



## Tech vs COVID-19: TecSalud use a telepresence robot with patients

By using a **telepresence robot**, [TecSalud](#) doctors give remote consultations to patients diagnosed with [COVID-19](#) to prevent the risk of infection and save protective materials.

**Fernando Castilleja**, Director of the Tec Salud Department for Wellbeing and Prevention (Bienestar y Prevención), explained to CONECTA that the robot's name is **A-NÍMO**, which means a friend who provides moral encouragement ('ánimo' in Spanish).

*"The idea of **A-NÍMO** stems from the search for close contact in real time with hospitalized patients for the purpose of **protecting both patients and health workers**,"* points out Castilleja, who is also the COVID-19 contingency plan coordinator [at TecSalud](#).

The robot is in the therapy department at the **San José Hospital**, one of the **TecSalud** hospitals in Monterrey.



## A ROBOT EQUIPPED WITH CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

The **robot**, which is 1.6 meters tall, also has a **loudspeaker and six microphones**, and doctors can turn the volume up or down without any delays in sound reproduction.

Its **two cameras** move up and down to give a **wide view** of the room and enable viewers to **see whether the patient** is sitting or in bed.

*“(Patients can) see the doctor, albeit on the screen, hear their voice and have a conversation. It gives them the **sensation of human contact**,”* said **Martín Hernández Torre**, a pulmonologist at **TecSalud**.

The specialist can **control the robot from a computer** and direct its movements with the mouse.

*“You can drive it as if it were a drone or a remote-control car,”* indicated Hernández.

*“You get a dialog similar to a video call and it also helps us take decisions with support staff like doctors or nurses,”* commented Martínez.

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## **THE BENEFITS**

This robot makes face-to-face doctor-patient consultation possible without their being in the same room. They can even be kilometers apart.

**Hernández Torre** says that the robot uses fewer and makes better use of supplies like masks and gloves during the **COVID-19** emergency.

*“It **increases** the number of **people we can help** without having to expose more people or use more protective equipment,”* he pointed out.

Moreover, **A-NÍMO** has **motion sensors** which help it move freely around the room and its **battery** lasts for **8 hours of continuous** use.

Hernández also mentioned that it is made of **material** that can be **sanitized** in exactly the same way as stretchers, monitors and medical equipment.



It uses special robot-handling software that can be installed on **any computer** and in some cases on mobile devices like tablets and smartphones.

*“With this technology we can **achieve goals** that we thought were **impossible**. It makes these things a reality and we can do them in our community,”* enthused Hernández.

## **OTHER TECSALUD TECHNOLOGICAL TOOLS**

**TecSalud** medical specialists have access to user-friendly tools and platforms for the **remote attention and monitoring** of patients with COVID-19.

*“Using digital platforms has enabled us to set up collaborations with groups from other Mexican states and around the world to share experiences, protocols and research outcomes,”* added Doctor Castilleja.



The **technological tools** the TecSalud COVID-19 team has developed to deal with the emergency include:

- **Assistance by WhatsApp and email.**

The email [covid19@tecsalud.mx](mailto:covid19@tecsalud.mx) provides information and counseling, and 1,400 chats from different Mexican states have been dealt with by **WhatsApp** .

- **Remote monitoring and teleconsultation system**

This service is offered to patients diagnosed with **COVID-19** who are being treated at home. Patients can see how their condition is progressing and keep a record of their symptoms, such as **fever, coughing and difficulty breathing**.

*“Our patients **being treated at home** have responded favorably to these technologies over the short time we’ve been using them. It gives them a way of monitoring their symptoms and getting in touch with a **TecSalud** doctor,” he added.*

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