



WINTER 2025

healthy living

HOW TO FIND TRUSTWORTHY SOURCES

A quick internet search can yield thousands of results on any health topic, from common cold remedies to complex medical treatments.

However, not all health information online is reliable, and distinguishing between credible sources and misinformation can help you make informed decisions about your health. “Doctor Google” is not as reliable as an actual human doctor.

DANGERS OF MISINFORMATION

The sheer volume of health-related content on the internet can be overwhelming, and unfortunately, much of it is misleading or outright false. Inaccurate health information can lead to harmful self-diagnosis, improper treatment and increased anxiety. For instance, relying on unverified sources for serious conditions like heart disease or cancer could delay necessary medical intervention.

Misinformation is especially dangerous during public health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, when false claims

**In the digital age,
health information
is more accessible
than ever before.**

about treatments or vaccines spread quickly. The rise of social media has exacerbated this issue, as posts and videos promoting unproven remedies or conspiracy theories often gain wide circulation.

IDENTIFYING TRUSTWORTHY SOURCES

When evaluating health information, consider the source. Reputable health organizations, government websites and peer-reviewed journals are typically the most reliable. Websites like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the World Health Organization (WHO)

and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) offer evidence-based information that experts in the field regularly update.

Medical professionals and academic institutions are credible sources. Websites affiliated with hospitals, universities or healthcare providers often feature articles written or reviewed by doctors, specialists or researchers. Look for information that cites studies published in reputable medical journals, such as “The New England Journal of Medicine” or “The Lancet.”

EVALUATING ONLINE HEALTH INFORMATION

When reading health information online, always check the author’s credentials. Are they a licensed health care professional or an expert in the field? Be cautious of websites that lack transparency about their authors or do not clearly explain their qualifications.

Pay attention to tone and language. Trustworthy sources rely on facts and evidence, not fearmongering or sensational

claims. If a website promises quick fixes, miracle cures or has a commercial interest in selling a product, it’s best to approach the information with skepticism.

Check the publication date, as health recommendations and guidelines can change over time. Outdated information may no longer be relevant or accurate, especially as new research and treatments emerge.

The National Library of Medicine offers a free tutorial on evaluating online health information at medlineplus.gov/webeval/EvaluatingInternetHealthInformationTutorial.pdf

CONSULT A PROFESSIONAL

Finally, while online research can provide helpful background information, it’s no substitute for professional medical advice.

Always consult with a health care provider before making decisions about your health, particularly when it comes to diagnosing conditions or starting new treatments.


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— Cassandra L.



SEASONAL ILLNESSES

As winter approaches, respiratory illnesses become more common.

Experts from John Hopkins Medicine explains that because people are indoors more, they spread viruses and cold, dry air can weaken resistance.

With the overlapping symptoms of various conditions, it can be difficult to tell them apart. John Hopkins lists several common winter respiratory concerns — the common cold, flu, COVID-19, RSV, acute and chronic bronchitis, pneumonia, and whooping cough. Here are some cues for recognizing them and taking steps to recover.

Common Cold

Symptoms: Sneezing, runny or stuffy nose, sore throat and mild cough. Fever is rare.

What to do: Rest, stay hydrated and use over-the-counter (OTC) cold medications to ease symptoms. Colds typically last 7-10 days and don't require medical attention unless symptoms worsen.

Influenza (Flu)

Symptoms: Sudden onset of fever, body aches, chills, fatigue, sore throat and dry cough. Flu can lead to serious complications like pneumonia.

What to do: Rest, hydrate, and take antiviral medication if prescribed by a doctor. If you are in a high-risk group — such as older adults, young children or those with underlying health conditions — seek medical

attention for more severe symptoms or complications.

COVID-19

Symptoms: Similar to the flu but may also include loss of taste or smell, shortness of breath and gastrointestinal issues. Symptoms can range from mild to severe.

What to do: Get tested if you suspect COVID-19. Isolate for the recommended period, rest and monitor symptoms. Seek immediate medical help if you experience difficulty breathing or chest pain.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)

Symptoms: RSV presents with cold-like symptoms in adults but can cause severe respiratory distress in infants, young children and older adults. Symptoms include runny nose, cough, wheezing and fever.

