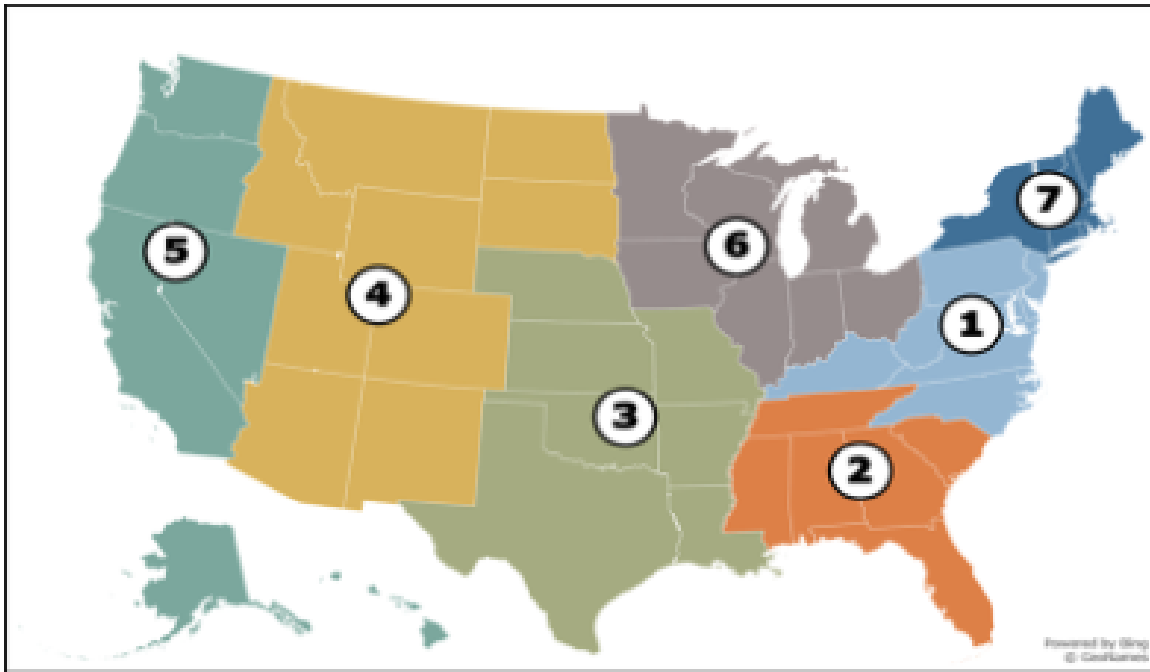


Introduction to Health Reference: Responding to Health Questions at Your Library

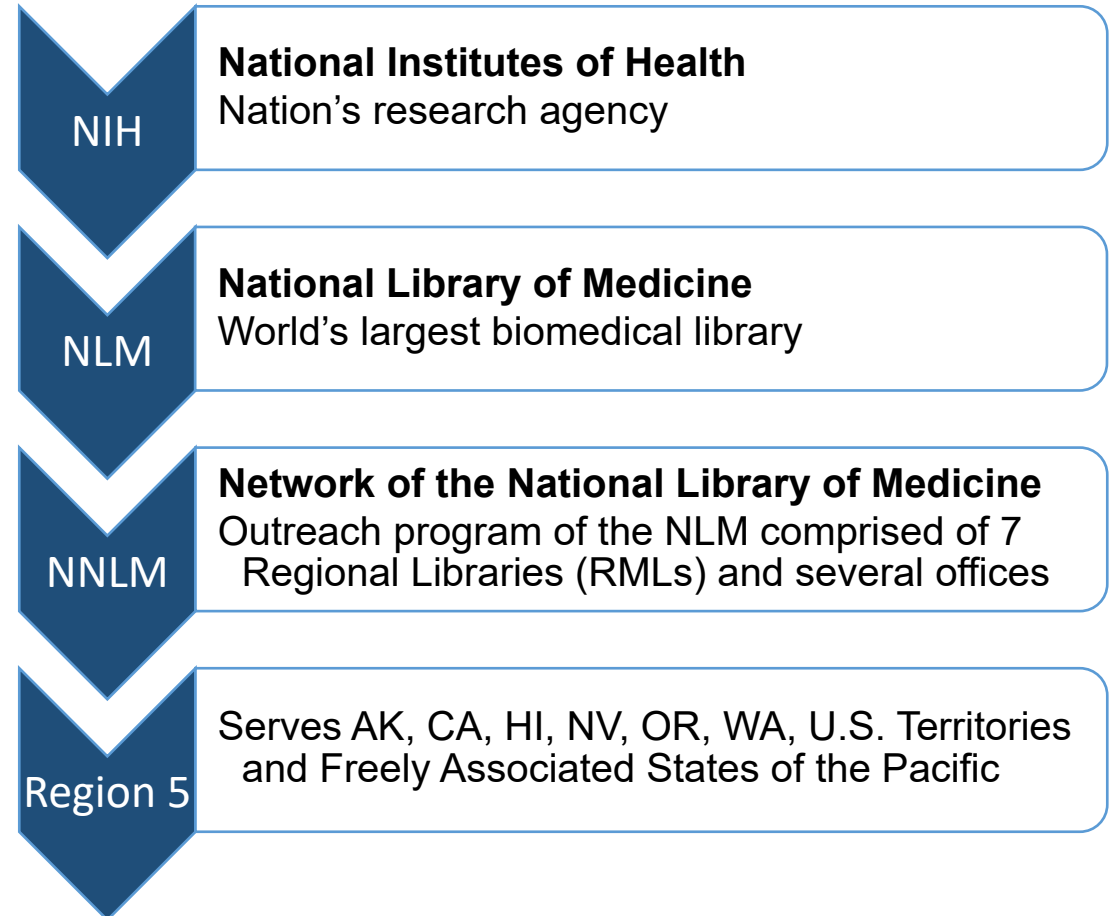
San Diego County, CA

April 27, 2022

Network of the National Library of Medicine (NNLM)



7 NNLM Regions



Learning Objectives

- Apply ethical and effective communication strategies to identify the health information needs of patrons
- Explain the ways librarians can protect patrons' health privacy and confidentiality
- Describe the ways librarians can practice ethical health information provision throughout the reference interview.
- Explain why it is important to teach evaluation skills to library patrons [and to educate patrons about online resources]
- Identify quality health information resources online, in print, and other formats when conducting health information reference

Consumer Health Reference Questions

"I want to find more about that diet thing Dr. Oz talked about the other day."

"I just found out my son may have Marfan syndrome. Do you have a book about it?"

"My mom is starting to forget things but how do I know if it's Alzheimer's?"

"Should I get the booster for COVID?"

"Do I have lice?"

Health Literacy and Misinformation

Evaluating information

What is Health Literacy?

- **Personal health literacy** is the degree to which individuals have the ability to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.
- **Organizational health literacy** is the degree to which organizations equitably enable individuals to find, understand, and use information and services to inform health-related decisions and actions for themselves and others.

Health Literacy defined by Healthy People 2030

MedlinePlus Evaluating Internet Health Information: Checklist



Provider

- Who is in charge of the Web site?



Funding

- Where does the money to support the site come from?



