



EVALUATING ONLINE HEALTH INFORMATION

Many people use the internet to find health and medical information. Unfortunately, not all online information is accurate and there are many websites which contain misleading health advice.

It is important to critically evaluate health information because of the varying quality of online sources.

There are four questions that you can ask to determine whether online information is reliable.

1. Who is the source?

Look carefully into who wrote the content and who is responsible for the article.

- Government websites (ending in .gov) have strict guidelines around publishing accurate information
- Organisation websites (ending in .org) may or may not publish reputable information
- Private websites (ending in .com) may or may not publish reputable information

To help determine if a source is credible, look for their credentials, qualifications, or reviewing process. For example, the Mito Foundation's Scientific and Medical Advisory Panel (SMAP) is made up of mito experts who review the Mito Foundation's information. The Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) ensures that only professionals who are adequately trained receive health practitioner registration in Australia. You can check if a provider is registered [here](#). Dietitians are registered separately through the [Dietitians Association of Australia](#).

2. Where is the information derived from?

It is important that the basis of the content is factual and comes directly from scientific research or a cited, reliable second hand resource such as information on the Mito Foundation website. Check to see if there are references listed at the end of the information or throughout the text.

3. What is the purpose?

Looking at the overall aim and purpose of the website allows you to fully understand its intentions. Is the aim of the information to promote or sell a product? If so, then the content may be skewed in order to influence you to spend money.

4. What is the purpose?

Medical information is constantly evolving due to scientific research. A good indicator of a reputable website is that there is a published or last reviewed date at the bottom of the page.

Contact the Mito Foundation Helpline if you have any questions about information you read online. Always discuss any changes to your treatment with your treating doctor or specialist.

Reputable websites for information about health and mitochondrial disease:

- [Better Health Channel](#) – General health and medical information from the Victorian Government
- [NPS MedicineWise](#) – General information about medicine and health technology
- [United Mitochondrial Disease Foundation \(UMDF\)](#) – Information about mitochondrial disease (US)
- [The Lily Foundation](#) – Information about mitochondrial disease (UK)
- [MitoAction](#) – Information about mitochondrial disease including podcasts with guest speakers
- [Mitochondrial Disease News](#) – Latest scientific research on mitochondria and mitochondrial disease
- [Mitochondrial Medicine Society](#) – Guidelines for health professionals about mitochondrial disease
- [International Mito Patients](#) – Information about mitochondrial disease and raising awareness
- [National Organization for Rare Disorders \(NORD\)](#) – Information about rare disease
- [Rare Voices Australia](#) – Information about rare diseases and advocacy
- [Genetic Alliance Australia](#) – Peer support and information for families affected by a rare genetic disease
- [Genetic and Rare Disease Network WA](#) – Information and support for people with genetic and rare disease
- [Metabolic Dietary Disorders Association](#) – Information and support for people with inborn error of metabolism such as Short-Chain Acyl-CoA Dehydrogenase Deficiency and Very Long-Chain Acyl-CoA Dehydrogenase Deficiency



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