

# surf smart

Save yourself time, worry and risk by learning the attributes of a credible health website.

Search the Internet for health resources and you'll be faced with an overwhelming number of sites, many of which are misleading, confusing, inaccurate or designed to sell products. And support blogs can attract an overabundance of folks who have experienced treatment side effects. Bottom line: Sifting through these links can cause more angst than you need.

For reliable information, turn first to websites sponsored by the government, public hospitals, universities or other established institutions. These organizations often use the expertise of their staffs to evaluate or write the content they feature.

On any website check the sources of the editorial content. Are articles updated and reviewed by physicians regularly? Are references, such as studies from peer-reviewed medical journals, cited? Verify the health information provided by comparing it with that on other trustworthy sites.

A site should be designed with the user in mind. Is it easy to navigate so you can find the information you're looking for? Are pages uncluttered, and do they offer the option to increase print size? Your best bet for credibility: the seal of the Health On the Net Foundation (**HealthOnNet.org**), which certifies that a site has agreed to a code of conduct that includes indicating the qualifications of authors, respecting the confidentiality of visitors who submit data, citing sources of data, identifying funding sources and clearly distinguishing advertising from editorial content.

After you've done your research, consult your doctor before making any changes regarding your well-being. ●



▲ A good sign. This seal certifies that a medical website is reliable and trustworthy.

## search with confidence

Need a few places to start your research? Explore these three websites for health information you can trust.

[Aetna IntelliHealth](http://intelihealth.com)  
intelihealth.com

[National Institutes of Health](http://health.nih.gov/category/seniorshealth)  
health.nih.gov/category/seniorshealth

[U.S. National Library of Medicine](http://medlineplus.gov)  
medlineplus.gov

## helpful ANSWERS

As an Aetna Medicare Advantage member, you can get information on health-related topics from a registered nurse anytime, day or night! Call our toll-free hotline at 1-800-556-1555.