Quality

- Does the site have advertisements? Are they labeled?



Privacy

- Does the site ask for your personal information?

[MedlinePlus Evaluating Internet Health Information Checklist](#)

Bias

Personal bias

the ONION

NEWS IN BRIEF 11.18.16 VOL. 52 / ISSUE 45

Surgeon General Recommends Exercising Once Every Several Months During Flash Of Panic About Health

WASHINGTON—Highlighting the benefits of brief, infrequent aerobic activity, U.S. surgeon general Vivek Murthy urged Americans Friday to make sure to exercise once every few months during a frenzied moment of panic regarding their health. “It’s important that citizens of all ages, genders, and backgrounds make the time every four to nine months to go for a quick jog or do 15 halfhearted push-ups in the midst of a frantic surge of concern about their physical fitness,” said Murthy, who explained that individuals need not possess a gym membership or their own exercise equipment to engage in twice-yearly anxiety-fueled attempts at working out, and could instead simply perform five to 20 minutes of various calisthenics in their own home during a short-lived fit of worry spurred by an increase in their

the ONION VIDEO WATCH MORE

5 Things To Know About Netflix

HOW DO THEY CURATE RECOMMENDATIONS? A complex algorithm determines what you were previously watching, then generates that data to suggest watching the next episode of that show.

Trending Now

NEWS IN BRIEF
Aides Wrestle Drill From Trump's Hands As He Tries To Remove Obama Listening Device From Skull

NEWS IN BRIEF
Man Sets Unsustainable Precedent Of Saying Hello To Coworker Every Morning

NEWS IN BRIEF
Study Finds Average American Hopes No One Saw That 12 Times Per Day

Weird New Gadget Gives ADHD Sufferers Laser Sharp Focus

Revolutionary new Focus Gadget flying off the shelves after finally being released to public.

