



Online Shopping During COVID-19

**With a bonus
section on Virtual
Online Medical
Appointments**

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**Many of us have been
shopping online for years**

**COVID-19 has turned online
shopping from a choice to a
necessity for many people**

**This presentation is a very quick OVERVIEW
of online shopping.**

**It is NOT intended to be a comprehensive
guide.**

**It is NOT intended to give any kind of advice
on COVID-19**

**A copy of this presentation will be available
on the OPCUG website**

Today's Biggest Reason to Shop Online!!!

**Physical Distancing
and Physical
Isolation because of
COVID-19**

Today's Biggest Reason to Shop Online!!!

**Many 'Non-essential'
stores are closed
because of COVID-19**

But you're trapped at home and you just really, really need another jigsaw puzzle!

Contactless Pickup

Some retailers such as Loblaws, Your Independent Grocer, Staples and others are offering “**Contactless Pickup**”, where you:

1. order and pay online
2. then drive to the store at the designated time and park in a designated spot,
3. phone the store on your cellphone and
4. your order is brought out and placed in your trunk without you actually interacting with anyone or going into the store or even getting out of your car.

This information is changing daily. Check with the individual retailer for the details

Contactless Pickup

During the Covid crisis most stores doing this have waived any pickup fees.

Due to the demand for this service at Loblaws and Your Independent Grocer you may have to book your pickup time two to three weeks in advance.

Note: Some of the grocery websites don't have all of their specialty items (e.g. Gluten Free) that they stock in the store, so you still have to go in the store if you need them.

This information is changing daily. Check with the individual retailer for the details

Contactless Pickup

- Produce Brothers (producebrothers.ca) is an example of a small retailer (3 people) that has put together an online order and pickup system.
- Check the FAQ's on the website for their rules and procedures.
- Pickup and pay at the loading dock at 830 Industrial Avenue Unit 10.



This information is changing daily. Check with the individual retailer for the details

Curbside Pickup

Some retailers such as Canadian Tire, GNC (General Nutrition Centers), etc. have phone ordering with curbside pickup available at SOME of their stores, but aren't set up for home delivery or online payment. Check with their websites and/or the individual stores for the availability and rules.



This information is changing daily. Check with the individual retailer for the details

Not Quite Contactless Pickup

Some other stores such as M&M Food Market and Lee Valley Tools allow you to order online and they'll prepare your order, but you still need to go into the store to pickup and pay.

Most pharmacies allow you to renew prescriptions online or by automated phone systems, but you still need to go into the store to pickup unless you make special arrangements.

This information is changing daily. Check with the individual retailer for the details

Safety During COVID-19

It is beyond the scope of this presentation, but you may want to take appropriate safety measures when handling items and bringing them into your home, whether they are bought online, in store or otherwise.

There is plenty of advice available online. It is up to you to seek out the advice, determine what is appropriate and to act on it accordingly.

Safety During COVID-19

Two examples of online information*

“COVID-19 food safety: Separating the myths from the facts”

<https://ottawacitizen.com/life/food/covid-19-food-safety-separating-the-myths-from-the-facts/wcm/b533230b-84a6-4b41-b9f0-e73ab04945f2/>

“Grocery Shopping Tips in COVID-19”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sjDuwc9KBps>

* - Inclusion of these links does not in any way constitute an endorsement of their contents

Safety During COVID-19

The contents of something packed at a factory or a food processing plant are safe from COVID-19, but the package itself was put on the shelf or put in an outer box or put in a bag by human hands. Act according to whatever advice you trust.

Business As Usual

- Retailers like Home Depot, Lowes, Lee Valley Tools and many others have their usual online order with delivery working.
- Some are also doing curbside pickup at some stores.
- The stores themselves are closed

Top Canadian eCommerce Platforms*

1. Amazon Canada
2. eBay Canada
3. Walmart Canada
4. Best Buy Canada
5. Canadian Tire
6. Costco Canada
7. Home Depot Canada
8. Etsy Canada
9. Hudson's Bay
10. Newegg Canada



Note that most of these are Canadian versions of the American website

Normal Reasons to Shop Online

- Much better selection than retail stores, especially for specialty and hard-to-find items
- Convenience of shopping from home
- Instantly download digital products like software, music, videos, movies, eBooks, etc.
- Often significantly better prices

Issues With Shopping Online

Can't '*see and feel*' and check the '*size and fit*' of the items first.

This is especially an issue for clothes.

Issues With Shopping Online

Some companies make returns easy but others make returning products very difficult or impossible or expensive (e.g. who pays the return shipping?)

