Medical Portals: Top 5

A patient portal is your doctor's website or app. It is the private place where your test results land, where you can message your doctor's office, see your appointments, and request prescription refills — any time of day, without waiting on hold.

You do not get to pick which portal your doctor uses — each office chooses one. But the big ones all do the same everyday jobs, so once you learn one, the others will feel familiar.

The top 5

- 1. MyChart (by Epic) — the most common by far. Used by most large hospitals and health systems. View test results, message your care team, schedule appointments, request refills, pay bills, and even manage records for a family member. There is a free app for iPhone and Android.
- 2. Oracle Health Patient Portal (was Cerner/HealtheLife). Used by hospitals running Oracle's system. Book appointments, view doctor's notes, medication lists, and test results. The newest version can explain your results in plain language and answer questions about them.
- 3. athenahealth Patient Portal. Common at smaller doctor's offices and clinics. Same everyday jobs: results, messaging, appointments, refills, and bill pay.
- 4. FollowMyHealth (by Veradigm). Works with many different practices. View your health history and lab results, message providers, request prescription renewals, make appointments, and pay bills.
- 5. NextGen Patient Portal. Used by many independent practices. Results, secure messaging, appointment requests, and refill requests.

Getting signed up: the usual way

1 Ask the front desk at your next visit — they can sign you up on the spot or send you a signup link by text or email.

2. You will get an activation code (often printed on your After Visit Summary). Type it into the signup page to create your username and password.
3. No visit coming up? Many portals let you sign yourself up online by matching your name, birthday, and other details against your medical record.

Everyday things you can do

- Read test results — they usually appear automatically, sometimes before your doctor has called.
- Message your doctor's office — for non-urgent questions. Replies usually come within a business day or two.
- Request prescription refills with a couple of taps.
- Schedule appointments and fill out check-in forms ahead of time.
- See your visit notes and medication list — handy to bring up at the next visit.

Your privacy

Portals are private and secure — protected by law (HIPAA) and by your password. Always sign out when you are done, especially on a shared or public computer. Never share your login with anyone except a trusted family helper you have formally approved.

When to call Sean instead

- You lost your activation code or can't get signed in.
- The portal's emails keep landing in your spam folder.
- You want the app installed on your phone with notifications turned on.
- Anything in the portal confuses you — Sean can walk through it with you.

Call Sean at (813) 770-6082.

Need a hand? Call Sean at **(813) 770-6082**.