



Staying Connected: A Guide to Messaging Your Patients When They're OOO

This is an extra resource to go along with the original article:
[Why every healthcare practice needs a patient portal](#)

If the idea of messaging your patients – and your patients messaging you – feels overwhelming or unmanageable, here are some tips to keep things clear and efficient:

1. Use a patient portal

Using a patient portal to message your patients keeps information safe and HIPAA-compliant.

2. Try bullet points

If you need to communicate a lot of information to a patient, use bullet points. Patients are less likely to miss information when it's spaced out.

3. Communicate response times

What is a realistic response time for you? 24 hours? 48 hours? A week? Be clear upfront about when patients can expect to hear back from you. That way, they won't be surprised or frustrated about any delays.

4. Refer patients back to their notes or data

If patients ask unnecessary questions, simply refer them back to their resources.

5. If you need to, schedule a phone call

If a particular conversation gets long and convoluted, a 15-minute phone call might be an easier solution.