



# The 10 top medical web sites

**Here are the 10 best places to find accurate health information**

We all love to seek health advice from the search engine sage known as Google. But how do we know that the mountains of information it delivers to us is the latest and best information? That was the question the Medical Library Association was pondering when they developed their “Top 10” list of medical Web sites. Using a strict criteria of credibility, authorship, content, currency, purpose, and design, the MLA has elected to call these the best consumer Web sites.

**www.cancer.gov**

The National Cancer Institute, part of the National Institutes of Health, supports research, training and public information. A great feature on their Web site is access to the NCI publications “What You Need To Know” and the “PDQ (physician data query) on Cancer Treatment Summaries.” You can download these from your computer on over 100 types of cancer. You can also search their Web site for clinical trials or call them at **(800) 4-CANCER**.

**www.cdc.gov**

The Centers for Disease Control is a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that is known for its surveillance work in emerging infectious diseases and public health. Their Web site encompasses—among other things—emergency preparedness, genetics, environmental concerns, immunization

safety and health information for travelers. The CDC also publishes valuable health statistics that is available through the MMWR, short for the sobering full title of Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Reports.

**www.familydoctor.org**

This is the family-friendly site brought to you by the American Academy of Family physicians. There is an A to Z topic list that answers a multitude of health questions quickly and easily, as well as other useful tools, such as a body mass index (BMI) calculator and a “Search by Symptom” option. You can find doctors, obtain drug information, or the causes of a dizzying array of diseases and conditions. Available in Spanish as well as English.

**www.healthfinder.com**

Maintained by the National Health Information Center section of the U.S. Department of Health and Human

Services, this site has links to valuable information concerning health fraud, medical errors, health news and health organizations. All are evaluated by the department for reliability of information. The Web site is also available in Spanish.

**www.hivinsite.com**

Called the “gateway to AIDS knowledge,” this site is maintained by the University of California-San Francisco School of Medicine Center for HIV Information. It comprehensively covers news, treatment, prevention, policy analysis and the geographic impact of AIDS worldwide. Most of the content is written by medical doctors, researchers and public health professionals.

**www.kidshealth.org**

KidsHealth is a project of the Nemours Foundation, which was founded in 1936 by the philanthropist Alfred DuPont. Its goal is to improve the health of American children through education, research, clinics and hospitals. The Web site is bright and cheerful with

separate links for children, teens and parents. The children and teen sections are written for the intended grade levels, as well as content and conversational style. Kids’ home page puts tobacco in the spotlight and highlights links that explain how the human body works.

**www.mayoclinic.com**

The world famous Mayo Clinic offers comprehensive search capability to locate information on diseases, conditions, treatments, drugs, as well as tips for weight control and healthy living. There are sections on exploring complementary and alternative medicine, exploring sleep and lifestyle, as well as a healthy recipe center.

**www.medem.com**

Medem Web site is a collaboration of such national physician associations as the AMA, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, and others. Medem was created as a physician-patient communication network and now has 90,000 physicians,

and 45 specialty and state medical societies participating to bring reliable health information to the public. An interesting feature is to request an online consultation with your current physician if they participate in the Medem network.

**www.medlineplus.gov**

MedlinePlus is the Web site for consumer health information from the National Library of Medicine. It offers many interactive health tutorials with sound and videos of surgical procedures such as heart surgery or hip replacement. The NLM also covers more than 700 health topics, drug information, medical encyclopedia and current health news. If you search for a health topic, your results will return with links to additional sources for reliable related information. For example, a search for diabetes linked to meal planning, coping, nutrition, recipes, clinical trials and the glycemic index.

**www.noah-health.org**

New York Online Access to Health (NOAH) welcomes you with English on

the left and Spanish on the right. You can enter their Web site through a listing of health topics or their A to Z index. NOAH provides online access to high quality full-text consumer health information. You can “ask NOAH about” health topics and receive accurate, timely and relevant answers. NOAH is supported by six New York organizations, one of which is the New York Academy of Medicine Library. ♦

Of course, a Web site is no replacement for your health provider, which is why all of these Web sites have a disclaimer. Web sites should not be considered as a substitute for medical consultation, but the information you get from them can certainly provide a good place to start any conversation about your health.