

Using the Internet to Access Health Information



**Ellen Maleszewski
Medical Librarian
VA Medical Library
(631) 261 – 4400 Ext. 2962**

Evaluating Websites

When looking at Webpage you have to use the “Who What When Where Why and How” criteria because it is harder to see who is behind the authoring on the Internet and easier to publish and have mass distribution. When Looking at WebPages you need to keep these principles in mind:

ACCURACY

- Are there typographical, grammatical or spelling errors.
- Are Sources of information displayed
- Does the web page load quickly?

AUTHORITY

- Authors name and qualifications should be clearly stated.
- The purpose should be clearly articulated.
- Contact information should be available.
- Copy write should be clearly stated

COVERAGE

- Is the website complete or under construction
- Is there a print equivalent available?
- How do other websites compare?

CURRENCY

- When was the page written and last revised
- Date for any statistical data

OBJECTIVES

- What is the intended audience?
- Is advertising clearly delineated

Ten Tips for webpage evaluation

1. Look for spelling errors
2. When was it last updated and when was it created
3. What institution supports it
4. What are the qualifications of the author
5. Does the author’s email address appear, and if so does it match the web address (i.e. ellen.Maleszewski@med.va.gov works at the VA- www.va.gov)
6. If this page is part of a larger institution, can you get to it from the institution’s homepage
7. Is it easy to read? Does it take too long to download.
8. Are there feedback forms? Is there a separate author and webmaster? (Content over structure)
9. Do the links on the webpage work?
10. What is the purpose of this webpage?

How to Find Healthcare Resources Located on the Net

1. Look at your association webpage or AMA, American Heart Associations. You can use these pages as resources, or to get additional lists. If you are interested in a topic outside of your field check out the association for that specialty.
 - a. <http://www.aarc.org/> American Association for Respiratory Care- They have a great Patient Education Site.
 - b. <http://www.aap.org/> -American Academy for Pediatrics – They have a link “You and Your Family” and “Professional Education”
 - c. <http://www.nypta.org/> NY Physical Therapy Association – Check out the Consumer Health Link, the Guide to PT Practice, and PT/PTA Information Link.
 - d. American Medical Association - <http://www.ama-assn.org/> Has info for patients and practitioners.
 - e. American Heart association www.americanheart.org has a heart and stroke a-z guide http://www.americanheart.org/Heart_and_Stroke_A_Z_Guide/
 - f. ILAR - <http://www.ilar.org/> For Rheumatology information.
 - g. Cancer - <http://www.cancer.org/>
2. Periodicals usually publish good WebPages
 - a. Science
 - b. Nature
 - c. New England Journal of Medicine
 - d. JAMA
 - e. New York Times
 - f. Newsday
 - g. Wall Street Journal
 - h. Home Magazines ie. Good Housekeeping – now everybody has a health section
3. Other Library Pages- Try Mayo Clinic, SUNY Stony Brook, any educational system that will have web pages listed on the library web page.
 - a. <http://www.nypl.org/branch/choices/> -Choices- the community health information service of the New York Public Library
 - b. <http://www.noah-health.org/> - a consortium of libraries in NY
 - c. www.hsclib.sunysb.edu look at the “Web Guides” Link
 - d. <http://www.suffolk.lib.ny.us/> - Suffolk County Library Association –click on the link for Web Sites by Subject
 - e. Try your own public library
4. News Websites

If you see information on TV, go to their website. They all publish information on the web now! Channel 4 for example, does an enormous amount of information. <http://www.wnbc.com/health/> - Channel 4- click on the Health Button in the middle

MedlinePlus

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus

- * What is it? It's **organized** access to healthcare information on the Internet.
- * Who made it? The National Library of Medicine.
- * Why should I use it? It can give you information about a health topic, a doctor or medication. It's free! And it is legitimate and lastly, it's easy!
- * How do I use it? See below!

1. Go to www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus to go to the homepage



From here you can choose what you wish to do.

2. Health Topics

Use this option to look up information on a health topic for example, a disease. Let's look up diabetes!

