

Fast Facts

Medical Information

- Internet has allowed all information to be distributed widely in short periods of time
- Not all of this information is accurate
- Medical information is no exception

Things to Consider

- Check website's funding
- Look for an "About This Site" or "About Me" page
- Find credentials for authors
- Sources should be provided for any facts, figures or ideas that are not the author's (which should be distinguishable from the opinions or advice)
- Make sure data is current (written or updated within the past two to three years—should be marked on the page)
- Should have a way for you to contact site owners with any feedback, questions or problems
- Be wary of data provided on websites trying to sell things
- Verify website's claims via research from non-related site
- Look for Health On the Net (HON) Foundation's seal of approval
- Material on websites operated by the government, non-profit health organizations or university medical centers more reliable
- Information found on commercial or individual websites can be useful, but needs to be verified from another source

Tips to Help

- If looking up symptoms on internet:
- Remain calm
 - Is a major or minor issue?
Major issue = seek medical attention immediately
Minor issue = continue search, but remember most likely you are experiencing a common condition, not a rare disorder
 - Besides the internet, try other options, such as an Employee Assistance Program hotline or one of several new apps that allow you to speak to a live, on-call doctor for a nominal fee

Resources

Run by National Institute of Health (NIH):

- MedlinePlus (www.medlineplus.gov)
- DailyMed (www.dailymed.nlm.nih.gov) – sourced from the Food and Drug Administration
- Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS) (www.ods.od.nih.gov)

Other Helpful Sites:

- Mayo Clinic (www.mayoclinic.org)
- John Hopkins (www.hopkinsmedicine.org)
- HealthFinder (www.healthfinder.gov)

Disease Specific Sites:

- Cancer = American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org), National Cancer Institute (www.cancer.gov) or Cancer Care (www.cancercare.org)
- Heart Disease = American Heart Association (www.americanheart.org) or National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (www.nhlbi.nih.gov)
- Diabetes = American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org) or National Diabetes Education Program (www.ndep.nih.gov)

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