

UpToDate available as Divisions of Family Practice member resource

Physicians rely on technology more than ever to stay current with rapid advancements in best practice recommendations. This is especially true in the busy general practice environment where physicians need to make efficient, informed decisions about diagnoses and drug interactions, and answer

use it to enhance their practice, save time, and increase efficiency and accuracy in decision making. A study from Harvard University demonstrated that use of the tools provided by UpToDate was associated with saving 11 500 lives over 3 years and 372 500 hospital days per year in the United States.²

their overall health can access nearly 1500 patient information articles that can be printed, e-mailed, or discussed during an appointment. These materials are provided at two levels to accommodate patients' learning styles and literacy levels. Basics are handouts for patients who want a brief overview—they are short, written in plain language, and incorporate graphics and visual elements. For patients who want more in-depth information, Beyond the Basics are 5- to 10-page articles containing specific medical terms and links to related professional topics.

All physicians registered with UpToDate can earn CME Mainpro credits by researching clinical questions through the resource. The system tracks and logs physicians' search activity and time spent reading articles and stores the information for up to 2 years.

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clinical questions that come up during each patient interaction. Data from the 2010 National Physician Survey indicated that 69.2% of BC physicians were using online journals, clinical practice guidelines, and medical databases in patient care,¹ a percentage that has almost certainly risen since then.

One of the many digital clinical support resources available to physicians is UpToDate, an online, evidence-based medical information resource through which subscribers can access articles on thousands of clinical topics.

Any physician, resident, or student can subscribe to UpToDate and

UpToDate contains features to help physicians practise more efficiently and make informed diagnoses. In addition to providing answers to clinical questions in an organized, searchable online format, the resource allows physicians to look up drug-to-drug and drug-to-herb interactions immediately, simply by entering a drug name into the search box. As well, more than 135 medical calculators are accessible through the resource, concerning medical measurements for a wide range of topics such as diabetes, pediatrics, and gastroenterology. The calculators can be accessed by typing a description of the calculation into the search box (for example, body mass index or cholesterol). Physicians who want to help patients learn more about managing their condition or improving

Access for members of divisions of family practice

While all physicians can subscribe to UpToDate, members of local divisions of family practice can access this resource at no cost to themselves through a group subscription funded by the provincial Divisions of Family Practice office. Divisions of Family Practice is an initiative of the joint Doctors of BC/Ministry of Health General Practice Services Committee (GPSC).

Division members who register for UpToDate through the Divisions of Family Practice website are able to use all of the resource's clinical tools and articles on their home and office computer, as well as via the UpToDate mobile app, UpToDate Anywhere (Divisions of Family Practice provides the only group subscription in

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Physician wellness: A challenging search

the province that includes access to the UpToDate Anywhere app). To register for access to UpToDate or to learn more about becoming a member of your local division and accessing this resource, visit www.divisionsbc.ca.

UpToDate toolkit

The provincial office of the Divisions of Family Practice has created a helpful toolkit that individual divisions can use to inform members about UpToDate and familiarize physicians with the clinical tools provided by the resource. The toolkit contains a comprehensive overview of UpToDate, a series of prewritten newsletter and website articles, and a link to a video in which BC physicians speak about how UpToDate has helped them improve patient interactions and practise more efficiently. Visit www.divisionsbc.ca/provincial/up-todate-toolkit to view the UpToDate toolkit and learn more.

—**Shelley Ross, MD**
GPSC Co-chair

References

1. College of Family Physicians of Canada, Canadian Medical Association, Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. National Physician Survey. 2010. Accessed 18 February 2014. www.nationalphysiciansurvey.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/2010-ProvBC-Q29.pdf.
2. Isaac T, Zheng J, Jha A. Use of UpToDate and outcomes in US hospitals. *J Hosp Med* 2012;7:85-90.

At a recent Finding Medical Evidence session presented by College librarians, a doctor mentioned that it is difficult to search for articles on physician wellness. Using the Medline database through the College's website (www.cpsbc.ca/library/search-materials/databases), a search for the phrase *physician wellness* returns only 17 results. This phrase doesn't map to a MeSH term—that is, Medline has not designated an official term for this concept.

There is an official term for *physicians*, which can be modified with the subheading *psychology*, producing many articles of interest. However, wellness is not just about psychological distress.

To broaden the search, try combining the *physicians* topic with terms such as *occupational exposure*, *occupational diseases*, or *radiation injuries*. There is also a term for *infectious disease transmission*, *patient-to-professional*. One can look on the bright side with terms such as *resili-*

ence, *psychological*, *health promotion*, or *personal satisfaction*.

If you are searching for articles on stress, you can go beyond the term *stress*, *psychological*. Additional terms include *burnout*, *professional*, *work schedule tolerance*; and *fatigue*.

If you encounter any other challenging searches, College registrants are welcome to ask the library for assistance. We can make recommendations and help you develop an effective search strategy.

Here are a few recent articles available online or by request from the library:

- Dyrbye LN, Varkey P, Boone SL, et al. Physician satisfaction and burnout at different career stages. *Mayo Clin Proc* 2013;88:1358-1367.
- Goetz K, Musselmann B, Szecsenyi J, et al. The influence of workload and health behavior on job satisfaction of general practitioners. *Fam Med* 2013;45:95-101.
- Zwack J, Schweitzer J. If every fifth physician is affected by burnout, what about the other four? Resilience strategies of experienced physicians. *Acad Med* 2013;88:382-389.

—**Niki Baumann**
Librarian

This article is the opinion of the Library of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC and has not been peer reviewed by the BCMJ Editorial Board.



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