- a.) When you click on **Health Topics** an alphabetical list will appear. You simply click on the letter of the alphabet that your topic starts with. Since we are looking up diabetes click on **D**.



- b.) A list of health topics will appear. Scroll, using the bar on the right, to find diabetes. Once you see the word diabetes, click on it!

c.) You will come to an organized page, which will have links to pages with overview, clinical trial information and more. Just click on a link that is of interest to you. **This will bring you to a page outside of the MedlinePlus page, but all the sites that they link to have been reviewed by members of the NLM staff.

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Contents of this page:

[News](#)
[From the NIH](#)
[General/Overviews](#)
[Alternative Therapy](#)
[Anatomy/Physiology](#)
[Clinical Trials](#)
[Coping](#)
[Diagnosis/Symptoms](#)
[Disease Management](#)
[Prevention/Screening](#)
[Research](#)
[Specific Conditions/Aspects](#)
[Treatment](#)
[Genetics](#)

[Dictionaries/Glossaries](#)
[Directories](#)
[Journals/Newsletters](#)
[Law and Policy](#)
[Organizations](#)
[Statistics](#)

- [Triple Therapy Highly Effective in Type 2 Diabetes](#) (12/09/2003, Reuters Health)
 - [New Guidelines Warn of Diabetes Drug Risks](#) (12/09/2003, Reuters Health)
 - [AHA/ADA Issue Statement on Diabetes Drug Linked to Heart Failure](#) (12/09/2003, American Heart Association)
 - [Stomach and Uterine Cancer Risk Higher in Diabetes](#) (12/04/2003, Reuters Health)
 - [High Risk of Narrowed Blood Vessels in Legs for People with Diabetes](#) (11/21/2003, American Diabetes Association)
 - [HHS Releases 2003 National Diabetes Estimates](#) (11/13/2003, Dept. of Health and Human Services)
 - [More News on Diabetes](#)
- From the National Institutes of Health**
- [7 Principles for Controlling Your Diabetes for Life](#) (National Diabetes Education Program) Also available in: [Spanish](#)
 - [Diabetes Overview](#) (National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse)
 - [Your Guide to Diabetes: Type 1 and Type 2](#) (National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse) -

3. Drug Information

Use this part of the webpage if you want to look up information about a medication you or a family member is taking. Since we looked up diabetes, let's look up insulin.

- Click on **Drug Information**
- Click on the letter in the alphabetical listing that the drug begins with. In this case let's click on **I**.
- Look in the list for the word Insulin and click on it!
- A page with information such as brand names, what not to take with the medications and more will appear.

Insulin

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(in' su lin)

Brand name(s): Humulin; Iletin; Novolin; Velosulin

Contents of this page:

- [Why is this medication prescribed?](#)
- [How should this medicine be used?](#)
- [What special precautions should I follow?](#)
- [What special dietary instructions should I follow?](#)
- [What should I do if I forget a dose?](#)
- [What side effects can this medication cause?](#)
- [What storage conditions are needed for this medicine?](#)
- [In case of emergency/overdose](#)
- [What other information should I know?](#)

Why is this medication prescribed?

4. Medical Encyclopedia

The Adam Health Illustrated Encyclopedia includes over 4,000 articles about diseases, tests, symptoms, injuries, and surgeries. It also contains an extensive library of medical photographs and illustrations (Description taken from MedlinePlus webpage)

Medical Encyclopedia

Other encyclopedia topics: [A-Ag](#) [Ah-Ap](#) [Aq-Az](#) [B-Bk](#) [Bl-Bz](#) [C-Cg](#) [Ch-Co](#) [Cp-Cz](#) [D-Di](#) [Dj-Dz](#) [E-Ep](#) [Eq-Et](#) [In](#) [Ia-Iz](#) [J](#) [K](#) [L-Ln](#) [Lo-Lz](#) [M-Mf](#) [Mg-Mz](#) [N](#) [O](#) [P-Pi](#) [Pm-Pz](#) [Q](#) [R](#) [S-Sh](#) [Si-Sp](#) [V](#) [W](#) [X](#) [Y](#) [Z](#) [0-9](#)

