



## AveraNow: Health Care In The Palm of Your Hand

*Avera launches AveraNow providing video doctor visits via web or mobile*

Do you need to see a doctor for an ache or pain? There's an app for that.

On June 20, Avera will launch a new a mobile video visit that can be done over a smartphone, tablet or computer. AveraNow is offered by Avera as part of its growing direct-to-consumer, easy access points of care. Appointments are \$49, payable by debit or credit card and are available to all consumers in Avera's service area.

The service is available 24/7 for patients as young as age 2 into adulthood.

"Our patients can now get an AveraNow visit, from anywhere, at any time of the day or night," said Tad Jacobs, DO, Chief Medical Officer for Avera Medical Group. "AveraNow gives people on-demand access to health care. The service is not limited to Avera patients."

AveraNow's free mobile app is offered through the iTunes App Store, Google Play and other Android-based app distributors. Or, consumers can connect by logging onto a special web page at [Avera.org/Now](http://Avera.org/Now).

When consumers connect for a visit, they can fill out a checklist concerning symptoms, current medications and pertinent health history. AveraNow is appropriate for minor illnesses, such as colds, flu, bronchitis, allergy problems, rashes, urinary tract infections and sore throat. Most appointments last about 10 minutes.

Patients will get a real-time, two-way video visit with an Avera doctor or advanced practice provider. Some online health services treat patients without actually "seeing" them, based on their questionnaire and a phone conversation. Two-way video enhances the experience and provides better, safer care.

Providers review medical histories, answer questions, make diagnoses and prescribe medications, excluding controlled substances. If a visit is not appropriate for AveraNow, for example, anything requiring lab tests, X-rays or hands-on care, consumers are advised to go to primary care, urgent care or an emergency department for their care.

AveraNow providers follow evidence-based care protocols for high quality care.

Tractica, a market intelligence firm that focuses on human interaction with technology, reports that home health technologies like AveraNow will increase from 14.3 million worldwide in 2014 to 78.5 million by 2020. Data show that telemedicine, like video visits, can deliver quality outcomes comparable to in-person clinic visits. And on average, patients report a 96 percent satisfaction rate with this mode of health care delivery.

Market demand and patient satisfaction are also driven by the low cost of video visits. In fact, telehealth is one of the most cost-effective ways to see a doctor. The emergency room is the most expensive and least efficient way to provide non-emergent care, costing from \$1,500 to \$3,000 on average compared to \$130 to \$190 for a clinic visit, according to a 2011 study by the Centers for Disease Control. An AveraNow visit will be \$49.

Jacobs expects AveraNow to quickly grow in popularity. “Access to a telemedicine provider can prevent an ER visit on a Saturday night or prevent the need to arrange travel, childcare, or time off from work for an office visit during the week,” said Jacobs. “While AveraNow is not designed to replace the need for a relationship with a primary care physician, it can serve as a convenient and cost-effective option.”

Avera is working with [American Well](#), the largest national telehealth company, which developed the most downloaded telehealth app of 2014<sup>1</sup>. A recent [Harris Poll survey](#) commissioned by American Well found that 64 percent of patients are willing to participate in a video visit with a health care provider. Of those that were willing to visit with their doctor over video, 61 percent said convenience was a factor in this decision.

“Telehealth is revolutionizing health care delivery,” said Danielle Russella, President of Customer Solutions at American Well. “Almost overnight the entire industry is embracing technology differently. Video doctor visits provide so many benefits, including: improved access and convenience, decreased cost and, most importantly, an easier way for ongoing patient/doctor communication and follow-up care. All of these things can lead to improved health outcomes and more satisfied patients. Avera is known for their innovative approach to caring for patients and the community. The launch of AveraNow is a significant step in the industry’s widespread adoption of telehealth.”

Visit [Avera.org/Now](http://Avera.org/Now) to learn more.

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<sup>1</sup> According to app analytics by App Annie.