

Optimizing Telemedicine in OSTEoarthritis

Telehealth vs Telemedicine

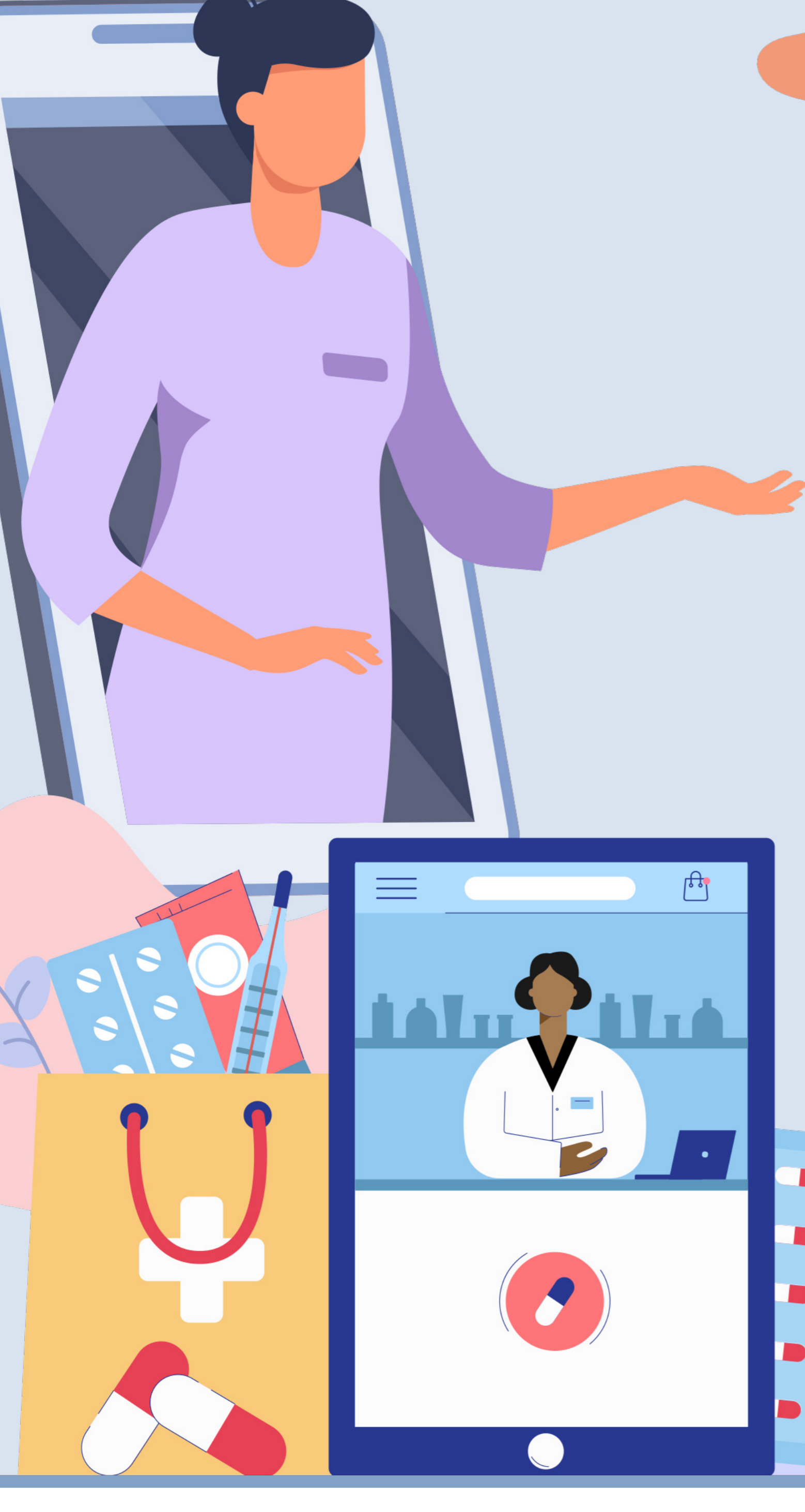
Telemedicine

Using telecommunications technologies to support the delivery of medical, diagnostic, and treatment-related services, usually by doctors.



Telehealth

Involves services provided by different healthcare providers (doctors, nurses, pharmacists, social workers)—all of those who help with patient health education, social support, and medication adherence and troubleshoot health issues for patients and their caregivers.



