

Accessing Your Personal Health Information Online

iCON Digital Health Literacy, 2023



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA
Department of Emergency Medicine
Faculty of Medicine

Acknowledgements

This digital health literacy curriculum was developed by The University of British Columbia's interCultural Online health Network (iCON).

iCON is supported by the B.C. Ministry of Health's *Patients as Partners* initiative.

iCON has been working with multicultural communities for over 10 years.

iCON helps people with chronic disease self-management.

iCON also helps people develop digital literacy in order to access, assess, and use health resources online.



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Thank you to the BC Ministry of Health Patients as Partners Initiative for their support.

Learning objectives

- Understand what personal health information is and how you can access yours online.
- Learn about how your personal health information is protected online.
- Get an introduction to Health Gateway and how it can be used.



Outline

- What is personal health information?
- How can you access your personal health information online?
- Example: Accessing your lab results online
- How can you protect your personal health information online?
- Example: Health Gateway

What is personal health information?



What is personal health information?

- Personal health information is any sensitive information that can be used to identify you and link you to any of your medical information or services you have received.

What is personal health information?



Medical History



Medication



Lab Results



Immunization Records



Health Services



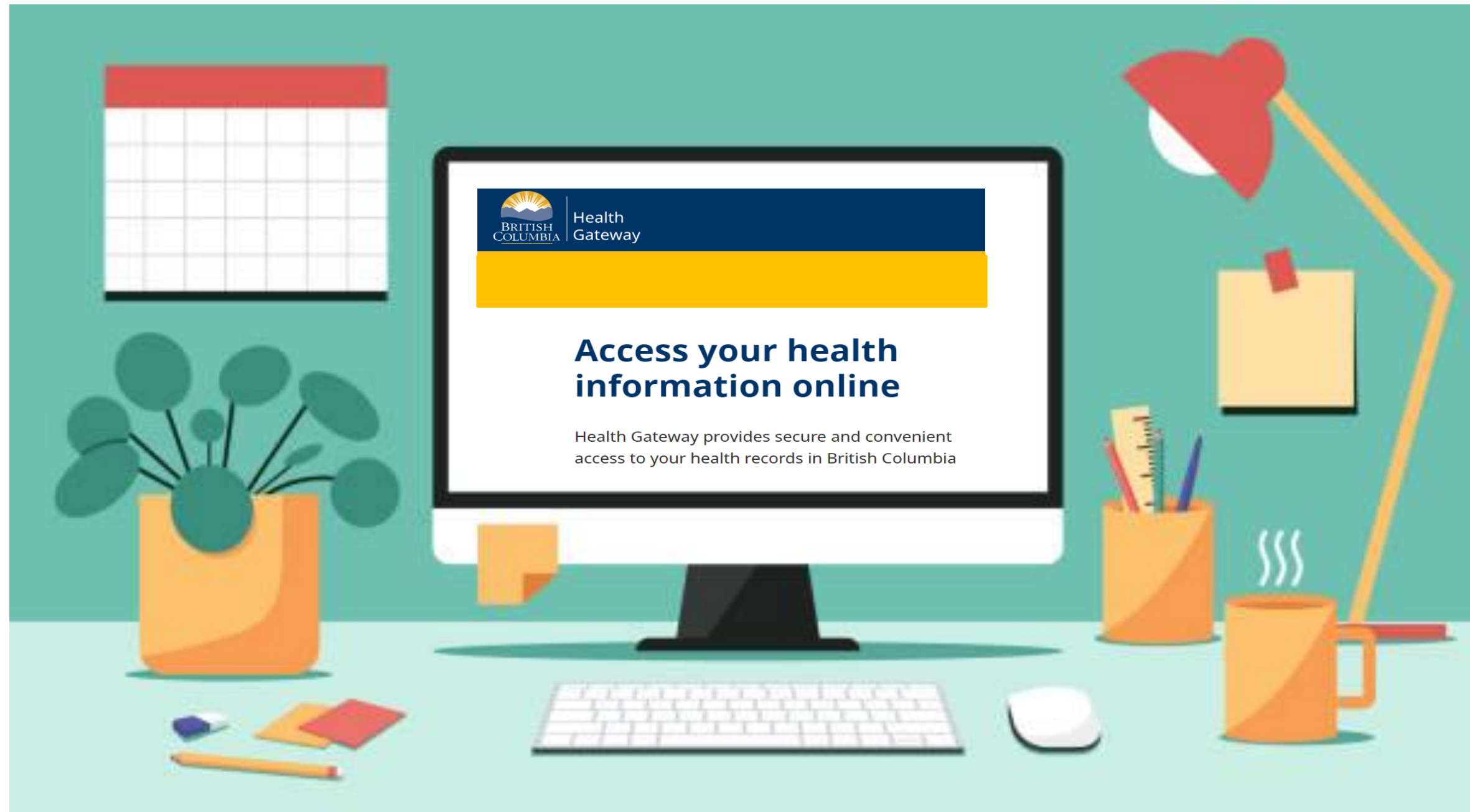
Identifying Information

How is your personal health information stored?

- Your personal health information is compiled into health records by clinics, hospitals, and other health service providers. Health records are used by health care providers to help manage your care and understand your medical history.



Have you ever accessed your personal health information online?



How can you access your personal health information online?



How do you access your personal health information online?