What to do: Mild cases resolve with rest and fluids, but more severe cases, particularly in children, may require hospitalization. Contact a health care provider if breathing difficulties arise.

Acute Bronchitis

Symptoms: Often starts with a cold or flu, then develops into a persistent cough with mucus production. Chest discomfort and mild shortness of breath may occur.

What to do: Most cases of acute bronchitis resolve on their own. Rest, drink fluids and use cough suppressants or inhalers if recommended by your

doctor. If symptoms persist or worsen, seek medical advice.

Chronic Bronchitis

Symptoms: Long-lasting cough with mucus that persists for at least three months in a year, often seen in smokers.

What to do: Chronic bronchitis requires medical management. Quitting smoking and using prescribed inhalers or bronchodilators can help manage symptoms.

Pneumonia

Symptoms: High fever, cough with mucus, sharp chest pain, and difficulty breathing.

What to do: Pneumonia can be life-threatening, especially for older adults or those with weakened immune systems. Seek medical attention promptly. Treatment typically includes antibiotics or antiviral medications, rest and fluids.

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MANAGING LIFE WITH OCD

While many people make jokes about obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), the symptoms aren't amusing to those who have to live with the condition.



Thankfully, with the right coping strategies, those affected can learn to manage symptoms and lead fulfilling lives.

OCD is a chronic mental health condition characterized by unwanted, intrusive thoughts (obsessions) and repetitive behaviors (compulsions) aimed at relieving the anxiety those thoughts cause. While there is no cure, several approaches can help people cope with the daily challenges of OCD.

Understanding OCD

OCD affects millions of people worldwide and can interfere with daily routines, relationships, and overall well-being. Individuals with OCD may experience compulsions like repeated handwashing, checking, or counting in an attempt to alleviate their obsessive thoughts. These rituals can become time-consuming, leading to stress and frustration.

Golden Steps ABA, an organization focused on autism, reports that OCD affects one in 40 adults with the average age of onset being 19. Women are more likely than men to have it and about one-third of the people who have OCD also have a tic disorder.

Because OCD is a complex disorder, it's important to work with healthcare professionals to develop a treatment plan tailored to individual needs. Most treatment plans include a combination of therapy, medication, and self-care strategies.

Golden Steps reports that nearly one-third of people with OCD do

not receive treatment. When it goes untreated, people with the condition are at higher risk for substance abuse, depression, eating disorders and anxiety disorders. The NIMH said that 76% of people with OCD have at least one other mental health disorder.

OCD can result from childhood trauma or genetic factors.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

One of the most effective treatments for OCD is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), specifically a technique known as exposure and response prevention (ERP). ERP involves gradually exposing individuals to situations that trigger their obsessions while preventing them from engaging in compulsive behaviors. Over time, this process can reduce the anxiety associated

with obsessive thoughts and lessen the urge to perform rituals.

With the help of a therapist, individuals with OCD learn to confront their fears in a controlled and supportive environment. CBT can take time to show results, but can significantly improve quality of life.

Medication

Medication can be a tool to manage OCD symptoms. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), a class of antidepressants, are commonly prescribed to help regulate serotonin levels in the brain. For many individuals, SSRIs reduce the intensity of obsessive thoughts and compulsions, making it easier to engage in therapy.

It may take time to find the right dosage and medication that works best.

Self-Care and Coping Strategies

Coping strategies can help manage OCD symptoms. Mindfulness techniques, such as meditation and deep breathing exercises, can reduce anxiety and help individuals stay grounded. Regular physical activity and maintaining a healthy diet also support mental well-being.

Building a support network is equally important. Sharing experiences with family, friends or support groups can ease feelings of isolation and provide emotional support.

Meeting your Health Goals

Technology has transformed nearly

every aspect of our lives, including the way we keep track of our health and wellness.

From fitness trackers to meal-planning apps, today's innovations make it easier than ever to set, monitor and achieve health goals. Whether you're aiming to lose weight, improve your mental health or stay active, here are just a few ways you can harness technology to meet your health objectives.