Issues With Shopping Online

Some product descriptions may be exaggerated, are not very detailed and/or are not very accurate, and may be written by someone whose first language is obviously NOT English or French

Issues With Shopping Online

Shipping can sometimes be expensive and sometimes take a long time

During the COVID-19 crisis, some companies have waived shipping charges on some or all items.

Issues With Shopping Online

The online experience of some bricks-and-mortar retailers can be very disappointing.

They realize they *'must'* have an online presence but their heart isn't really in it.

Remember Sears?

How to Pay

- **Regular credit card for sites you trust that have decent security (e.g. Amazon, Loblaws)**
- **PayPal or other online payment services for other sites**
- **Prepaid credit cards for small sites that don't accept PayPal**



Reviews

- Online reviews can be useful for comparing products and services.
- The more reviews an item has the more accurate they tend to be as results are averaged out by larger samples.
- The American version of a website may have up to twenty times more reviews on the same item, and sometimes the Canadian site also contains reviews from the American site.

Reviews

- Reviews on sites like Amazon and Home Depot tend to be fairly accurate, some other major sites not so much.
- Comparing different items on a single website (e.g. Amazon) tends to be more accurate than comparing the same item across different websites (but not always).
- Going to several websites to compare their reviews on the same item can be a real eye opener.

Reviews

Manufacturer's website reviews tend to be less accurate than retailer's websites since there is more incentive to 'fudge' things

Many reviews on manufacturer's websites are not reviews but are actually testimonials disguised as reviews

Some sites (e.g. Canadian Tire) port in some of their reviews from the manufacturer's or the supplier's web sites

Reviews

Top review websites include:

- Amazon
- Google
- Facebook
- TripAdvisor
- Yelp
- Trustpilot
- TestFreaks
- Consumer Reports

Reviews

Most reviews are based on user feedback, but some are based on actual testing (e.g. wirecutter.com, Consumer Reports).

Some review sites require paid subscriptions (e.g. Consumer Reports)

Reviews

On many sites the process of giving a review steers you towards giving a positive review

- Was the product packed properly?
- Was the delivery time as promised?
- Was the customer service polite and courteous?

Not a lot of questions about the product itself!

Fake Reviews

Advertisers, marketers, and other stakeholders are often motivated to produce fake positive reviews for products they wish to promote or fake negative reviews for competitor's products which they wish to disparage.

There is a whole gray industry dedicated to posting false reviews, both positive and negative.

Reviews

Some sites like Amazon are taking measures such as verifying that reviewers have actually bought the product and by giving more weight to reviews from regular known reviewers.

'Helper' Sites and Apps

- Using sites like Rakuten (formerly eBates), Groupon, Swagbucks and AirMiles can result in rebates, lower prices, discount coupons, reward miles, etc.
- Services like Wikibuys, camelcamelcamel and Chrome extension Keepa compare price histories at specific sites like Amazon and can issue price alerts

'Helper' Sites and Apps

Comparison Shopping Sites, Apps and Browser Extensions can help you compare prices online.

Flipp, ShopBot, Honey, Google Shopping, NexTag, PriceGrabber, Shopping.com, Shopzilla, Become, Bing Shopping Campaigns, Pronto, BizRate, Amazon Product Ads, Avast SafePrice

Problems with VPN's

If you use a VPN (Virtual Private Network) app like ExpressVPN or NordVPN for security or privacy reasons, you may have problems with some websites like Home Depot, Costco, Amazon's Kindle, etc. and need to turn the VPN off to use those sites

**We're going to take a closer look at
the two biggest shopping websites**





- eBay is a website that facilitates consumer-to-consumer and business-to-consumer sales.
- It started as an online auction business and has expanded to include instant "Buy It Now" shopping.
- **Pay attention to the ratings of the sellers!!!**
- **Caveat Emptor:** Many items on the eBay.ca Canada site are ported from the eBay.com US site so international shipping rates from the US may be incurred.

More eBay Caveat Emptors

- As much as eBay tries to police its vendors, the accuracy and legitimacy of the postings is up to the individual sellers
- There have been issues with counterfeits, knockoffs, copies, copyright infringement and licensing problems (Is that copy of Microsoft Office Pro for \$30 legitimate?)
- eBay owns PayPal, Craigslist and Skype



**Amazon is the 800
pound gorilla of the
online business**

**This can be both a
good and a bad
thing**





In these times of COVID-19:

Amazon has a large selection of non-perishable grocery and household items.

Amazon (and other websites) are sometimes delaying shipment of 'non-essential' items when volumes get too high.