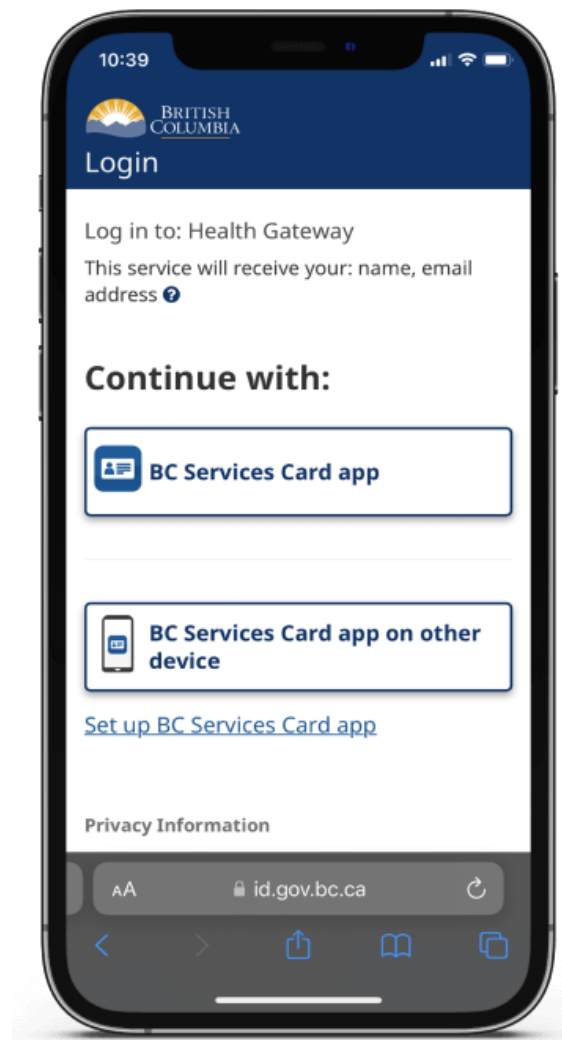
You can access your personal health information online using a range of platforms and tools, which are digital ways to store and organize individual health information.

- **Health information platforms** are provided by trusted health organizations to access personal health information online, such as test results and medical history.
- **Health information tools** are used to input and manage your personal health information on your own digital devices.

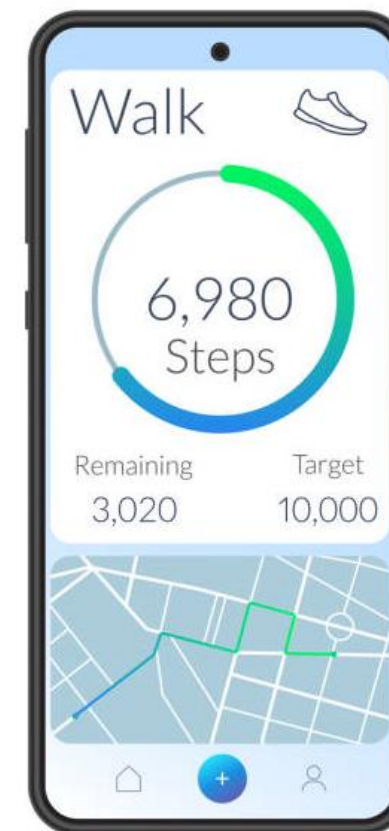


Accessing your personal health information online

Platforms

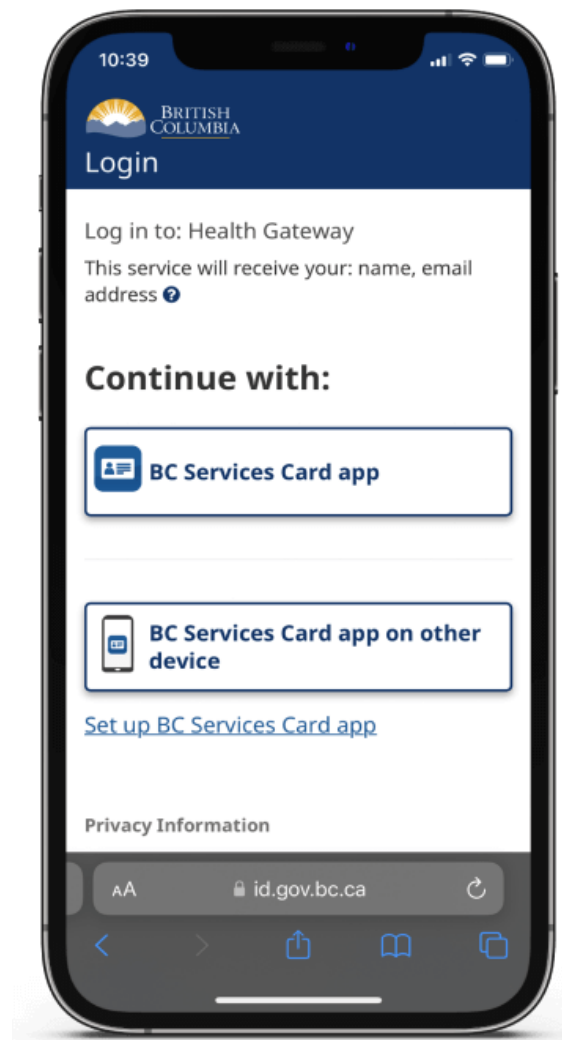


Tools

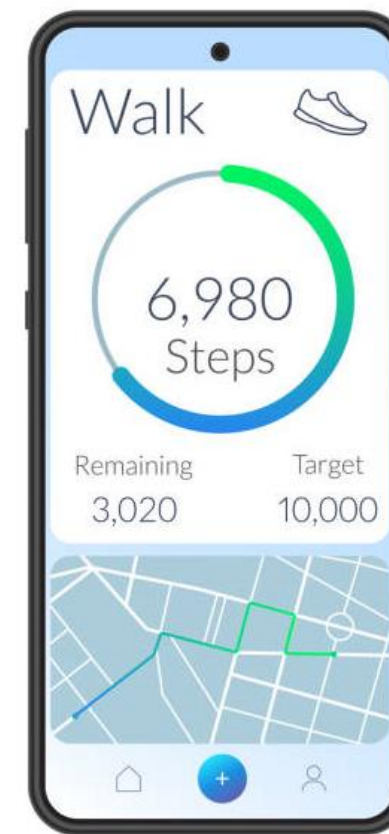


Accessing your personal health information online

Platforms



Tools



Benefits of accessing your personal health information online

- Easy and quick access to your personal health information.
- Convenient as all your information is stored in one location.
- Easier access to more of your personal health information helps you to coordinate your care.
- Encourages collaboration and patient participation in managing care.

Limitations of accessing your personal health information online

- Digital platforms are still being expanded to include more types of health information. This means that you may not be able to find all of your health information online at this time.
- Continual learning is needed as the platform gets new updates.
- No clinical guidance and explanation while viewing your results online (before you discuss your results with your health care provider).
- Different precautions are needed to protect your personal health information online compared to paper health records.

Example:

Accessing your lab results online



What lab results are available?



You can access your lab results using several different platforms depending on where you got your testing done.

