Let's Talk About...

Online health information

Have you wanted to find information about a medical condition or to answer questions about your health, but you did not know where to start looking? When you search for information about your health online do you wonder if what you found is up-to-date and correct?

There is more information available today than ever before. Everyday more information is added to online websites. With so much information available, searching for answers can be frustrating. You can find useful information, but you can also stumble onto websites that give you information that is not correct or once was correct, but it is now out of date.

It is a good idea to have a checklist of questions to ask when you look at a website. Use the 5 W's checklist to help you find high-quality information on the web. Review several high-quality web sites to see if similar information appears in a number of places. Looking at many good sites will also give you a wider view of a health issue.

The internet is a tool that gives us a lot valuable information. But not all information on the internet is valuable. Evaluate what you find on the internet with a critical eye and share what you find with your doctor and healthcare team. Your doctor and healthcare team can help you understand the information you find and guide you to the best decisions for your healthcare needs. Ask questions, find answers, play an active role in your healthcare with high-quality information.

5 W's Checklist to Evaluate a Website

What:

- What is the purpose of the website?

Where:

- Where does the information come from?
- Where is the "About Us" page?

When:

- When was the website created?
- When was the content last updated?
- When was the website last worked on?

Who:

- Who created the website?
- Who is responsible for the content?
- Who is the site created for?
- Who is paying for the website?
- Does information favor the person or company paying for the website?

Why:

- Why is this information useful for my purpose?

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Pediatric Education Services, 801.662.3500 | Rev. 04/11, LTA521046972 | *Available in Spanish*