



Finding Reliable Health Information on the Internet

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ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ... "TELL ME" SITES

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

<http://www.cms.hhs.gov/>

Good overview of topics. A complementary site is Medicare.gov (<http://www.medicare.gov>)

Dr. Weil.com

<http://www.drweil.com/>

The site that launched a thousand "Ask Me" health sites.

Go Ask Alice - Columbia University

<http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/>

Experts answer questions relating to physical and mental health from young adults.

Intelihealth – Aetna and Harvard Medical School

<http://www.intelihealth.com/>

Lots of inter-linked information on commonly-asked about health conditions and issues.
Formatted like a magazine.

Netwellness – University of Cincinnati, Ohio State University, and Case Western Reserve

<http://www.netwellness.org/>

A wealth of health links – the opening page is more of a menu, less of a magazine.

WebMD

<http://www.webmd.com/>

Content is vetted by an independent medical review board. WebMD is associated with MedicineNet.com (<http://www.medicinenet.com>) which is produced by physicians and has been on the Internet since 1996. Its format combines the magazine look with topical menus.



Donsbach.com

<http://www.donsbach.com/>

There is no way to tell who produces this site. Its reliance on lists of links to commercial products as its main source of content is also suspicious. The owner of the site is Kurt Donsbach. I found the site through QuackwatchSM which has been monitoring Donsbach's activities for years (<http://www.quackwatch.org/01QuackeryRelatedTopics/donsbach.html>).



<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>

A mega-website designed for consumers – in English and Spanish. Maintained by the U. S. National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health.

The site has a search box, but you should familiarize yourself with the directories that appear on the MedlinePlus homepage. A good starting point for information on hundreds of subjects is:

▶ **Health Topics**

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/healthtopics.html>

This link leads to a list of broad topics that, in turn, lead to narrower topics. For example, the Cancer link leads to an entire list of types of cancer. On the information pages for each narrowed topic, you will find:

- Basic Information (e.g., overviews, diagnosis and symptoms, treatment);
- Reference Shelf (e.g., dictionaries, directories, organizations, statistics); and
- Research (e.g., clinical trials, research alerts, and **journal articles –see PubMed**).

▶ **Go Local**

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/golocal/index.html>

A feature of MedlinePlus that lets you limit your search to resources from your own state. *Georgia Health - Go Local* went “live” in January 2008.

EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND MATERIALS . . . “TEACH ME” SITES

CHILDREN & PARENTS

Children’s Health Education Center | BlueKids.org

<http://www.bluekids.org/>

Advice, games, and fact sheets relating to health education from the Children’s Health Education Center, an affiliate of the Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin.

Kids Health

<http://www.kidshealth.org/>

Lots of compiled lists – the site relies heavily on pages of text to convey content. Still, the messages and topics addressed are well-written and relevant, and much of the content is available in Spanish. Sponsored by the Nemours Foundation.

Tox Town

<http://toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/>

Invites children to explore sources of pollution by “rolling” the computer mouse over scenes from the city, the farm, etc. There are sound effects, pop-up information windows, and Spanish translations.

ADULTS & GENERAL AUDIENCES

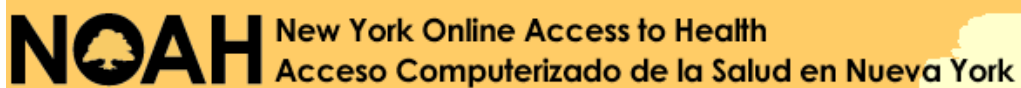


MedlinePlus | Interactive Health Tutorials

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorial.html>

MAYO Clinic | Health Tools | Videos

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/VideoIndexPage/VideoIndexPage>



<http://www.noah-health.org/>

Contains health materials in English and Spanish that the general public from all over the United States will find useful. Developed by contributors from New York City.

PEOPLE, PLACES, PROVIDERS . . . “FIND IT” SITES

America’s Best Hospitals

<http://health.usnews.com/sections/health/best-hospitals>

A long-standing, reliable list of hospitals rated by analysts from *U. S. News and World Report*.

ABMS: Is Your Doctor Certified?

<https://www.abms.org/WC/login.aspx>

Maintained by the American Board of Medical Specialists. Finding a doctor’s name in the registry indicates that s/he is licensed to practice. It does not indicate superior qualifications.

DoctorDirectory

<http://www.doctordirectory.com/doctordirectory/default.aspx>

An independent online directory. It’s free and has received positive reviews over the years. It seems to be underwritten by a group of pharmaceutical companies.