Resource bias

GetHealthy StayHealthy

START HEALTHY LIFE AILMENTS

hypersomnia

READ ARTICLE

Tuberculosis: what is it and what are its risks?

READ ARTICLE

Myths and truths of superfoods

READ ARTICLE

Triglycerides: how to protect the heart?

READ ARTICLE

Foods that help the heart: a guide to support cardiovascular

READ ARTICLE

CHECK THE OFFICIAL HEALTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

GO TO THE OFFICIAL SITE

SEE MORE

Trust It or Trash It?



The screenshot shows the website's header with a magnifying glass icon and the title "Trust It or Trash It?". Navigation links for "About", "Contact", and "Español" are visible. The main content area features three numbered steps: "1 Who said it?", "2 When did they say it?", and "3 How did they know?". A blue box titled "What is Trust It or Trash It?" explains the tool's purpose. A light blue footer box contains contact information, a printer-friendly version link, a disclaimer, and a developer version link. The bottom of the page includes a Creative Commons license notice and design credits.

1 Who said it?

2 When did they say it?

3 How did they know?

What is Trust It or Trash It?

This is a tool to help you think critically about the quality of health information (including websites, handouts, booklets, etc.). Click on *Who said it?* *When did they say it?* and *How did they know?* to guide you through the process.

✉ Have questions, comments or suggestions? [Send us a note.](#)

🖨 [Click here](#) for a printer friendly version.

📄 The Quality Assessment Toolbox is for educational purposes only. Read our [disclaimer language.](#)

🔗 [Creating a resource?](#) [Click here for the developer version.](#)

Except where otherwise noted, content on this site is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License. This tool is for educational purposes only.

⋮ DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT BY - WWW.PROJECTMISO.NET ⋮


[Trust It or Trash It](#)

Class exercise – evaluating websites


- **Healthychildren.org:**
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Lasik@home:** <https://www.lasikathome.com/>
- **Everyday Health:** <https://www.everydayhealth.com/>

Health News


Top tips for navigating the infodemic




1. Assess the source:
Who shared the information with you and where did they get it from? Even if it is friends or family, you still need to vet their source.




2. Go beyond headlines:
Headlines may be intentionally sensational or provocative.




3. Identify the author:
Search the author's name online to see if they are real or credible.




4. Check the date:
Is it up to date and relevant to current events? Has a headline, image or statistic been used out of context?




5. Examine the supporting evidence:
Credible stories back up their claims with facts.



6. Check your biases:
Think about whether your own biases could affect your judgment on what is or is not trustworthy.



7. Turn to fact-checkers:
Consult trusted fact-checking organizations, such as the International Fact-Checking Network and global news outlets focused on debunking misinformation.



- Assess the source
- Go beyond the headline
- Identify the author
- Check the date
- Examine the supporting evidence
- Check your biases
- Turn to fact-checkers

[World Health Organization's Top Tips for Navigating the Infodemic](#)

Celebrities and Health

The BMJ posted the following 12-minute video about this topic and this research.



[BMJ Celebrities and Health video](#)



A screenshot of a research article page from the British Medical Journal (BMJ). The page header includes the BMJ logo, the journal title "thebmj", and the CrossMark logo. The article title is "Following celebrities' medical advice: meta-narrative analysis". The authors are Steven J Hoffman and Charlie Tan. The article is marked as "OPEN ACCESS". The abstract and introduction are visible, discussing the influence of celebrities on health decisions and the clash between celebrity culture and science.

[BMJ celebrity health article](#)

Questionable Doctors

How 'America's Frontline Doctors' Sold Access to Bogus COVID-19 Treatments—and Left Patients in the Lurch



