

Learning About How to Find Mental Health Resources Online



How can you find sites you can trust?

When you search for mental health information online, it's important to choose websites that are reliable. With so much information online, it can be tough to find sites you can trust. Knowing what to look for and what to avoid can help.

Here are some tips for finding reliable websites.

- Find out who's sponsoring the site.
Look at the web address. For example, websites that use ".gov" are sponsored by a government agency. These sites are more likely to have unbiased information. Those that use ".com" may be sponsored by a business. That means they may be biased. If there is a sponsor, it should be listed on the website. Knowing who sponsors a site and who is providing the information can help you decide how much trust to give it.
- Check to see when the site was last updated.
Health information changes often. Look for the website's revision date. This may appear at the bottom of the page. If the site hasn't been updated in a long time, the info could be old or not accurate.
- Check for facts.
To help you know if a website uses facts, try to find out if the information has been reviewed by a medical professional. You can also check to see if the info is based on scientific or medical journals. These should be cited or referenced.
- Review blogs and opinion sites with care.
Even though they may help by showing you that you're not alone, these sites shouldn't be used for mental health advice.
- Use websites to filter health information online.
The U.S. government has built websites that can help you find health information online. Here are some examples:

- www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus
- www.healthfinder.gov
- www.mentalhealth.gov

Online health information is just one resource. It shouldn't take the place of professional help if that's what you need. If you need help finding someone to talk to, ask your doctor for a referral.

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