Finding Reliable Health Information on the Internet

Using the Internet can be a good way to find information. But all the health information you'll find on the Internet may not be correct. The following questions may help you decide whether you can trust health information you find online.

Where does the information come from?

The Website should clearly show which organization, company or person is responsible for the information.

If a person started the site, the Website show whether a company or organization is helping to pay for it. This is known as sponsoring a Website.

A Website's address, called a "URL" gives you some of this information.

- **.gov** – The government owns or sponsors this Website.
- **.edu** – A public or private school owns or sponsors this Website.
- **.org** – A non-profit organization owns or sponsors this Website.
- **.com** – A business owns or sponsors this Website.

What is the purpose of the Website?

The purpose of the Website should be easy to find. Usually it is found on the page called "About this Site". If the Website has advertisements, these should be separate from the health information.

Is the information reviewed before it is posted to the Website?

The site should include information about the person or people who review the health information before it is posted on the Website.

Some sites may direct you to other Websites for information on the same subject. Use these questions to review the linked sites too.

How often is the information updated or reviewed?

Health information on the Websites should be current, including recent research or news. The date that the information was updated or reviewed should be easy to find. It's often listed at the bottom of the page.

What are "social media" Websites?

Social media Websites are online ways to connect people. They allow people to display information for others to read or watch and to interact by sharing feedback and comments.

Facebook™, YouTube™ and blogs are examples of social media Websites.

- **Facebook™** lets individuals , companies and organizations share timely updates. It is often used to share information with family and friends who live far away.
- **YouTube™** lets individuals , companies and organizations put videos online for the public to watch.
- A **Blog** is a Website that features opinons or news. It may be owned or hosted by an individual, organization or company. Topics vary from personal daily information to specific information about one subject. Readers can share feedback online. For example you can read and share your thoughts with Bowmont Travel Clinic at http://www.bowmonttravel.ca/Blog/.

The following Websites may be helpful

Website's known to have good health information include the following. *

- Health Canada - http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/index-eng.php
- The Canadian Medical Journal - http://www.cmaj.ca/
- The Canadian Pediatric Society - http://www.cps.ca/
- The Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care - http://www.canadiantaskforce.ca/
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada - http://www.heartandstroke.com/site/c.ikIQLcMWJtE/b.2796497/k.BF8B/Home.htm
- The Canadian Diabetes Association - http://www.diabetes.ca/
- The Asthma Society of Canada - http://www.asthma.ca/adults/

If you have questions about health information you find on the Internet, ask your health care provider about it. Website information should not be used to identify (diagnose) or treat any medical or mental health condition.

Please note:
Bowmont Medical Clinic does not sponsor or endorse the listed websites above. Bowmont Medical Clinic cannot guarantee the accuracy of the information on these Websites.

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