Tablets of Ivermectin on May 19, 2021. Soumyabrata Roy—NurPhoto/Shutterstock

CNN health Life, But Better Fitness Food Sleep Mindfulness Relationships

Congressional hearing investigates Dr. Oz 'miracle' weight loss claims

Jen Christensen and Jacque Wilson, CNN
Updated 9:54 AM EDT, Thu June 19, 2014



Dr. Oz accused of peddling bogus drugs

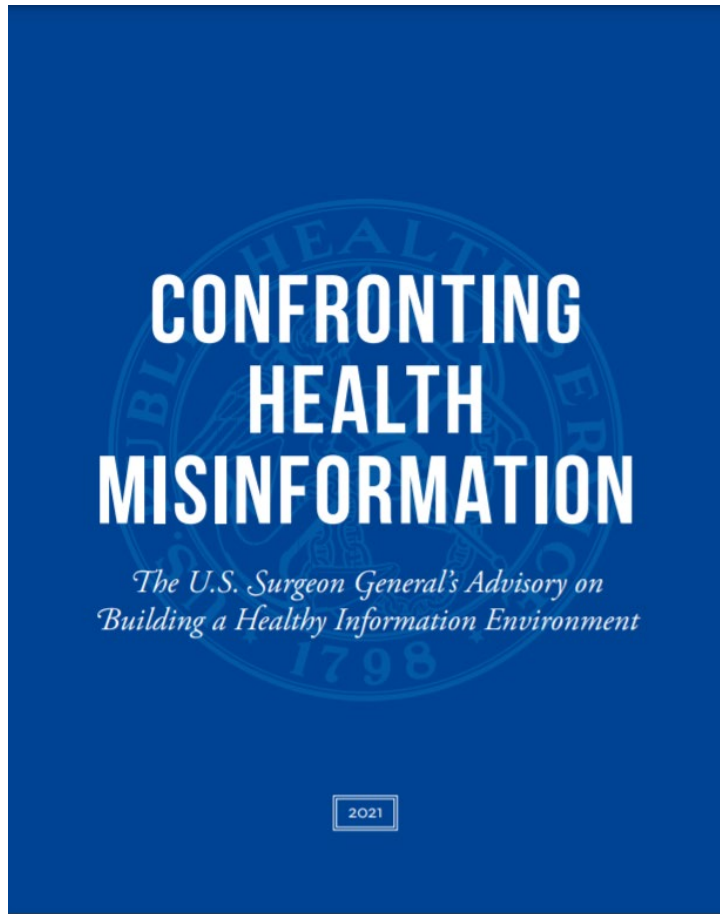
The Most Influential Spreader of Coronavirus Misinformation Online

Researchers and regulators say Joseph Mercola, an osteopathic physician, creates and profits from misleading claims about Covid-19 vaccines.

f WhatsApp Twitter Email Share Bookmark 905



Health Misinformation

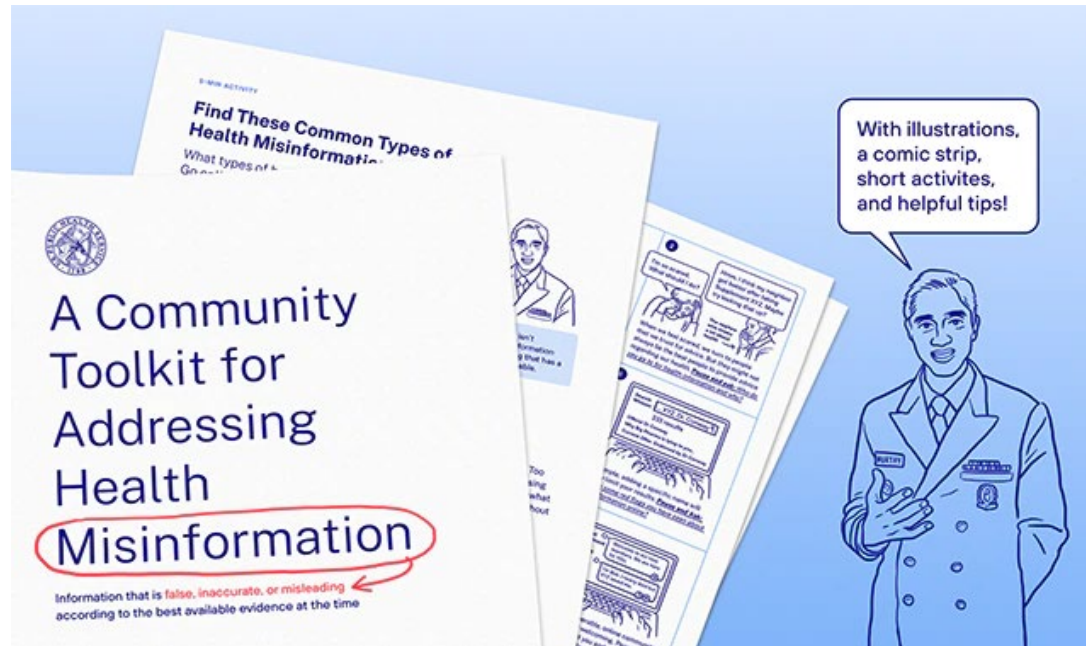


“Health misinformation is a serious threat to public health. It can cause confusion, sow mistrust, harm people’s health, and undermine public health efforts. Limiting the spread of health misinformation is a moral and civic imperative that will require a whole-of-society effort.”