Some types of lab results that are available online include:

- Blood or urine tests
- Cervix or colon cancer screenings
- Pathology tests




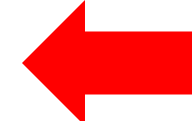
What information can you see about your lab results?



 **Hematology Lab Results** 2023-Jan-27
Order Status: Completed 

Collection Date: 2023-Jan-27

Ordering Provider:

Reporting Lab: LifeLabs






Find resources about your lab tests.  



 [DOWNLOAD FULL REPORT](#) 

Follow the instructions from your health care provider. When needed, they can explain what your results mean.

Remember:

- **Ranges** are different between laboratories
- **“Out of range”** results may be **normal** for you

Test Name	Result 	Status 
Vitamin B12	Out of Range 	Completed 
CBC & Differential	In Range	Completed 

 Write a comment 

Understanding your results

- Usually, some guiding information on how to understand your results will be available on the platform.
- Your health care provider will also receive your test results. If there is a result that requires attention or further action, your health care provider will contact you quickly to take any necessary next steps.
- You are encouraged to discuss your lab results with your health care provider at your next appointment, so they can help you understand what it means for you.

Understanding your results



70 years
old

Male

Heart
condition

Understanding your results

- Every person's baseline health is unique.
- Multiple factors like age, gender, health status, pre-existing conditions (diabetes, high blood pressure, etc.) can influence your health.
- Even though your results says "out of range", this may be normal for you. Your health care provider will be able to explain what your results mean for you.

How can you protect your personal health information online?



How is your personal health information protected online?

- By law, organizations that store your personal health information are required to comply with rules and policies to keep your information safe.
- Credible organizations, such as government institutions and regional health authorities, can be trusted to keep your personal health information safe and secure.

How can you protect your personal health information online?

You can protect your personal health information online by taking these measures:

- Choosing to use trusted platforms
- Being careful about sharing sensitive information
- Using a strong password
- Setting up multi-factor authentication

Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform

More trustworthy:



Less trustworthy:



Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform

More trustworthy:



- Primarily aims to provide access to personal health information, not to get money or sell products.



- Is from a reputable organization.



- Is endorsed by health professionals you trust.



- Clearly explains how your information will be protected in a privacy policy.



Less trustworthy:



- Primarily aims to get money or sell products.



- Is not from a reputable organization.



- Is not endorsed by health professionals you trust.

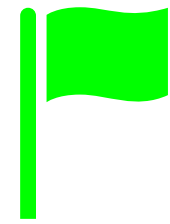


- Is not clear about how your information will be protected, and may not have a privacy policy.



Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform

Websites with these endings **might be more** trustworthy:



website.gov = government information

website.org = usually a not-for-profit organization

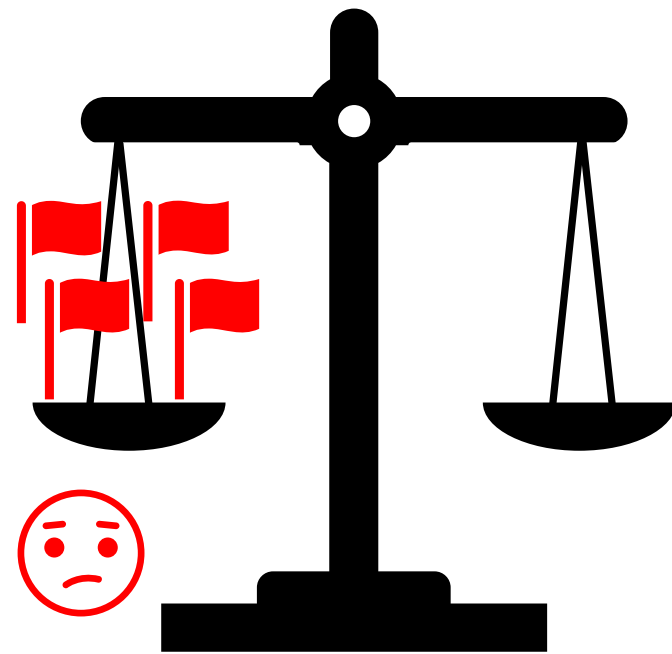
website.edu = an educational institution such as a university

Websites with this ending **might be less** trustworthy:



website.com = a commercial business

Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform



Less
trustworthy



May or may not
be trustworthy

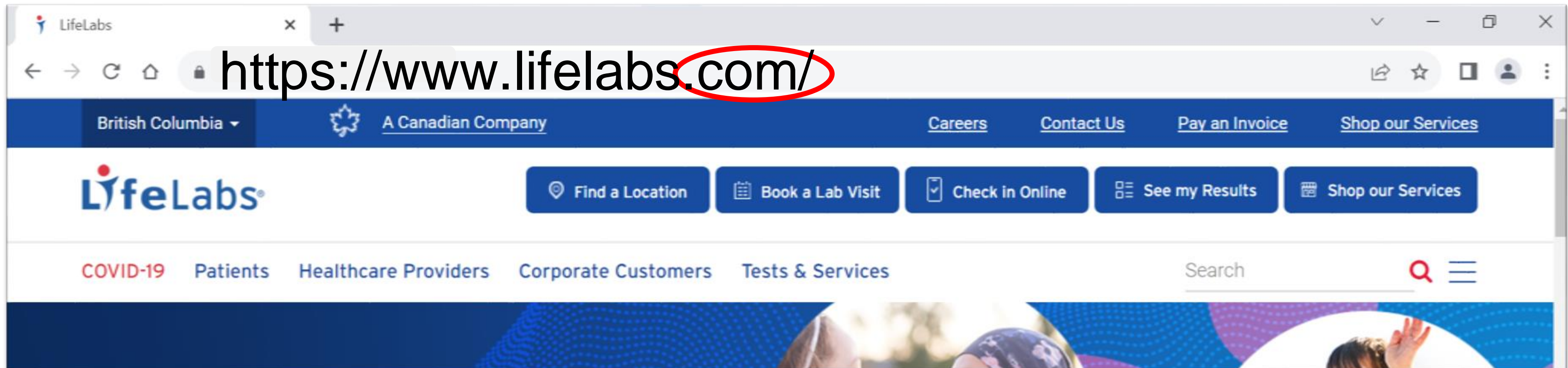


More
trustworthy

Green Flags : more trustworthy. 

