username @gmail.com

You can use letters, numbers & periods

[Use my current email address instead](#)

Password Confirm

Use 8 or more characters with a mix of letters, numbers & symbols

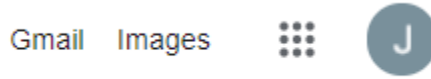
Show password

[Sign in instead](#) [Next](#)

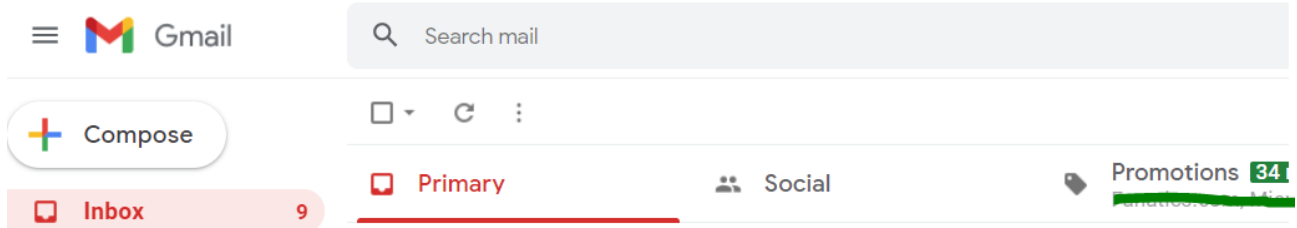


One account. All of Google working for you.

6. You **MUST** have a telephone number to verify that you want the account. There is **NO** getting around this. Google will “robocall” a landline or a mobile phone with a **ONE-TIME USE** code that’s usually 6 to 8 digits long. Write that down and enter it into the online form. **THERE IS NO BYPASSING THIS STEP IN THE SETUP OF YOUR NEW ACCOUNT.**
7. Once you sign in, you’ll see your initial at the top right corner. Click the Gmail link and you’ll be in your new email account.



8. This is a part of a Google inbox:



9. I have more videos on how to create and use your email.

As to this video, I will stop here. Good luck!

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