

Electronic Communications:

Patient Information Sheet

During your visit, or activating an account with our Patient Portal (MyDovetale), you will be asked to provide your personal email address and/or mobile phone number as another option for the St. Joseph's Healthcare Hamilton (SJHH) to communicate with you. We will only use email and text messaging to communicate with you if you consent (give us permission).

Important Notice about electronic communications sent and received by SJHH:

1. Your Care Team will not use email/text to communicate sensitive information.
2. Your Care Team will not provide emergency advice or treatment by text or email. If you are experiencing medical distress, please visit an emergency department or call 911.
3. Your Care Team may make decisions about your care based on the information provided to them via email/text.
4. Your Care Team will copy or summarize any information contained in an email/text into your patient health record if the information is considered to be clinically relevant and important to your care.

How does SJHH protect my information?

Your phone number and email address are kept secure in our electronic health information system (Dovetale) and will not be shared with anyone without your consent.

SJHH is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of your information, and follow rules for how we collect, use and share your information set out in Ontario's Personal Health Information Protection Act ("PHIPA"). Please visit our [Privacy website](#) for information about our privacy practices at SJHH.

What kind of emails can I expect to receive from SJHH if I agree to communicate by email?

With your consent, SJHH may communicate with you by email for:

- Appointment reminders/notifications
- Provision of care
- Patient Experience Surveys
- Fund raising to support priorities of the hospital
- Determining your interest in participating in Hamilton Integrated Research Ethics Board (HIREB) approved research

What information may be included in emails?

The emails we send you may contain personal health information, such as information about your diagnosis, treatment or medications. Where possible, such as for appointment reminders, the minimal amount of personal information will be included in the email.

Is email and text communication optional?

Yes. Email and text communications are not required. If you decide that you do not want to communicate in this way, the hospital will continue contacting you by telephone and/or regular mail. If you choose not to email or text, your care will not be affected.

How am I able to withdraw my consent to receive emails and/or texts from SJHH?

You may withdraw your consent to receive emails or text messages from SJHH.

Patients that have an active MyDovetale account are able to adjust their communication preferences from within their account. You can set/update your communication/notification preferences by navigating to **Your Menu > Communication Preferences**. Here you can choose the method of notification – either e-mail, text, and/or mail – you would like to receive for upcoming appointments, new messages, new test results, questionnaires, account management items, patient experience surveys and more. After you have selected your preferences, click **Save changes**.

If you do not have a MyDovetale account or require support, you may contact a member of your care team or the Health Information Management Department at (reinfo@stjoes.ca)*.

Additionally, you may withdraw your consent to be contacted by Access Research at any time by [clicking here](#) and completing the 'Concerns & Withdrawal' form.

**Please allow up to 30 days for you to stop receiving emails from SJHH after withdrawal of consent.*

What are the risks of using email/text to communicate with SJHH?

There are some risks to your privacy and security when using email and text to communicate with others. Know the risks and ways to protect yourself before you agree to use email to communicate with us.

1. Email and texts are not a secure or confidential form of communication. As with all email/texting, there is a risk that your health information could be unintentionally disclosed.
2. Other people may be able to access your emails or texts without you knowing. They may read, copy, or forward your messages with or without your knowledge.
3. Email messages may be delayed for technical reasons or may inadvertently be filtered and sent to your spam or trash folder.
4. You may get emails or texts that are meant to look like they are from a trusted source. These fraudulent (fake) messages may be used to give you a program that damages your computer, tablet, or call phone (malware). They may also be used to get sensitive information about you, such as your usernames, passwords, or credit card information (phishing).

Note: By providing us with your email address and consenting to receiving electronic communications from SJHH, you accept the associated risks. SJHH is not responsible for the security of your internet service providers, email domains, computer, tablet, cell phone or applications (programs) on your devices.

How can I keep my personal health information safe while using email or text messaging?

A few tips include using a strong password for your inbox and/or device, watch out for phishing, do not click or download any suspicious attachments, protect your account with two-factor authentication (which is a security system that requires two forms of identification beyond just a username and password), and download anti-virus software.

What can I do if I receive an email or text message from SJHH that I did not consent to?

If you have any additional questions or concerns related to privacy and confidentiality, or if you have received an email or text message from SJHH in error, please contact the SJHH Privacy Office at privacy@stjoes.ca