



Things to Think About!

Website Reliability - How Do You Know its Good?

By Karen Morgan



Users of the Internet are always initially impressed that they can find useful information of literally any kind. However, with the expanding accessibility of publishing on the internet to the general public, the problem has become one of sifting through a mass of advertising material and vanity publications in order to find information that is both reliable and of high quality. When researching medical information it is important to understand that not all internet web sites are accurate when it comes to medical information. Be cautious of who you trust as a reliable medical resource. The internet can be an invaluable tool but you need to be very, very cautious when you are utilizing the internet for research. Current diagnostic information which would be listed on AMA sites may not be included on other specialty sites appearing as legitimate medical resources. Always check your source! As you evaluate websites for your own personal use there are two very important questions to ask yourself when deciding whether or not to trust the information being provided...

Who is the Author?

The first question is "Who is the author?" Any website attempting to genuinely be of service, in good faith, is not going to have a problem clearly identifying who they are. Look for a website's "Contact" link and also browse through their "About Us" section if they have one. Have they given information about who they are and where they are located? Depending on the nature of the website, this may be a simple identification of the state from which they base their operations or could be a specific mailing address and phone number. It is up to you to decide how comfortable you are with the level of identification they have offered in relationship to the services you are utilizing through their website. Have they included an actual person's name and job title of someone that can be contacted for assistance. Most websites actually want your feedback and are anxious to be contacted by those utilizing their service.



Is the source credible?

The second question is "Is the source credible?" Evaluating credibility may come from introductory notes either on the opening statements of the website's home page or often found in the "About Us" section of a website. You should be able to find where the publisher offers useful scope notes or information about the credentials of the producers. Plainly speaking, are the authors of the content you are relying on qualified to be offering that information? Are they publishing original content based on genuine qualified experience or are they re-dispensing information taken from other sites. If the later is the case, then bypass this middle man and go directly to their source to determine true credibility. Good websites will share a balance between quality original content and offerings of external support links. Consider if the author of the website you are visiting is well known with a good reputation. Serious information websites will focus on their content and not primarily on trying to sell you things.



Check it Out

To help you in finding accurate resources and information, SNRP has been working hard to extensively expand our "Research Links" section.

Visit our website at www.snrproject.com to find new links to resources in your home state.

If you have a specific question that we can answer, please feel free to contact us anytime through the following email address...snrproject@hotmail.com