



Finding Health Information You Can Trust



High quality health information can have a big impact on your ability to stay healthy and manage your condition well, giving you a better quality of life.

Below are some questions to ask when you look at health information online to help see if it is reliable.

Who produced the information?

- What are their credentials? Are they qualified health experts?
- Is information about the authors or the site's editorial board easy to find?
- Are the authors or reviewers part of a trusted health institution or organization?
- Who runs the resource or site?

Who is the information for?

- Is the information easy to use and understand?
- Does the information answer your question?
- Is the information relevant to Canada or Quebec?

What kind of information is being presented?

- Does the information provide facts or opinions?
- Is the information complete and balanced? Does it list benefits and risks?
- Does the site or resource present information that seems too good to be true?

How current is the information?

- When was the information published or last reviewed?
- Is the information recent? Has more recent research been done?
- Is the information regularly updated?
- Do the links work?

Where does the information come from?

- Does the information cite many different sources or references?
- What kind of sources are used? Original research studies? Magazine articles? Personal stories?
- How recent are the sources?
- Cross-check the information: can you verify it with at least one other source?

Why has the information been produced?

- What is the purpose of the information or site?
- Who is funding or sponsoring the information or site?
- Does the site explain how it collects and uses personal information?
- Is the site or resource trying to sell you something or persuade you?
- Is any advertising clearly marked?

What about social media?

- Check that social media accounts are official and what they claim to be. For example, check the website of the organization connected to the social media account.
- Follow social media from reputable sources (government, health institutes, etc.).
- Be careful if you follow personal social media accounts:
 - What applies to one person might not apply to you: each person's health history and body are different.
 - You don't know where or how the person got their information.



Always check in with your health care team about the information you find online to make sure it is reliable and applies to you!

For more health information and resources,
contact the librarians at one of the MUHC's Patient Resource Centres:

Montreal Children's Hospital

Family Resource Centre
and Library

bibliofam@muhc.mcgill.ca
mchfamilylibrary.ca

Glen Site – Cancer Mission

Cedars CanSupport
Resource Centre

cedarscansupport@muhc.mcgill.ca
cansupport.ca/resource-centre

Glen Site & Montreal General Hospital

McConnell Patient Resource Centre

crp-prc@muhc.mcgill.ca
muhclibraries.ca/patients

Montreal Neurological Hospital

Infoneuro: Neuro-Patient
Resource Centre

infoneuro@muhc.mcgill.ca
infoneuro.mcgill.ca

References and Further Reading

- Evaluating Health Websites – National Library of Medicine
- Help You Evaluate – Online Health Information Aid
- Evaluating the Credibility of Health Websites: Can You Trust Dr. Google? – CADTH
- Using Trusted Resources – National Cancer Institute
- Public Information – Health Information Week
- Finding and Evaluating Online Resources – National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health

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