

Use of mobile app reduces number of in-person follow-up visits after surgery

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Patients who underwent ambulatory breast reconstruction and used a mobile app for follow-up care had fewer in-person visits during the first 30 days after the operation without affecting complication rates or measures of patient-reported satisfaction, according to a study published online by *JAMA Surgery*.

In the age of patient-centric care, delivery models must evolve to become more convenient for [patients](#) and cost-effective to the health system, while also maintaining a high degree of [patient satisfaction](#) and convenience. John L. Semple, M.D., M.Sc., of Women's College Hospital, University of Toronto, and colleagues randomly assigned 65 women undergoing [breast reconstruction](#) to receive follow-up care via a mobile app (n=32; 49 percent) or at an in-person visit (n=33; 51 percent) during the first 30 days after the operation. The app that was used (from QoC Health Inc.) allows patients to submit photographs and answers to a quality of recovery questionnaire and a pain scale using a mobile device. Surgeons are able to follow patient reports on a web portal.

The researchers found that patients using the mobile app attended 0.40 times fewer in-person visits for follow-up care and sent more emails to their [health care professionals](#) during the first 30 days after surgery than did patients in the in-person follow-up group. The [mobile app](#) group was more likely to agree or strongly agree that their type of follow-up care was convenient. Complication rates and patient satisfaction scores were comparable between the groups.

"These are important findings given the current demands on the health care system and the push toward patient-centric care," the authors write.

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