



Best Practices for Finding Reliable Medical Information Online

Online research can be a great way to learn more about your cancer. But it's important to make sure the information is reliable.

Here are some tips and best practices for finding medical information online:



Look at the website address (URL): websites ending in “.edu” or “.gov,” for example, are run by organizations like universities or government agencies that are considered reliable sources of information. Websites that end in “.com” or “.org” can also be run by trusted organizations, but it is important to look into the organization if you do not know of it.



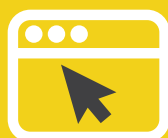
Check whether the information is referenced: reliable websites often note where their information came from as well as when it was last reviewed and updated. Organizations like **Health on the Net** have tools that can check how reliable health websites are.



Explore the motivation behind a website: far-fetched claims, like those of a 'miracle cure,' should make you suspicious.



It's important to take extra care in evaluating information on social media, because misinformation can spread very quickly on these platforms. Social media accounts run by professionals like doctors and scientists, or organizations (like hospitals, universities, government agencies, pharmaceutical companies, cancer professional societies) are typically more reliable resources. Social media can also be an important place to build awareness about diseases, and find community with others going through similar experiences.



Some websites and resources that provide helpful, reliable information include:

- 1** **Cancer.Net:** Cancer information from the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) that has been approved by oncologists
- 2** **Medline Plus:** Cancer information from the U.S. National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health (NIH)
- 3** **National Cancer Institute (NCI):** Cancer information from the NCI, part of the U.S. National Institutes of Health
- 4** **Cancer.org:** Cancer information from the American Cancer Society (ACS)
- 5** **National Comprehensive Cancer Network (NCCN):** Information for people living with cancer and their caregivers, from NCCN, a group of the country's leading cancer centers
- 6** Plain language summaries from medical journals (available online in association with certain scientific journals or from a doctor): Findings from research articles that are summarized simply, so people living with cancer can learn about the latest research on their disease