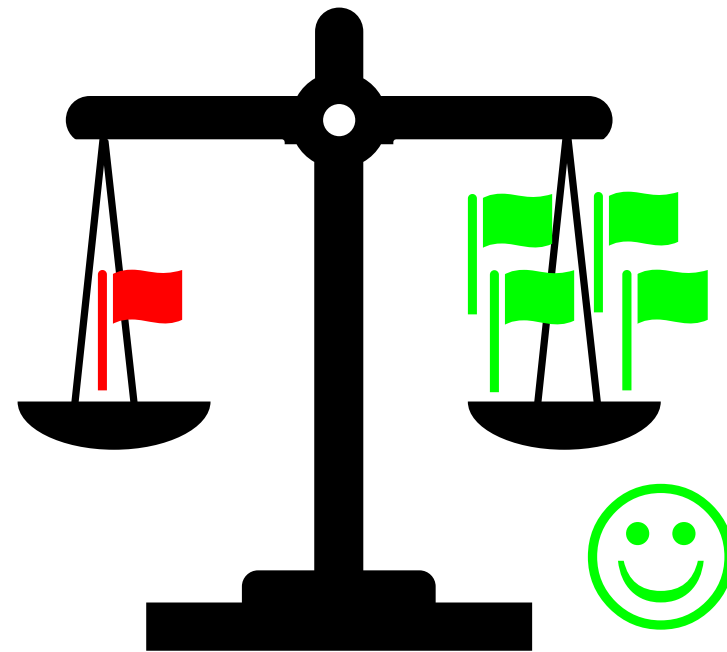
Red Flags : less trustworthy. 

Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform



Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform

English ▾ | [About Us](#) | [Accessibility](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms of Use](#) |
[Report A Vulnerability](#) | [Support](#) | [FAQ](#) | [Site Map](#)



Protecting yourself: Choose a trusted platform

- If you are unsure about whether a platform is trustworthy, ask someone you trust for help to determine if it is safe to use.

How can you protect your personal health information online?

You can protect your personal health information online by taking these measures:

- Choosing to use trusted platforms
- Being careful about sharing sensitive information
- Using a strong password
- Setting up multi-factor authentication

Protecting yourself: Avoid sharing sensitive information

Be cautious if you are asked to share sensitive information, such as:

- Date of birth
- Address
- Personal Health Number (PHN)
- Social Insurance Number (SIN)
- Identification documents, such as passport or driver's license
- Personal financial information

How can you protect your personal health information online?

You can protect your personal health information online by taking these measures:

- Choosing to use trusted platforms
- Being careful about sharing sensitive information
- Using a strong password
- Setting up multi-factor authentication

Protecting yourself: Use a strong password

To create a strong password, follow these tips:

- Try to make a password that cannot be easily guessed (avoid including personal information).
- Use different passwords on different account and devices.
- Keep your password private.
- Use a minimum of 15 characters.
- Use a combination of upper and lower case letters.
- Include at least one number and one character, like !, # or \$.

How can you protect your personal health information online?

You can protect your personal health information online by taking these measures:

- Choosing to use trusted platforms
- Being careful about sharing sensitive information
- Using a strong password
- Setting up multi-factor authentication

Protecting yourself: Use multi-factor authentication

Multi-factor authentication is when you are asked to use a password and verify your identity using another method to log in to your account.

Ways to verify your identity can include:

- Sending an alert to your device
- Asking you to enter a one-time code sent by email, text, or phone call
- Asking you to unlock your device using your fingerprint or device passcode



Protecting yourself: Use multi-factor authentication



Example: Health Gateway



(Author unknown, n.d.)

What is Health Gateway?

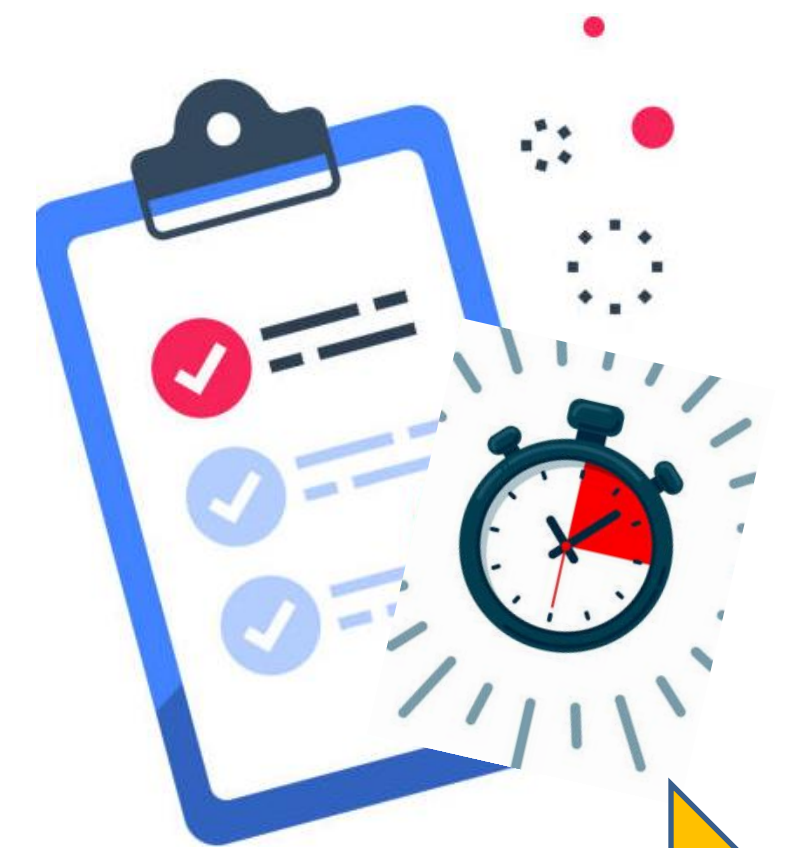
- Health Gateway is a platform developed by the B.C. provincial government for users to access their personal health information online.
- Health Gateway allows you to access many types of your personal health information in one convenient digital location.

What can you access using Health Gateway?