[YouTube video of U.S. Surgeon General’s health advisory](#)

[Confronting Health Misinformation](#)

Community Toolkit for Addressing Health Misinformation



Toolkit includes:

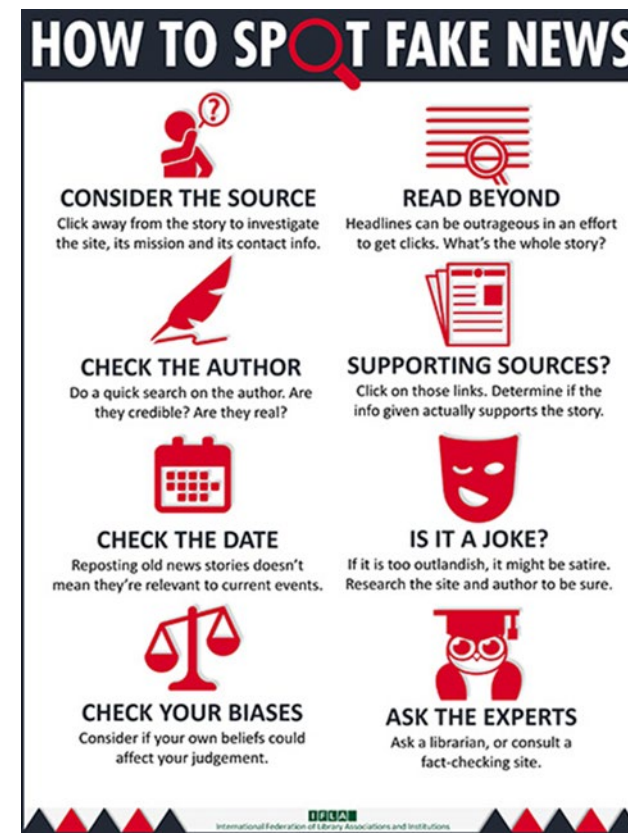
- 22 page “Confronting Health Misinformation” report
- Teaching slides
- Infographics
- Most information available in English and Spanish

[Community Toolkit](#)

Misinformation Resources



GO VIRAL!



Health Reference

Best practices, privacy, ethics, tips

When a patron asks a health question...

- Library staff might learn private and personal information
- Patrons (or staff) may be more emotional
- Library staff need to stay neutral but compassionate
- Library staff might not be familiar with the topic, unsure how to answer
- Library staff might worry about providing incorrect information

Factors Impacting Information-Seeking Behavior

- Health issues can cause stress, anger, sadness, disillusionment, confusion, frustration, desperation
- Factors: age, gender, literacy level, socioeconomic background, culture, language
- Your reaction and communication can help a patron feel more comfortable

Welcome and Safe Space



- Clear and prominent signage
- Clean and inviting
- Develop a statement addressing privacy and confidentiality of reference services
- Lower your voice
- Designate an area for privacy
- Ask patron permission if asking a colleague for help

Non-Verbal Communication

- Facial expressions
- Body posture
- Eye contact
- Gestures
- Attitude
- Active listening



Verbal Communication



- Empathy, clear boundaries
 - “I’m so sorry to hear you’re dealing with this. I can help you find information about this topic.”
 - “I can help you find information, but I am not a health professional, and am not qualified to help you make sense of this information. I recommend talking further with your doctor”
- Tone of voice, listening
 - Calm, more silence
- No unnecessary noises or comments
 - Sighing, tsking, harrumphing

Do not tell your story or anecdotes

- Don't tell your own story or story of others
- Patron could take this as a recommendation
- Keep the focus of the interaction on the patron and the information they need



Open-ended questions



- What kind of information on _____ are you looking for?
- Would you tell me more about...?
- What do you already know about _____?
- What is it you want to know about _____?
- I'm not certain I understand... Can you give me an example?
- Where have you looked for information so far?

Topic and Scope of Question

- Purpose of the information
 - Schoolwork, personal, for family member
- Many categories of health information
 - Diseases, treatments, prevention, causes
- Health questions can be complex. How much detail is needed?
- What level of information is needed?
- What language?
- What formats would be most appropriate?