An Amazon Prime membership (currently CDN\$79/year) gets you:

- **Prime Delivery** - free two business day shipping on qualifying items
- **Prime Video** - Stream Amazon Original shows and movies as well as other popular movies, TV shows, etc.
- **Prime Music** - Stream over a million songs
- **Prime Reading** - Download hundreds of romance novels, thrillers, children's books and more to your Amazon Kindle eReader or the free Kindle app on your computer

Note that the selection of music and ebooks is limited unless you subscribe to Amazon's premium (\$\$\$) versions of these services.



- Three main categories:
 - Sold and fulfilled by Amazon
 - Sold by “X” and fulfilled by Amazon (i.e. Amazon warehouses and ships the item for the seller)
 - Sold and fulfilled by “X”
- Only the first two categories qualify for free Prime two day shipping. For the last category the shipping may be free or you may have to pay for it, and it may take up to several weeks



- Many items are sold through the “**Amazon Marketplace**”, where Amazon provides the “storefront” and handles the financial transaction, but the items come from a separate vendor. This includes “Also sold by” items.

New & Used (6) from **CDN\$ 96.00** + **CDN\$ 24.89** Shipping

- It is important to look at the ratings for the marketplace vendors as well as the items, and to compare the shipping costs as well as the purchase cost.
- **Caveat Emptor:** While Amazon will eventually cut off unscrupulous or poorly rated vendors, in the meantime you can still get stuck with rip-offs and counterfeits before they do, although Amazon generally resolves any disputes in your favour.

Lottery Tickets Online

- Many retailers have stopped onsite lottery sales during COVID-19, but you can get your lottery tickets online (olg.ca in Ontario, loteries.lotoquebec.com in Quebec)
- However, their prize offices are closed until further notice due to COVID-19, so if you win a big one you'll have to wait a while to get your payout.
- The OLG site may have problems with any browser except Internet Explorer

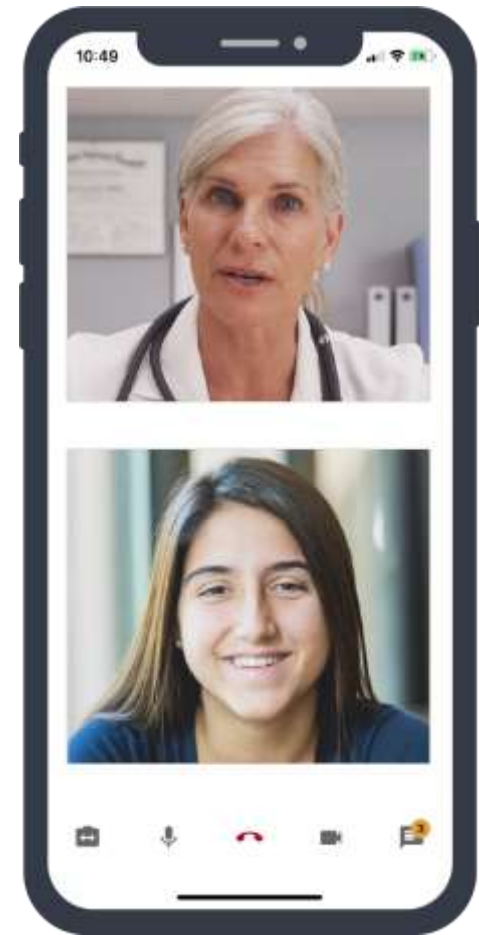


Virtual Online Medical Appointments



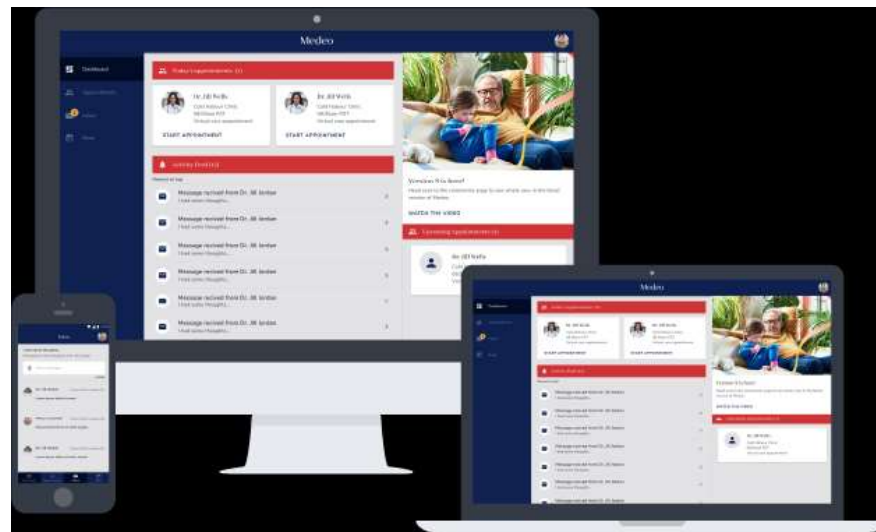
Virtual Doctor Appointments

- Many non-critical doctor's appointments, medical treatments and operations are being postponed or cancelled because of COVID-19
- When in-person patient visits are not needed or even possible with outbreak isolations, doctors and other care providers and patients can have audio or video virtual appointments using a phone, smartphone, tablet or computer.





