

# Protecting your electronic health records

February 19 2018, by Julie Davis, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—An electronic health record, or EHR, is the digital version of the paper records documenting your health care. These online records are an advance in health management in many ways.

These records mean fewer and shorter forms to fill out at appointments. Your information gets to all of your providers so they can coordinate your care and prevent problems like harmful drugs interactions. You won't need to repeat tests for different doctors because they all have access to all of your results. And you can more easily access your records to better track your care.

Electronic health records can improve:

- Your care and care coordination.
- Your role in your care.
- The accuracy of your diagnoses.
- Health care costs.

But what about the safety of your records?

HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules were enacted to keep your health information secure, requiring [health care providers](#) and health plans to safeguard both paper and electronic records. Providers must assess the security of their EHR systems, follow technical safeguards, and have risk-management policies and procedures in place to evaluate, address and prevent risks.

They must also notify you and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services of any breach, plus notify the media and the general public if the breach affects more than 500 people.

Portal security safeguards should include:

- Instituting controls, including passwords.
- Encrypting your information.
- Doing audit trails to look for hackers.
- Ensuring that computers that can access your health records can't

be used by unauthorized people.

While there's still a learning curve for both patients and doctors, [electronic records](#) offer benefits now and in the future.

**More information:** HealthIT.gov details HIPAA (1996's Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) regulations and how your information is protected on [electronic health records](#).

Copyright © 2018 [HealthDay](#). All rights reserved.

Citation: Protecting your electronic health records (2018, February 19) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-02-electronic-health.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--