Through Health Gateway, you can access your:

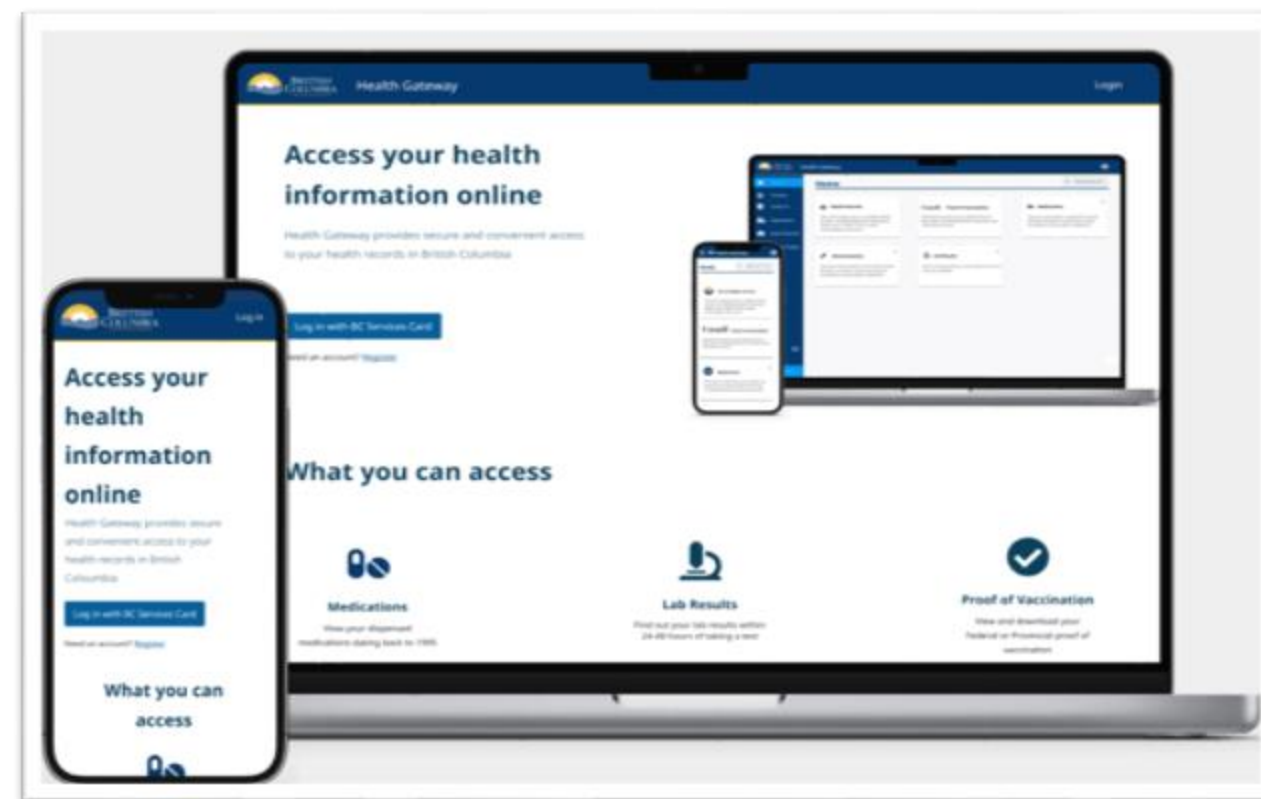
- Health and hospital visits
- Medications
- Lab results
- Immunization history
- COVID-19 proof of vaccination and test results
- And more...

When could you use Health Gateway?



How do you access Health Gateway?

- You can access Health Gateway either using the Health Gateway app or by visiting their website: <https://www.healthgateway.gov.bc.ca/>



Accessing Health Gateway



Accessing Health Gateway: Logging in

There are several steps required to login to Health Gateway. These steps protect your privacy by ensuring that only you can log in to your account.

There are two ways to verify your identity:

- Using the B.C. Services Card app on your mobile device
- Entering a username, password and a code from a small device called a B.C. Token

For more information: <https://id.gov.bc.ca/account/setup-instruction/>

Health Gateway: Using the platform

The screenshot displays the Health Gateway platform interface. At the top left, the British Columbia logo and 'Health Gateway' text are visible. A navigation menu on the left includes Home, Timeline, COVID-19, Dependents, Services, and Export Records. The main content area is titled 'Home' and features a grid of service tiles: Health Records, Canada Proof of Vaccination, HealthLinkBC, Organ Donor Registration, BC Vaccine Card, Health Visits, Clinical Documents, and My Notes. A 'Feedback' button is located at the bottom left, and a footer contains links for Terms of Service, Release Notes, About Us, and FAQ, along with the email address HealthGateway@gov.bc.ca.