Benefits of Telehealth in OA

- Patients can attend appointments from the comfort and safety of home
- Physical and occupational therapists can observe and assess the patient's ability to navigate and do self-care in the home
- Arranging transportation, a full day off from work, or child or pet care is not necessary
- Increases access to remote patients
- Reduces potential exposure to respiratory viruses
- Allows family members to participate in care



Clinicians Who Treat OA Can Use Telehealth



Primary Care Physicians



Rheumatologists



Physical Therapists



Dietitians



Psychologists



Nurse/Nurse Practitioners

Using Telehealth in OA

Telehealth can be used in osteoarthritis (OA) to address many patient concerns:

- Seeking treatment advice regarding pain from a past joint injury
- Patient education on reducing risk of OA
- Teaching safe exercises
- Treatment modification discussions
- Addressing a new symptom
- Managing mild side effects from medication
- Patient is unable to drive (either due to joint pain or the effects of pain medications)
- Teaching dietary/nutrition information
- Remote patients



When Telehealth Should Not Be Used in OA:



A physical examination is needed to confirm diagnosis

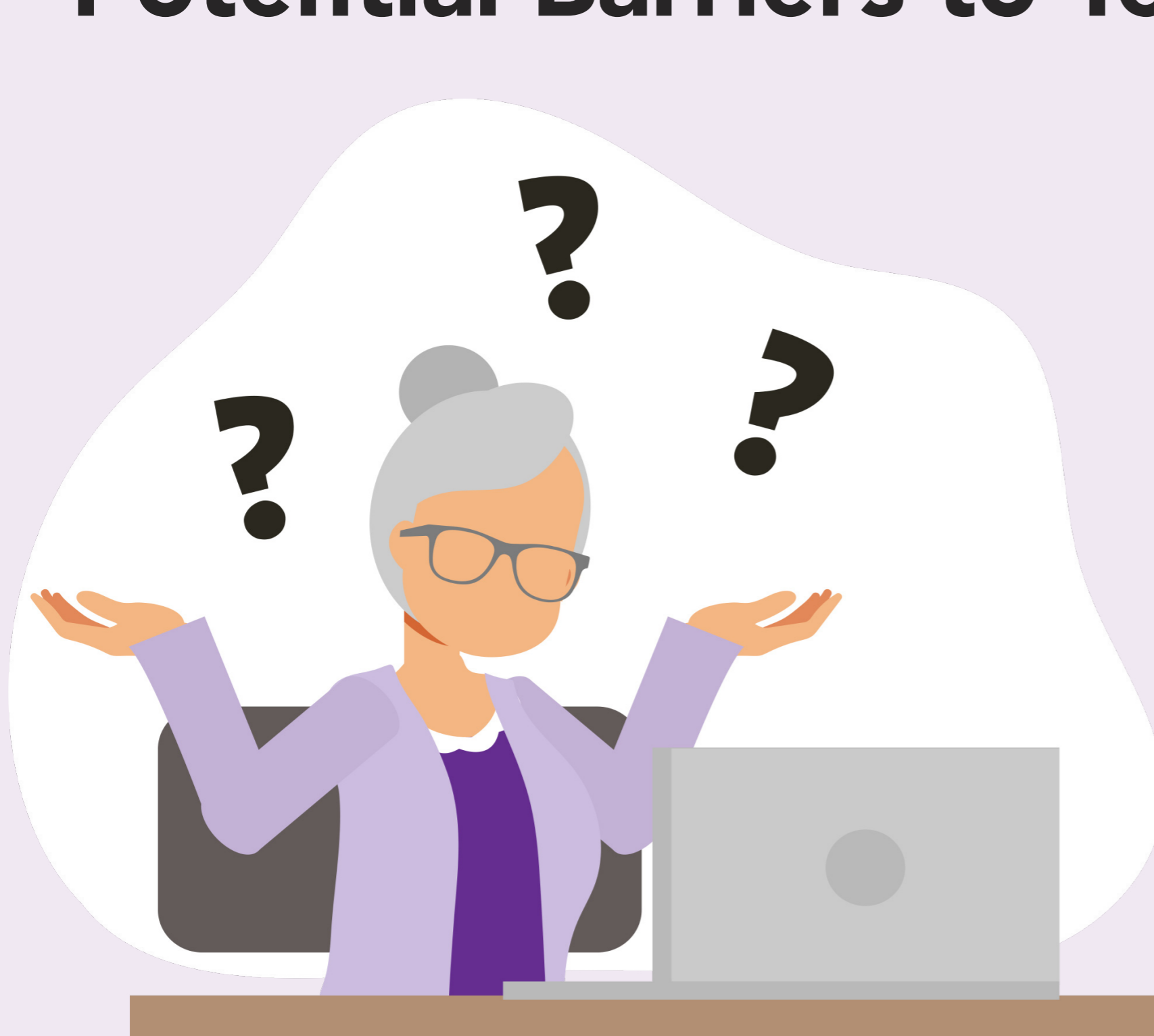


An X-ray or laboratory test is required



Addressing severe medication side effects

Potential Barriers to Telehealth for OA



- Language barriers
- Technical abilities
- Health insurance restrictions
- Lack of access to smartphones, computers, or a data plan
- Lack of a private place in the home for the visit

REFERENCES

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