Gathering information



- Verify medical terms and spellings
- Provide information from evidence-based health information resources
- Provide the most complete information possible
- It's ok to not provide information if not available from an authoritative source
 - Refer the patron back to their healthcare provider

Quality Health Information

- Utilize ABCs of Evaluation OR Trust It or Trash It
- No matter the format, evaluate the resource
- Seek ways to integrate health information evaluation tips in reference services
- It's ok to say you cannot locate the information from your library's resources
 - Know the limits of your library's health information
- Provide quality resources on a Subject Guide or brochure/bookmark
 - MedlinePlus.gov

Delivering Information

- Your role is to provide information
- Do not interpret medical information for a patron
- Read as it is printed
- Do not give your recommendation or opinion
- Do not let your own bias or personal or cultural values affect your professional interaction
- Refer patrons to their healthcare provider

Phone reference



- Use same practices as in-person
- Read directly from the resource
 - state the name of the resource, date of publication, authority, page number or website
- Ask if they'd like you to mail or email the information
- Suggest patron take this information to their doctor to discuss further

Virtual reference (email, chat)

- Use same practices as in-person
- Include information about the resource – provide authority, last date updated or reviewed, etc.
- Suggest patron take this information to their doctor to discuss further



Class Exercise – Role Playing

What did the
library staff do
correctly?

What could
have been done
differently?

Authoritative Resources

MedlinePlus:

- 1,000 + Health Topics
- Medical encyclopedia
- Drug information, medical tests, genetics
- Content must meet strict criteria and regularly reviewed
- Spanish edition
- No advertisements

The screenshot shows the MedlinePlus website homepage. At the top, there is a search bar with the text "Search MedlinePlus" and a "GO" button. Below the search bar are navigation links: "About MedlinePlus", "What's New", "Site Map", and "Customer Support". The main navigation menu includes "Health Topics", "Drugs & Supplements", "Genetics", "Medical Tests", "Videos & Tools", and "Español".

The left sidebar features several categories with icons and descriptions:

- Health Topics**: Find information on health, wellness, disorders and conditions.
- Drugs & Supplements**: Learn about prescription drugs, over-the-counter medicines, herbs, and supplements.
- Genetics**: Explore genetic conditions, genes, and more.
- Medical Tests**: Learn why your doctor orders medical tests and what the results may mean.
- Medical Encyclopedia**: Articles and images for diseases, symptoms, tests, treatments.
- Healthy Recipes**: Try these recipes as part of a healthy lifestyle.

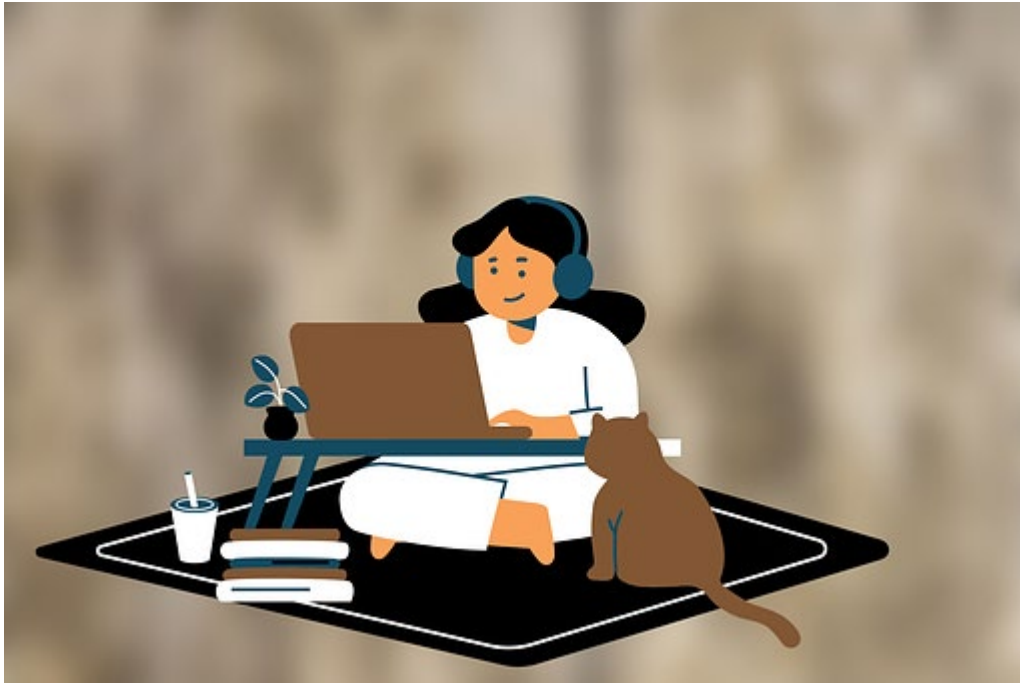
The main content area includes a "Share MedlinePlus" section with social media icons, a featured article titled "Stay healthy and active as you age!" with a photo of a man and a woman on bicycles, and a "Tweets by @MedlinePlus" section. Below the tweets is a "Stay Connected" section with a "SUBSCRIBE" button for the "My MedlinePlus newsletter".