Health Gateway

Home + ADD QUICK LINK

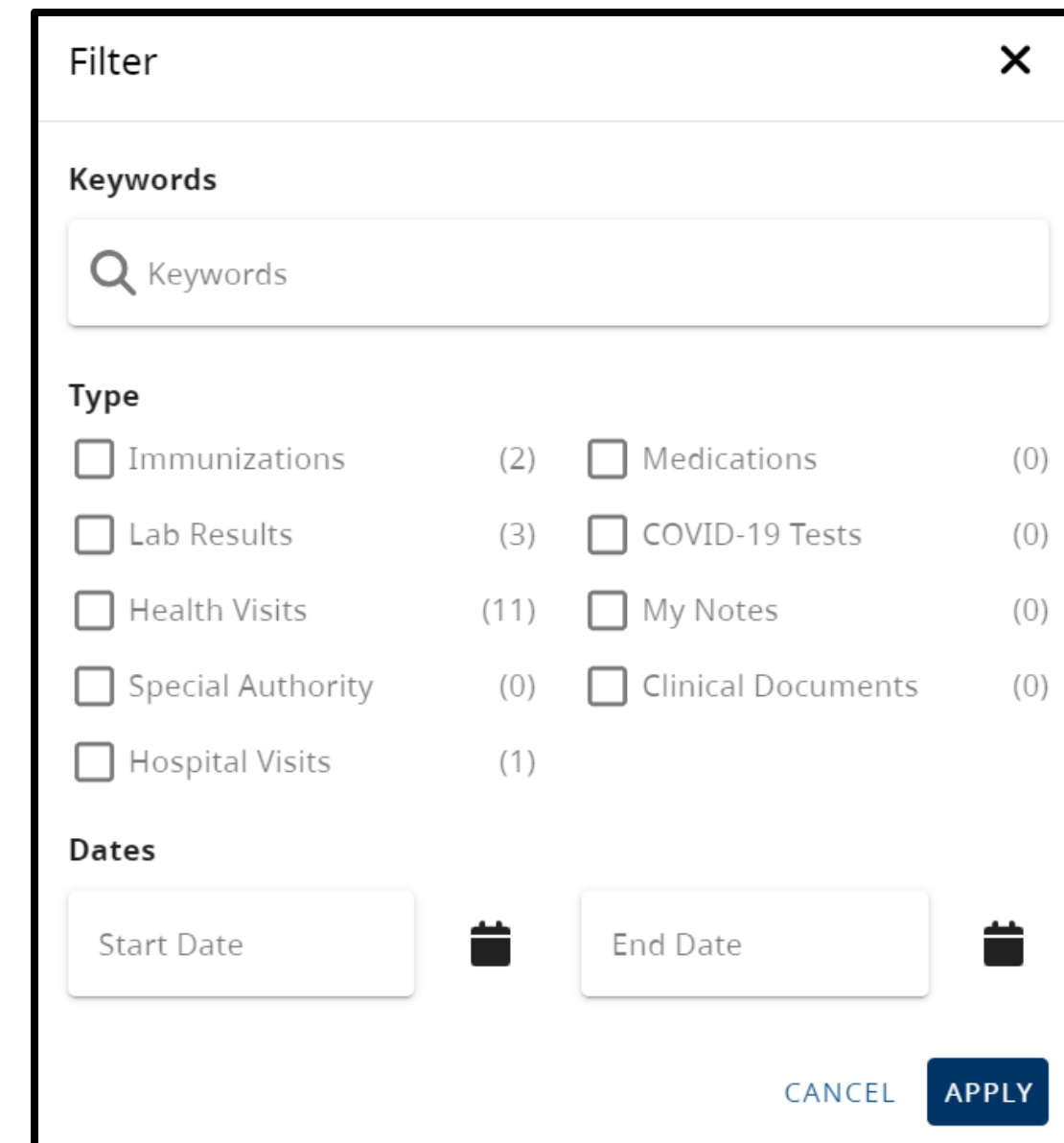
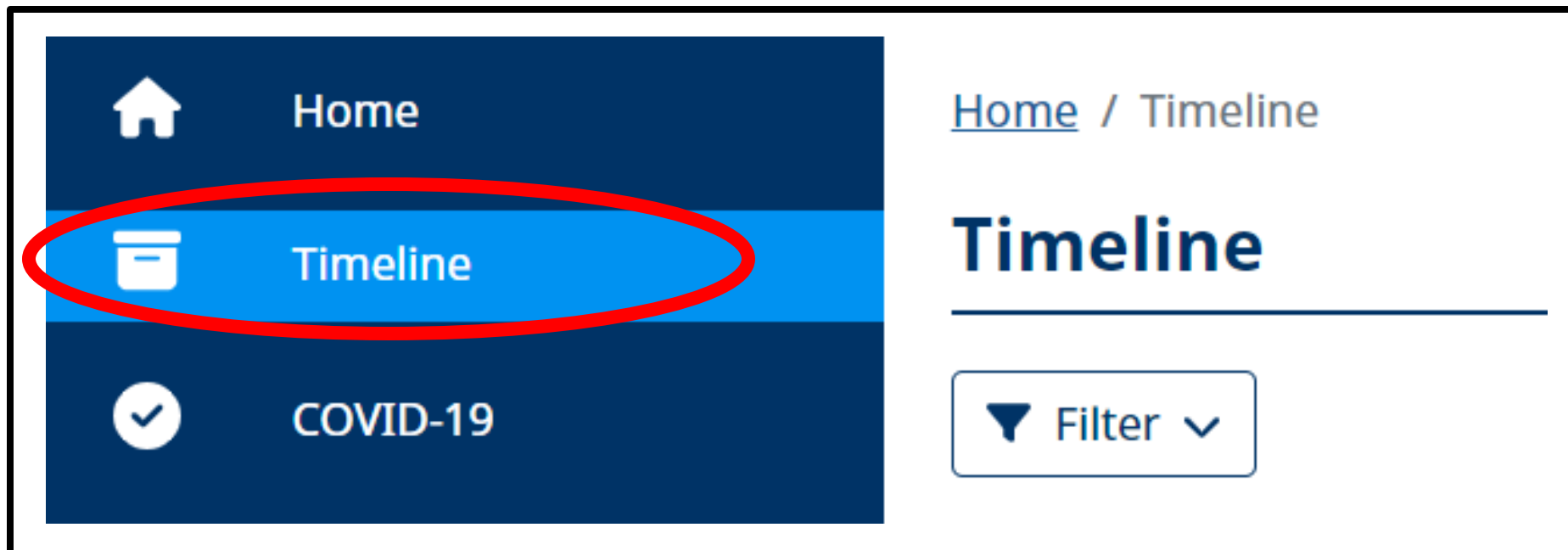
- Health Records**
View and manage all your available health records, including dispensed medications, health visits, COVID-19 test results, immunizations and more.
- Canada Proof of Vaccination**
Download and print your Federal Proof of Vaccination for domestic and international travel.
- HealthLinkBC**
Register on the Health Connect Registry to get a family doctor or nurse practitioner in your community.
- Organ Donor Registration**
Check whether you are registered as an organ donor with BC Transplant. If you are registered, you can review the details of your decision.
- BC Vaccine Card**
View, download and print your BC Vaccine Card. Present this card as proof of vaccination at some BC businesses, services and events.
- Health Visits**
See the last seven years of your health visits billed to the BC Medical Services Plan
- Clinical Documents**
View documents shared by your care providers. You can get consultation notes, hospital discharge summaries, outpatient clinic notes and more.
- My Notes**
Create and edit your own notes on your health records

[Feedback](#)

[Terms of Service](#) [Release Notes](#) [About Us](#) [FAQ](#) [Email: HealthGateway@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HealthGateway@gov.bc.ca)

Health Gateway: Using the platform

- On the platform, you can filter through your records to find what you are looking for using the “Timeline” tab.



