

Information is

Key



Amazon Debuts New Virtual Health Care Service

On Nov. 15, 2022, Amazon launched Amazon Clinic, an online telehealth service. The service connects individuals with medical professionals through a secure, message-based portal. It's currently available in 32 states, but Amazon plans to expand to additional states in the coming months.

Amazon Clinic offers treatments for more than 20 common health conditions, including the following:

- Acne
- Allergies
- Asthma
- Birth control
- Dandruff
- Eczema
- Erectile dysfunction
- Genital herpes
- Hair loss
- Urinary tract infections

After selecting from a list of health-related issues, individuals choose a preferred telehealth provider and complete a survey. They are then connected with a health care professional through a private messaging portal, allowing individuals to communicate with professionals when it's most convenient for them. Health care professionals provide individuals with personalized treatment plans through the portal and can send prescriptions to individuals' preferred pharmacies or Amazon Pharmacy.

Treatment prices, which are set by telehealth providers, are provided upfront and include two weeks of follow-up messages with professionals. Amazon claims that, in many cases, the service will cost equal to or less than the average copay. Amazon Clinic does not currently accept insurance; however, individuals can use their existing insurance to help pay for medications prescribed through the service. They can also use funds from flexible and health spending accounts to pay for the service.

What This Means

Amazon's new service comes only months after it announced it would be shutting down Amazon Care—a different telehealth service—by the end of 2022. The company has repeatedly signaled its intention to make health care a major component of its business model in recent years. Earlier this year, Amazon purchased One Medical, which offered telehealth services and operated a network of boutique primary care practices.

Treating common health conditions through telehealth services could lessen the burden on traditional in-person health care services, decreasing diagnosis and treatment delays. However, Amazon's health care endeavors have raised concerns among regulators and lawmakers about how the company will use and protect sensitive customer information.

For more health care resources, contact us at 856.761.1833 or info@katzpierz.com.