At the bottom, there are four boxes: "Easy-to-Read Health Information", "Organizations and Directories", "Health Information in Multiple Languages", and "MedlinePlus Connect for EHRs". The footer contains links for "Get updates", "Subscribe to RSS", "Follow us" (with social media icons), and "Social Media Toolkit".

Using MedlinePlus

The screenshot shows the MedlinePlus website interface. At the top left is the MedlinePlus logo with the tagline "Trusted Health Information for You". To the right is a search bar with the text "Search MedlinePlus" and a green "GO" button. Below the search bar are links for "About MedlinePlus", "What's New", "Site Map", and "Customer Support". A navigation bar contains "Health Topics", "Drugs & Supplements", "Genetics", "Medical Tests", "Videos & Tools", and "Español". The main content area features a breadcrumb "Home → About MedlinePlus → Using MedlinePlus" and the title "Using MedlinePlus" in a red-bordered box. Below the title is a sub-header: "Find out more about policies and guidelines for MedlinePlus, and get guidance and tips for using this resource." To the right of the title are social media icons for email, Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. A vertical list of blue buttons includes: "Linking to and Using Content from MedlinePlus", "Guidelines for Links", "Search Tips", "Citing MedlinePlus", "Information for Trainers and Librarians", "Video Player Keyboard Shortcuts", and "MedlinePlus Social Media Toolkit". On the right side, there is a "Related Information" section with links for "What's New", "About MedlinePlus", "Information for Developers", and "MedlinePlus Connect". Below that is a "Stay Connected" section with the text "Sign up for the My MedlinePlus newsletter" and a form with an "Enter email address" input and a "GO" button.

NNLM Classes and Events



- Live online webinar format classes
- Scheduled asynchronous online classes
- On-demand online classes
- Webinar series with guest speaker
- Special events

Consumer Health Information Specialization (CHIS)

- Take classes (NNLM, MLA, etc.) focusing on health information and health literacy
- Increase health information knowledge
- Become more confident providing health information services and programs
- Commitment to providing quality consumer health information

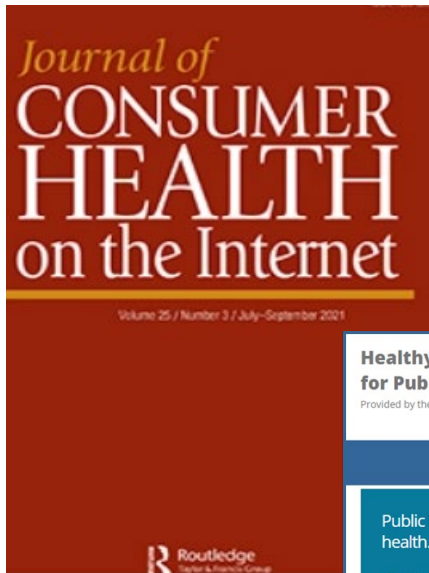


Consumer Health class tester



- Consumer Health Information Specialization (CHIS) Core classes
- Level 1 CHIS includes 5 core competencies
- Each core competency class runs 1 hour
- Testers will receive CE for each core class completed
- Testing tentatively scheduled mid May

Keeping Updated



Health Literacy Happens Here

Webinars | Discussion Communities
Certificate Program | Continuing Education



Healthy Community Tools for Public Libraries

Provided by the Public Library Association

Newsletters | Initiatives | Today's Health News

Search

Resources Training Regional Offices & Funding Databases

Public libraries are critical to our nation's health.

All Americans need access to current, reliable health information, especially as we navigate complex issues like health care, insurance and aging. Public libraries are a go-to resource throughout this journey.

This website, a project of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine (NNLM) and the Public Library Association (PLA), brings together a host of resources to help public libraries better serve their patrons' health needs.

Latest Resources
Tools, program ideas and primers to help public libraries get the information and inspiration they need.
Libraries are Champions of Health Communities (Facebook Group)
ALA Libraries Transform Health Literacy Toolkit

Latest Trainings
The National Network of Libraries of Medicine and its Regional Medical Libraries offer live and online educational experiences for health professionals, medical librarians, public librarians and others. The courses below are those most relevant to public librarians.