Diabetes

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Contents of this page:

- [Illustrations](#)
- [Alternative names](#)
- [Definition](#)
- [Causes, incidence, and risk factors](#)
- [Symptoms](#)
- [Signs and tests](#)
- [Treatment](#)
- [Support Groups](#)
- [Expectations \(prognosis\)](#)
- [Complications](#)
- [Calling your health care provider](#)
- [Prevention](#)

5. Medical Dictionary

When you click on medical dictionary a screen with a box will appear. Just type in the word you are interested in and click **Search**. Let's try **Diabetes**

Medical Dictionary

Type the word that you would like to find. If you're not sure of the spelling, type the first few letters, followed by an asterisk(*).

Enter search term [SEARCH](#) 

6. Directories

Use the directories when you want to look up credential information of doctors, nurses or healthcare professionals.

Directories

General Doctors and Dentists

- [ADA Find a Dentist Member Directory](#) (American Dental Association)
- [AMA Physician Select: Online Doctor Finder](#) (American Medical Association)
- [American Podiatric Medical Association: Member Locator](#) (American Podiatric Medical Association)
- [DocFinder](#) (Association of State Medical Board Executive Directors) - health professional licensing listings by state.
- [Medicare Participating Physician Directory](#) (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services)

Doctor/Dentist Specialists

HEALTH INTERNET SITES

www.mayohealth.org Mayo Clinic Health Oasis A site built by the Scientists and Doctors of the Mayo Clinic. Updated Weekly this site contains consumer health information, preventative medicine and a database of “explanations of how to treat diseases”. This excellent site is easy to load and has a easy to find listing of it’s editorial staff. The homepage has the new information posted as well as a listing of the centers. These are just some of the niceties to this webpage.

www.healthfinder.gov This is an easy to navigate site and is recommended for those who are new to the web. Though not as comprehensive as other health care sites, this web site provides good foundation material. The Online journal listing is an excellent listing, and it is great that they point you to medical dictionaries. This is also definitely a child friendly site.

www.herbmed.org Herbmed—alternative medicine An excellent resource to look for those hard to find Alternative medicine informatics. This site gives both an alphabetical listing as well as a search option for herbs. What is really nice is the information that they provide is both clinical in nature, including the biochemistry, as well as pictorial and historical folklore.

www.fda.gov This is the FDA official web page contains information for your protection about food, drugs, biologics, cosmetics, toxicology and medical devices. Easy to move around, and they even have a search box on the home page.

www.noah-health.org NY Online Access to Health—bilingual, full text, alternative medicine, women, healthy living. It is created by the New York Academy of Medicine, the NY Public Library, the Queen’s and Brooklyn Public Library. It’s easy to navigate.

www.healthtouch.com HealthTouch—information on vitamins/herbals—information from government/medical organizations

<http://www.ama-assn.org/> AMA Health Insight—general- but easy to navigate. This site is family/child friendly and contains a number of consumer health issues and informatics. It’s got access to so much information. Just look for the word Patients on the left side of the screen, and press the **GO** button!

www.familydoctor.org Family Doctor from Am Assoc Family Physician- An excellent site, however not comprehensive. This site has a nice organization to it. The alternative medicine section is not the strongest, however is stronger then Medlineplus.

www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus Medline’s consumer health database

www.medicinenet.com/Script/Main/hp/asp written by physicians—easy to understand with illustrations—medical topics likely to affect average person; some parts free, rest is fee based And-this site is peer reviewed.

<http://chid.nih.gov/> - Governmental Agency Database. This database provides titles, abstracts, and availability information for health information and health education resources.

<http://www1.va.gov/visns/visn03/kids/kids.asp> - “For Our Kids” website put together for children, educators etc.

<http://www.myhealthvet.va.gov/> - MyHealthVet Information only at present, but soon you will be able to access more information. You are required to create a username and password. It is FREE!