

# Text Messages to Patients

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Can I receive text messages from Kootenai Health?

Yes! As a Kootenai Health patient, you can opt in to receive text messages related to your health care, such as appointment updates, family notifications and more. Certain text messages, such as appointment reminders will have two-way communication. This means you can confirm appointments with just a few taps.

### Are Kootenai Health text messages safe and secure?

Yes. All our communications, including text messaging, follow privacy laws, including HIPAA. We will never ask you to confirm your identity via text or ask you to send information such as your birthdate or Social Security number. Protected health information will never be sent in a text message.

### How can I enroll in text messaging?

If you'd like to enroll in text messaging, there are three easy ways to get started.

1. **Enroll by text.** Simply text the word **START** to **53691**
2. **Enroll in MyChart.** Log into MyChart and update your communication preferences (see the instructions below)
3. **Ask the front desk staff.** Tell the front desk staff you'd like to enroll in text messages at your next office visit.

### How do I enroll, update, or check text messaging in MyChart's communication preferences?

- Visit the **Communication Preferences** screen in MyChart. If you're not already signed in, you'll be prompted to do so. You can also navigate to this screen through the **Menu** (scroll down to **Account Settings**).
- Under **Details**, select the communication topic (e.g., appointments, messages, billing) and make sure **Text Message** is toggled on (click/tap the switch to move it from off/grey to on/green).
- Under each communication topic, select **Advanced Settings** to update all types of messages sent for that topic (e.g., appointments, messages, billing).
- Make sure your current mobile phone number is listed under your contact information.
- **Important:** Select the green **Save Changes** button at the bottom of the screen before exiting.

### What if I'm not sure if I'm enrolled in text messages?

If you have a MyChart account, you can check your communication preferences at any time. You can also ask the front desk staff to confirm your settings during your next visit.

### What happens if I don't respond to an appointment confirmation text message?

Your appointment will remain scheduled, but you may receive a phone call from Kootenai Health to confirm your appointment.

### Do text messages cost anything?

Depending on your cellphone service plan, message and data rates may apply. Kootenai Health does not charge you to receive our text messages.

### **What if I no longer want to receive texts from Kootenai Health? How do I opt out?**

The simplest way to stop receiving text messages is to follow the instructions in the message itself by replying STOP. You can also stop text messages by doing one of the following:

- Text STOP to **53691** at any time.
- Log into your MyChart Communication Preferences and turn off text notifications.
- Ask the front desk staff to assist you during your next visit.

### **What if I accidentally opted out of text messages?**

You can opt in again with any of these three methods:

- Text START to **53691**
- Update your communication preferences in MyChart (see instructions above)
- Tell the front desk staff you'd like to enroll in text messages during your next office visit

### **I am a Kootenai Health patient, why did I receive a text message that says it is from MultiCare?**

Kootenai Health partners with MultiCare Health System on its electronic health record, Epic. Both organizations remain independent; partnering on Epic is an initiative to improve patient care, create efficiency and reduce costs. As part of this arrangement, some messages from the system will indicate they are from MultiCare.

### **Can I opt out of text messages from MultiCare but continue to receive messages from Kootenai Health?**

No, because of the shared platform, you cannot opt out of messages from one organization or the other. If you opt out, you end messages from both organizations. If you accidentally opt out, you can easily opt in again (*see the opt in steps above*).

### **Can people at MultiCare see my health information?**

No, Kootenai Health patients' protected health information is secure. MultiCare does not have access to Kootenai Health patients' information unless they are also patients of MultiCare. Additionally, no one will ever look at a patient's information unless they need to when providing medical care or assisting with billing questions.

### **What if I enrolled in text messaging but I'm not receiving any text messages?**

Your communication preferences in MyChart may be preventing you from receiving text messages. If you have text messages disabled in MyChart, you'll need to turn them on. To check your communication preferences, follow the instructions above. You can also ask the front desk staff to confirm your settings during your next visit or call our MyChart customer support team at (208) 625-3200.

### **Do I need a MyChart account to enroll in text messaging?**

No, a MyChart account is not required to receive text messages. However, having a MyChart account will give you the ability to tailor your text message preferences and provide more tools to manage your health. To learn more about setting up a MyChart account, visit our MyChart page at [kh.org/patient-portal/mychart-faq/](http://kh.org/patient-portal/mychart-faq/)

### **How do I enroll in text messaging for my child or a person I care for (proxy)?**

To enroll in text messaging for a proxy, you'll need to ensure you have a MyChart account with proxy access. [Learn more about proxy access.](#)

To opt in to receive text messages for your proxy, you can:

- Update your communication preferences in MyChart while viewing the proxy account (see instructions above)
- Tell the front desk staff you'd like to enroll in text messages for your proxy during your next office visit.

### **What numbers will text messages come from?**

You may receive text messages from a couple of numbers.

- **53691:** General care information, including appointment reminders, and more.
- **1-844-730-1528:** You may also receive appointment reminders from this number. You will still be able to confirm or cancel appointments using the options provided in the text message.

### **Why are the phone numbers for Kootenai Health text messages changing?**

We are changing our text messaging to new five-digit numbers known as "short codes."

Short codes are abbreviated numbers used for text messaging. They offer features that let you securely do routine tasks, like confirming your appointment, with just a few taps from your phone. It is just one of the ways we are working to make managing your health care easier.

### **Can I receive text messages in Spanish or another language?**

Yes! We offer 10 languages, including Spanish, with more planned for the future. To receive text messages in another language, make sure your preferred language is set correctly in MyChart. Here's how:

- Under **Account Settings** in the **Menu**, select **Personal Information**.
- In the **Details About Me** section, select **Edit** and update the language as needed, then select the green **Save changes** button.
- You can also ask for help with this from the front desk staff during your next office visit.

### **What if I have an international phone number?**

We cannot send text messages outside the U.S. at this time. This includes phone numbers related to services like Skype, as well as international carriers.