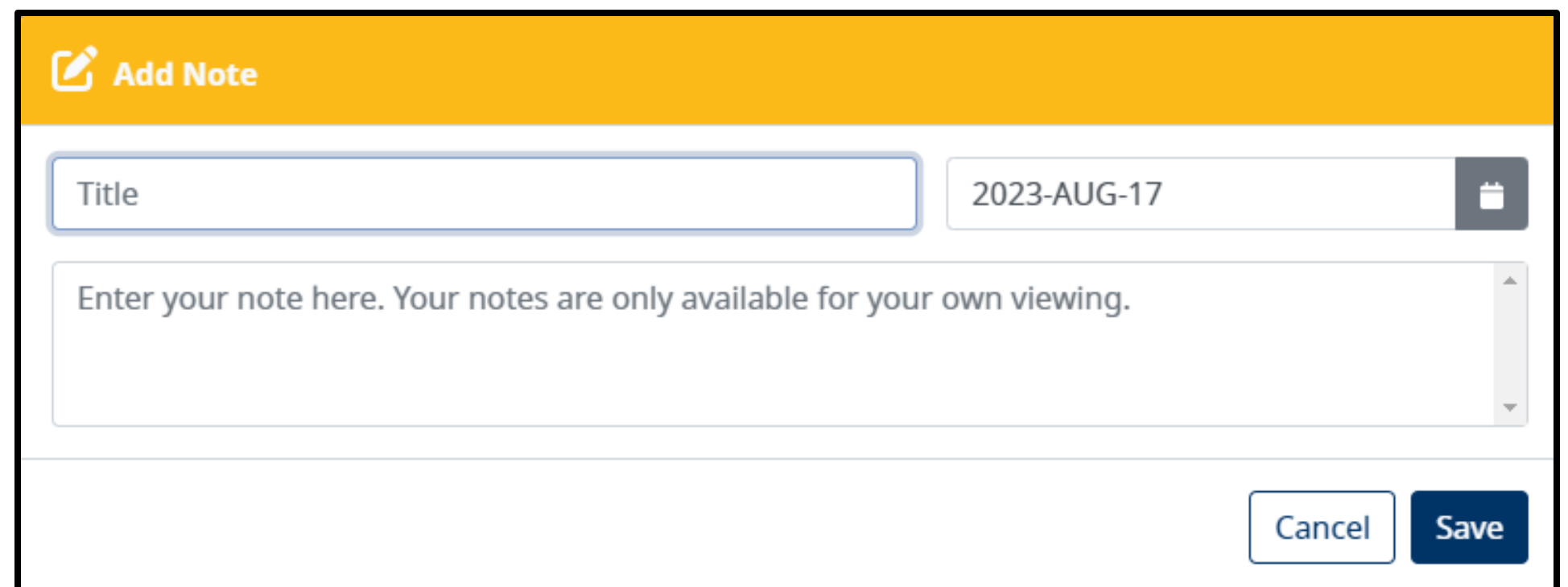
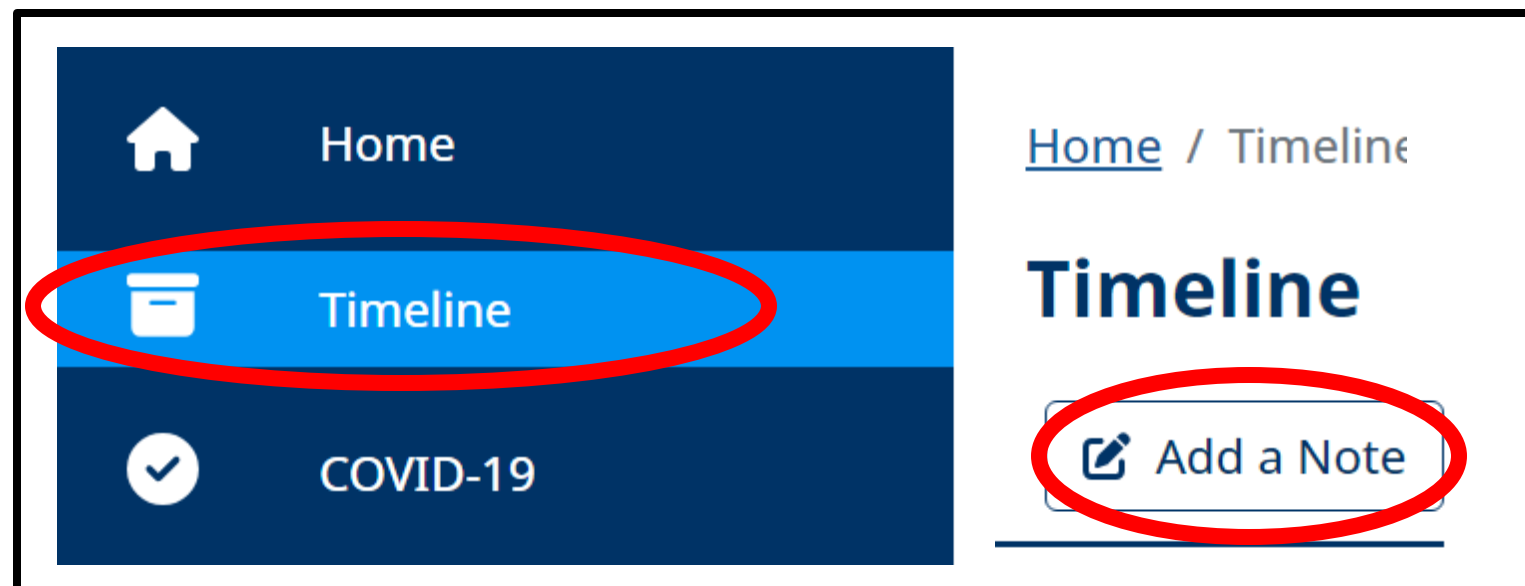
A screenshot of the 'Filter' dialog box. The dialog has a title bar with 'Filter' and a close button (X). It contains several sections for filtering records:

- Keywords:** A search input field with a magnifying glass icon and the placeholder text 'Keywords'.
- Type:** A list of record types with checkboxes and counts:
 - Immunizations (2)
 - Lab Results (3)
 - Health Visits (11)
 - Special Authority (0)
 - Hospital Visits (1)
 - Medications (0)
 - COVID-19 Tests (0)
 - My Notes (0)
 - Clinical Documents (0)
- Dates:** Two date input fields labeled 'Start Date' and 'End Date', each with a calendar icon.

