

Finding Accurate Health Information on the Internet

With the Internet, the world is at your fingertips, information is limitless. But is all the information good? When seeking out information online, especially health information, it's helpful to have a discerning eye!

All Information is NOT Created Equal

When searching for information online, consider the source. The most reputable sources of information will be impartial, unbiased and probably less than sensational in reporting their findings. These sources may include **academic & government** institutions and **peer-reviewed journals**. Less reputable sources of information will be more likely to try to sell a particular perspective or product. These sources may include **companies, individuals** and **unaffiliated** sites.

What's in a Name?

Your name is your reputation in so many aspects of life and the Internet is no different. Let the website's name and other pertinent information lead your investigation as to whether the site is reputable.

- .com – Commercial, for-profit site
- .gov – Government, federal & state
- .edu – Educational institution
- .org – Industry standard or non-profit
- .state.tx.us – State government, specifically Texas
- Check the author
- Check the sponsor
- Check the date the information was last updated
- Check for misspellings & poor grammar
- Check for absolute words

Remember When Phones ONLY Made Telephone Calls?

The Internet is shifting so that mobile devices have more capability to access information on the web. These devices may also be used to store and track information. Experiment with your own device and see if it may be able to access **mobile websites**; set **alarms** to remind you to do important things; and make **notes** about personal health information.

The Moral of the Story

- **Do your homework** – Actively participate in your own health and wellbeing and online resources can help you be better informed.
- **Be smart** – Make good decisions about information using what you've learned today.
- **Speak up** – Your computer didn't go to medical school! Share the information you find online with your health provider and discuss what it means.