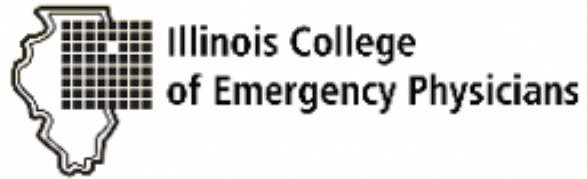


Far Away But Not
Out of Reach –
Tips and Tricks to
Treat Patients
Virtually



5.27.2021

The logo for Rush University. It consists of a white stylized 'R' symbol inside a circle, followed by the word "RUSH" in a white, serif font, all set against a dark green rectangular background.

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Disclosures

No conflicts of interest to report for this presentation

Why?

Why Not!

PROS

- Convenience
- Increased access
- Ease of access
- Less wait time,
- Decreased cost
- Creation of “virtual space”
- Patient satisfaction

CONS

- Start up costs
- Training
- Support staff
- Technical difficulties
- Limitations on physical exams
- Less “human interaction”

What do patients think?

- Telemedicine has not been shown to reduce overall patient satisfaction
- Press Ganey administered over 3.5 million telemedicine surveys in < 2 months
 - Virtual visits can achieve similar patient experience ratings to in-person visits (Press Ganey 2020)
- A 2018 survey of consumers by Black Book Market Research
 - 89% of health care consumers younger than 40 wished medical organizations had more technologically advanced and electronically communicative options available
 - They were unsatisfied with their current options

“Webside” Manner

Patient Comfort	Be friendly and warm with the patient. Many patients will be using virtual for the first time so do your best to put them at ease.
Eye Contact	Ensure eye contact by adjusting the webcam to eye level. Before the visit, check the camera placement. Ask the patient if they can see and hear you clearly. Maintain eye contact when you can.
Environment	Consider the exam room setting. Check your surroundings to ensure they are professional from the patient’s perspective. Create a clean, professional environment without disruptive noise.
Timeliness	Improve visit efficiency by being on time. If a delay is inevitable, notify the patient.
Professionalism	Dress appropriately for the virtual visit. Have the same level of professional attire as with an in-person visit.
Explain	Clarify your actions with the patient. If you must look away to take notes or document during the visit, let the patient know what is happening.
Tech	Check your tech. Make sure you aren’t muted. Consider using a headset.

More on Tech Check...

**Make sure
patients can
connect**

**Have a
backup plan**

When I walk into the “room” what do I see?

What's the environment?

- Anything concerning in the background?
- Be understanding of environmental circumstances

Observe the patient

- Can you see what you need to see?
- How acute are their symptoms?
 - Do they look alert or do they appear excessively fatigued? What is their general appearance – are they disheveled or well kempt? Look at the home/the environment they are calling from
- Can they talk in a full sentence?

Assess cognition

- How's their thought process?
 - Their speech?
 - Do they have normal judgement and insight?
-

General Clinical Examination Tips & Tricks

- Follow the same clinical guidelines you would with an in-person visit.
- Even if you can't do a “physical” exam, you can ask good questions and request a self-examination.
- **Present illnesses:** Obtain a thorough history of present illness.
- **Heart rate:** Ask the patient to count their pulse while you track time.
- **Respiratory rate:** Ask the patient to breath normally while you track time if you need a respiratory rate.
- **Temperature:** If you'd like a temperature, ask the patient if they have a thermometer.
- **Physical exam:** Ask if there's a friend or family member who can assist with “physical exam” if you think it would be beneficial.

Evaluating Pharyngitis

- a) Have the patient angle the camera and use a light source to evaluate the tonsils for redness, exudates and swelling
- b) Ask the patient to evaluate if they have tenderness over their lymph nodes
- c) Observe if they cough, or have a runny nose
- d) Observe them take their temperature if you need this information
- e) Assess for dysphagia/drooling
- f) If need be, request the assistance of a nearby friend or family member

If you can't see anything have them see a professional in person

Other Upper Respiratory Examination

Gentle palpation of eyelids

Conjunctival erythema/drainage

Scleral injection

Nasal drainage

Sinus tenderness to palpation

Transillumination!?!