At the bottom right, there are two buttons: 'CANCEL' and 'APPLY'.

Health Gateway: Using the platform

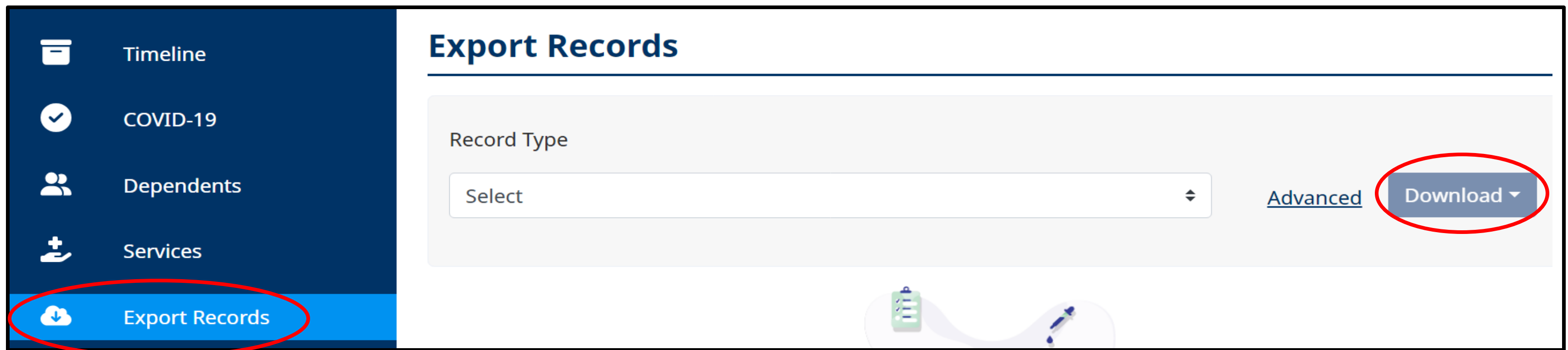
- You can add notes to your timeline and on your results. This can help you to keep track of any information you need to manage your health.
- Only you can see the notes you add (your healthcare providers will not be able to see your notes).



The screenshot shows the 'Add Note' form. It has a yellow header with a pencil icon and the text 'Add Note'. Below the header is a 'Title' input field. To the right of the title field is a date field showing '2023-AUG-17' with a calendar icon. Below these is a large text area with the placeholder text 'Enter your note here. Your notes are only available for your own viewing.' At the bottom right of the form are two buttons: 'Cancel' and 'Save'.

Health Gateway: Using the platform

- You can export your records by downloading a copy of your health records to your device, which you can then print. This allows you to store a copy of your health information outside of Health Gateway.



The screenshot displays the 'Export Records' page in the Health Gateway. On the left is a dark blue navigation sidebar with icons and labels for 'Timeline', 'COVID-19', 'Dependents', 'Services', and 'Export Records'. The 'Export Records' option is highlighted in a lighter blue bar and circled in red. The main content area is titled 'Export Records' and contains a 'Record Type' dropdown menu with 'Select' as the current choice. To the right of the dropdown are the links 'Advanced' and 'Download', with the 'Download' button circled in red. At the bottom of the page, there is a decorative graphic featuring a clipboard and a pen.

General notes

- Health Gateway is meant to be a health management platform for you, which means you cannot delete, edit or add to your actual health records.
- Health Gateway is still being expanded to include more types of health information. This means that you may not be able to find all of your health information online at this time.

Summary



Summary

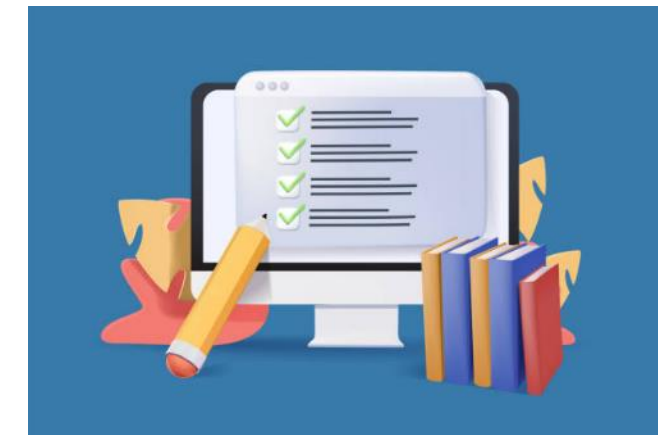
Personal health information is sensitive information used to manage your care.



Ways to access your personal health information online.



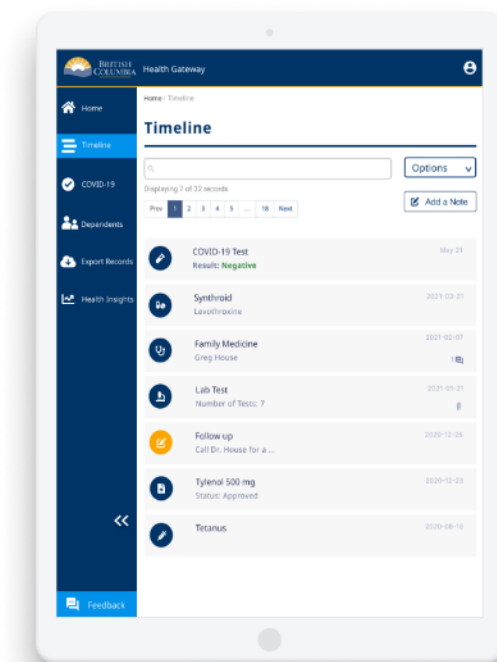
Tips to keep in mind when viewing your lab results online.



How your personal health information can be protected online.



What Health Gateway is and some of its features.



Questions?

- Health Gateway support guide:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/managing-your-health/health-gateway/guide>

Image Credits

- Screen captures were provided by iCON on slides 18, 29-30, 43-44, 46-49.
- Unless cited, the images used in this presentation were from publicly available open sources.



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