PROGRAMMING Librarian

A website of the American Library Association Public Programs Office

Browse Ideas News Blogs Program Models Learning About

Featured Items

- American Rescue Plan**
in News
Up to 200 U.S. libraries of all types will receive \$10,000 for pandemic recovery. Apply by December 2.
- Weather Emergency Preparedness**
in News
New Ulm Public Library is working with local faith communities to prepare for harsh weather emergencies.
- Let's Talk About It: Women's Suffrage**
in News
This ALA grant will help libraries discuss the history of women's suffrage. Apply by December 1.
- Going Beneath the Cultural Iceberg**
in Blog
To communicate clearly with community members, it can be helpful to be aware of hidden layers.

News

- OCT 5** Apply Now: American Rescue Plan: Humanities Grants for Libraries
- SEP 24** Products To Create High-Quality Livestreams and Virtual Programs
- SEP 22** Bringing Faith Communities Together: Weather Emergency

Blogs

- free** SOAR Analysis: 16 Questions to Improve Your Community E...
By: Community-Centered Libraries
- free** Building Programs for the Long-Term: Think C-S-C
By: Community-Centered Libraries
- free** Going Beneath the Cultural Iceberg to Communicate with ...

Public Libraries: Community Health Partners

**BECAUSE LIBRARIES
ARE PARTNERS
IN A HEALTHY
COMMUNITY.**

**LIBRARIES
TRANSFORM[®]**
ALA American Library Association

 U.S. National Library of Medicine
National Network of Libraries of Medicine

- Partners for health
- Partners for health equity
- Increase health literacy
- Public health
- Community health
- School health

NNLM Funding

Announcements:

- NNLM Region 5 webpage
- NNLM Region 5 News-Weekly Digest

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

from Region 5 of the Network of the National Library of Medicine

For libraries and organizations in AK, CA, NV, OR, WA, and the U.S. Territories and Freely Associated States

Show What You Know- True or False

- Your non-verbal communication is just as important as your verbal communication.
- To show patrons you care, tell them a little about your similar health experience.
- It's helpful for a library volunteer, a retired physician, to provide medical advice to patrons.
- Set aside your own personal beliefs and values when it comes to providing health information.

Show What You Know – True or False continued...

- The library should consider creating a list of recommended local doctors to have on hand for patrons.
- Provide a quiet corner or space for more private health reference
- Always make sure the patron has the correct name and spelling of the health condition and treatment before directing them to the information
- Let the patron know they should contact their doctor to explain how the health information you provided applies to their situation

Works Consulted

NNLM Classes

Consumer Health Collection Management: <https://nnlm.gov/training/class/consumer-health-collection-management-demand>

Introduction to Health Reference, Ethics & Best Practices: <https://nnlm.gov/training/class/introduction-health-reference-ethics-and-best-practices>

MedlinePlus Tutorial for Librarians and Health Educators: <https://nnlm.gov/training/class/medlineplus-tutorial-librarians-and-health-educators>

Additional Resources

Confronting Health Misinformation, US Surgeon General: <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-misinformation-advisory.pdf>

Consumer Health Information Specialization: <https://www.mlanet.org/page/chis>

Health Literacy Solutions Center: <https://www.healthliteracysolutions.org/home>

Healthy Community Tools for Public Libraries: <https://publiclibrary.health/resources>

IFLA, How to Spot Fake News Infographic: <https://repository.ifla.org/handle/123456789/167>

Journal of Consumer Health on the Internet: <https://www.tandfonline.com/toc/wchi20/current>

Libraries Transform, Health Literacy Toolkit: <http://www.ilovelibraries.org/librariestransform/health-literacy-toolkit-intro>

Media Literacy in the Library: https://www.ala.org/tools/sites/ala.org.tools/files/content/%21%20Media-Lit_Prac-Guide_FINALWEB_112020_0.pdf

Programming Librarian, Health & Wellness: <https://programminglibrarian.org/ideas/topic?topic=948>

Trust it or Trash it: <http://www.trustortrash.org/>

WebJunction, Health Happens in Libraries: <https://www.webjunction.org/explore-topics/ehealth.html>

WHO, Tips for Navigating the Infodemic: <https://www.who.int/news-room/spotlight/let-s-flatten-the-infodemic-curve>

Your time for input and questions

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Developed resources reported in this presentation are supported by the National Library of Medicine (NLM), National Institutes of Health (NIH) under cooperative agreement number UG4LM013725. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.