Fitness Trackers and Smartwatches

Fitness trackers and smartwatches are among the most popular, new tools. These wearable devices monitor everything from steps and calories burned to heart rate and sleep quality. Some models even track oxygen levels, stress and other vital signs.

Setting daily goals — like walking 10,000 steps or burning a certain number of calories — can help you stay accountable. Many trackers allow you to set reminders to get moving if you've been inactive for too long. The data these devices collect can offer insights into your habits, helping you make informed decisions about your health.

Nutrition and Meal-Planning Apps

Maintaining a balanced diet is key to any health goal, whether it's weight loss, muscle gain, or overall wellness. Nutrition and meal-planning apps like MyFitnessPal, Lose It!, and Noom allow users to log their meals, track calorie intake and monitor their macronutrients. Some apps even offer



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FAQ

Who is a good candidate for microneedling?

Talk to your provider for a proper diagnosis and to create a treatment plan. Microneedling with platelet-rich plasma is ideal for all skin types. Candidates are those wanting to improve the appearance of minor skin imperfections such as fine lines and wrinkles, skin laxity, and uneven skin tone and texture. Additionally, PRP can assist in minimizing the appearance of acne scars, and stretch marks or skin irregularities.



FAQ

Is microneedling with platelet-rich plasma going to cause downtime?

(*Individual results may vary)

Microneedling requires little to no downtime. Using platelet-rich plasma can help to boost healing time and combat swelling. Some patients may experience redness, dryness, or swelling for a day or two after their treatment. With microneedling, makeup can be applied the day after treatment.

THIS SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PROCEDURE CAN TREAT AND IMPROVE THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS: (*Individual results may vary)

- Acne, burn, and surgical scars
- Fine lines and wrinkles such as "crows feet" or "smoker lines"
- Stretch marks
- Loose lax skin
- Hyperpigmentation or hypopigmentation addressed when combined with topical agent and targeting pigment
- Hair regeneration

IS MICRONEEDLING RIGHT FOR YOU?

Enjoy younger, firmer skin with fewer fine lines and wrinkles. Microneedling with platelet-rich plasma stimulates fibroblast production of collagen and elastin, improving the overall condition of your skin from the inside out.



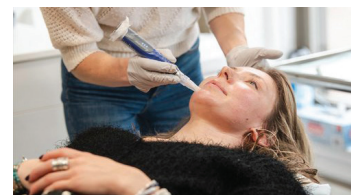
FAQ

When will I see results?

Results may be noticeable as soon as you heal from the treatment, as the redness subsides and fine sloughing of skin resolves. Scientific data suggests that results become better over a six-month period. During this time your body is producing new collagen. Within 1-3 months, you should notice more buoyancy, resilience, and evenness to your skin.

FAQ

How many treatments are required: For optimal results, it is recommended a series of 3-4 treatments with 4-6 weeks between each. A maintenance program of 2 treatments per year, is recommended to maintain the results you are pursuing.



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personalized meal plans and grocery lists based on dietary preferences and health goals.

By providing real-time feedback, these apps help you make better food choices and stick to your nutritional plan. Many allow you to scan barcodes or search databases for accurate food information, making it easier to track what you're eating.

Telehealth Services

Gone are the days when you had to visit a doctor's office for every health concern. Telehealth services have revolutionized the way we access healthcare, allowing anyone to consult with medical professionals from the comfort of their home. Whether you're managing a chronic condition or seeking advice for a minor issue, virtual visits can help you stay on top of your health goals without the hassle of scheduling in-person appointments.

In addition to video calls, many telehealth platforms offer secure messaging with health care providers, making it easy to ask questions or get prescription refills without delay.

Mental Health Apps

Numerous apps can help manage stress, anxiety and other mental health concerns. Apps like Calm, Headspace and Talkspace offer guided meditation,



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therapy sessions and mindfulness exercises. By incorporating these tools into your routine, you can improve your mental well-being and reduce stress.

Goal-Setting Platforms

Many fitness and wellness apps come with built-in communities and goal-setting features that allow users to connect with others who share similar objectives. Platforms like Strava, for example, let users track their workouts while interacting with others, creating a sense of community and competition. You can join challenges, share progress and encourage others, fostering motivation and accountability.

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