- Many doctors in Ontario are doing this is with the Medeo Virtual Care App
- Medeo is a virtual care solution that offers:
 - Video Visits
 - Patient Messaging
 - Online Booking





Ontario has been using Medeo for virtual appointments and virtual consultations with isolated communities, especially in the north, but due to COVID-19 has opened it up to use across Ontario.



- When you arrange your first virtual appointment with your doctor's office, they will email you a virtual appointment notice
- In setting up the appointment they have created an account for you based on your email address
- To use Medeo you will need:
 - High-speed internet (Wi-Fi or LTE)
 - A computer with Google Chrome, webcam and microphone OR
 - An iPhone or Android smartphone or tablet with the Medeo app



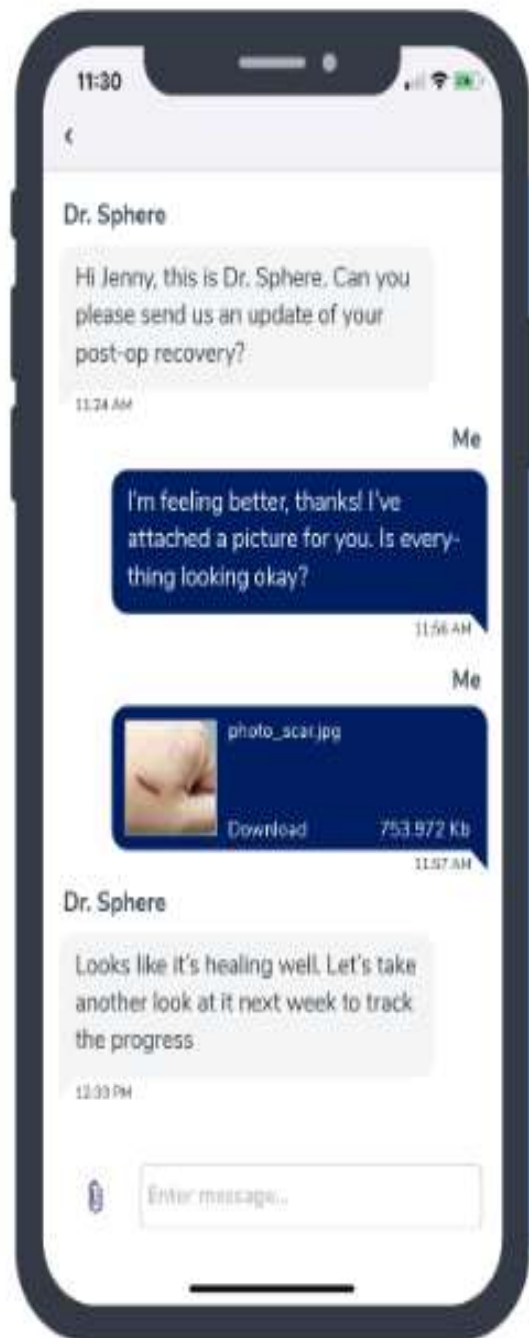
- The appointment notice will give you some instructions. If you click on “See Your Appointment” you will be asked to sign in. Use your email address and click on the “forgot password” link and follow the instructions to reset your password.
- You can also set up your password by going to the [Medeo website](#), logging in as a patient, and click on the “forgot password” link and follow the instructions to reset your password.



- The appointment notice will also give you:
 - A link to test your microphone, speakers and webcam
 - Other instructions for the appointment.
- Once your basic Medeo account is set up it can be used by other doctors



- 15 minutes before the scheduled appointment, log in to the [Medeo website](#) and click on the appointment (note: my doctor's office phoned to delay my appointment by an hour, but on the website the appointment had the original time. This is OK, just click on it anyway.)
- After what could be a 15 minute wait you may have to wait further until your doctor joins the appointment.



Patient Messaging

When you and your doctor both use Medeo, you can securely exchange messages, share files, even send photos to make things clearer.



"That's all Folks!"