Skin examination

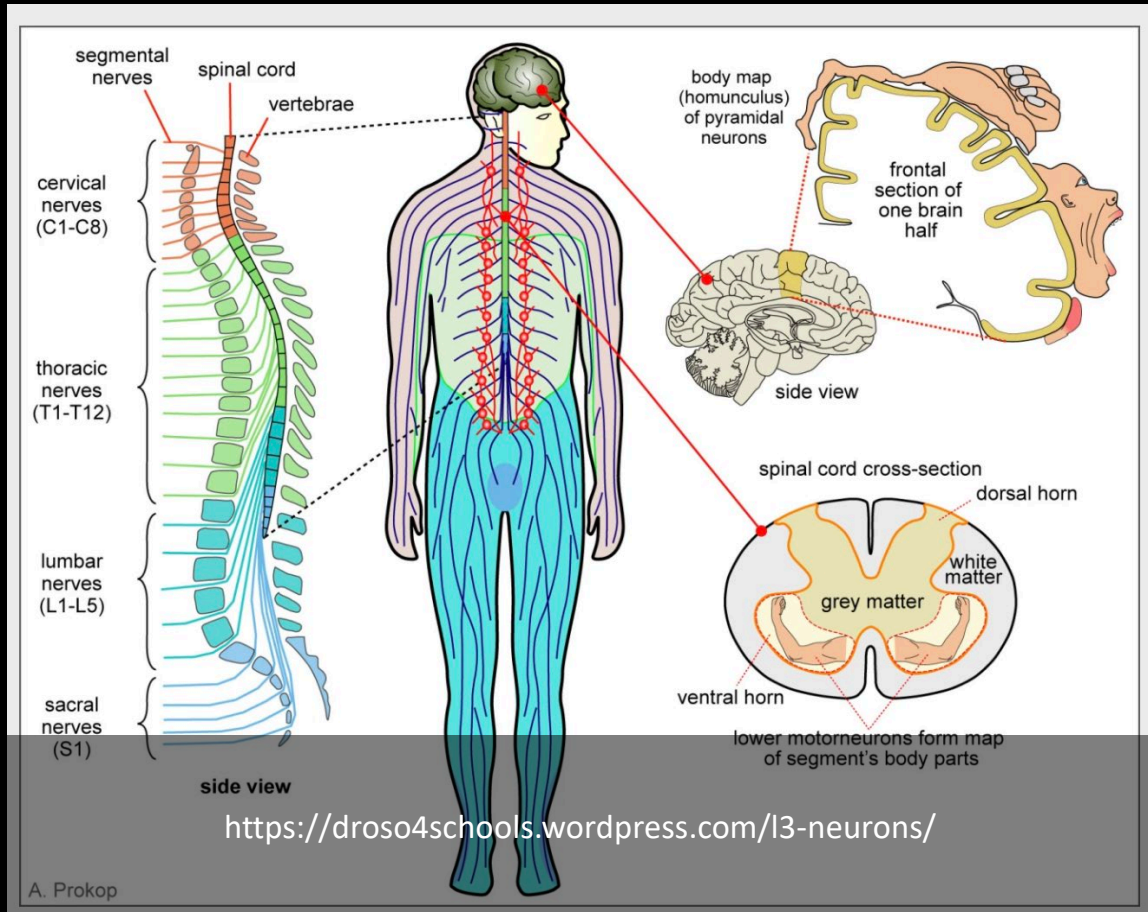
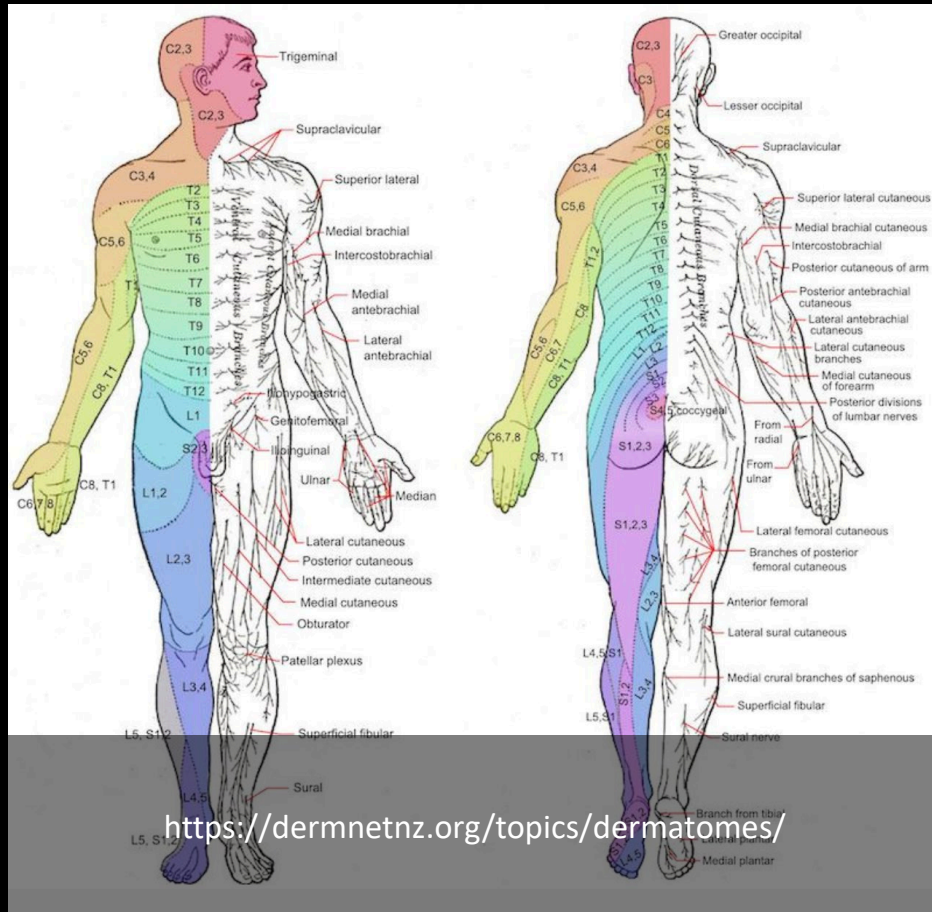
Respiratory effort

Neurologic Exams

Physical exam for headache patients for example can also be quite robust via telemedicine

- a) Cranial nerves
- b) Motor testing, coordination maneuvers
- c) Gait
- d) Gross sensory exam
- e) Nuchal rigidity
- f) Pupillary reactivity with a light (have them use their cell phone or another light source)

Remember your dermatomes and motor innervations



Musculoskeletal Exams

- Make sure the camera is positioned well
- Have patient ask for help if needed
- Check ROM/flexion/extension
- Observe ambulation and strength
- Self examination with palpation
- Neuro examination
- Back pain:
 - Ask the normal scary questions



Most Importantly

Recognize the limitations of telehealth:

If you are uncomfortable with any part of their exam – refer them for in person care.



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March 1st**



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Thank you!!

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