

Information for patients

Further to our last column about Google, what suggestions should you make to patients who want information on health concerns?

www.familydoctor.org

The patient can Google, of course, but it's preferable to look at critically appraised high-quality resources such as STAT!Ref's American Academy of Family Physicians' Conditions A to Z (2007). This is available to the physician who has logged in to STAT!Ref and gone to the table of contents, but is also available to the patient at www.familydoctor.org. The information is clear and concise with the date created and the date reviewed or updated included. There is a place to click on a print-

er-friendly version or to e-mail the entry if the patient chooses.

www.canadian-health-network.ca

For a Canadian slant, the patient has only to turn to the Canadian Health Network. The information on this web site is especially focused on health promotion and prevention and is available in both English and French. A printer-friendly version is available and a search can be limited to Canadian resources if desired.

www.nlm.nih.gov/ medlineplus/

MedlinePlus is a web site from the world's largest medical library, the US National Library of Medicine. The site

has sections on health topics, drugs and supplements, a medical encyclopedia, and dictionary entries as well as various directories, a news section, and other resources. MedlinePlus is designed to provide up-to-date, authoritative information for patients and health care providers, and it is updated daily.

If patients start their searches with one or more of these web sites, they can feel secure that the information will be both relevant and timely. Physicians should not hesitate to recommend them.

—Linda Clendenning

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—Judy Neill

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