DoctorFinder

<http://webapps.ama-assn.org/doctorfinder/home.html>

Maintained by the American Medical Association. Doctors must register themselves, so a missing name often indicates that the physician did not enter his name into the registry. Finding a doctor’s name in the registry does not indicate superior qualifications.

Health Grades

<http://www.healthgrades.com/>

Get out your credit card – you are asked to pay for comparison reports on physicians, hospitals, nursing homes, and more. QuackwatchSM gives it a “pass.”

DISEASES, DIAGNOSES, DRUGS . . . “LOOK IT UP” REFERENCES

Merck Manuals

<http://www.merck.com/pubs/>

Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy (written for physicians)

<http://www.merck.com/pubs/mmanual/>

Merck Manual of Medical Information – Home Edition (written for the general public)

http://www.merck.com/pubs/mmanual_home/

RxList

<http://www.rxlist.com/script/main/hp.asp>

A highly-rated free online pharmacopeia.

SafeMedication.com

<http://www.safemedication.com/>

A modest amount of information, but includes tips and procedure sheets for managing medications that other sites do not have.



Healthline Directory of Prescription Drugs

<http://usnews.healthline.com/directory/drugs>

Several websites including the U. S. News and World Report “Best Hospitals” page include “Drug Information” links that actually go to the Healthline Directory of Prescription Drugs. This appears to be the contents from the *Multum Drug Directory 2006*.

TESTING NEW TREATMENTS . . . CLINICAL TRIALS SITES

Center WatchSM

<http://www.centerwatch.com/>

A corporate site overseen by Jobson Medical Information. Centers conducting clinical trials pay to be listed on Center Watch. This service guarantees that trials on its listings are approved by internal review boards. International in coverage.

ClinicalTrials.gov

<http://clinicaltrials.gov/>

Tens of thousands of clinical trials in progress in the United States and around the world. The registry includes government and privately supported clinical trials.

DIGGING FOR DATA ON HEALTH . . . GOVERNMENT SITES

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

<http://www.cdc.gov/>

A mega-site of information that takes some time to maneuver. The CDC oversees many government agencies, including the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), listed below.

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>

Part of the CDC (see above entry), but worthy of its own mention as a medical reference. Its content is available in English and Spanish (just click the *NCHS en Español* link).

Regularly updated NCHS reports which can be downloaded from the Web include:

- **FASTSTATS**
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/Default.htm>
- **Health United States 2007** (a 500+ page report – comprehensive in coverage)
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/hus.htm>
- **National Vital Statistics**
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss.htm>

Georgia Department of Community Health

<http://dch.georgia.gov/02/dch/home/0,2467,31446711,00.html;jsessionid=386F3A366C383C7ACB4F8AB169C1A2DB>

Georgia Department of Human Resources | Division of Public Health

<http://health.state.ga.us/>

Online Analytical Statistical Information System (OASIS)

<http://oasis.state.ga.us/>

A website that lets you calculate statistics on public health surveillance and demographics from the Georgia population. Administered through the GA Division of Public Health.

For information on national health issues and statistics, go to:

United States Department of Health and Human Services (<http://www.hhs.gov/>)

Healthfinder

<http://www.healthfinder.gov/>

A guide, directory, and search engine all rolled into one website. Both searching and browsing leads to many external sites. The advantage to using Healthfinder over Google or other commercial engines is that the content to which Healthfinder links has been reviewed for accuracy and reliability. It contains a comprehensive list of organizations. Sponsored by the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion.



The free search tool for finding articles in MEDLINE and a number of other databases maintained by the National Library of Medicine.

HOW TO EVALUATE HEALTH/MEDICAL WEB SITES . . .

Health on the Net Foundation's Code of Conduct (referred to as the HONCode)

<http://www.hon.ch/HONcode/Conduct.html>

Probably the most widely-known and accepted set of principles for judging health web sites.

QuackwatchSM

<http://www.quackwatch.com>

Links to questionable medical practices. Operated by the Consumer Federation of America.

GENERAL SEARCH ENGINES . . .

About.com, Google, and Yahoo

All have health directories. Here you can find general information, usually well presented. Look for the credentials of the author. For example, here's an article called "Understanding Your Doctor's Prescription" at http://drugs.about.com/od/medicationabcs/a/How_To_Read_Rx.htm It is written by an MD and reviewed by a second MD.

To find organizations or advocacy groups in Google, use the Advanced search and limit to **.org** sites. To find government sites, do the same, but limit to **.gov** sites.

Copy of this list in pdf is on this website:

<http://www.valdosta.edu/mlis/faculty/ondrusek/index.shtml>