



Health On the Net Foundation
Non Governmental Organization

Quality Online Medical and Health Information

**Trustworthy health and medical information: the
Health On the Net initiative**

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The Founders

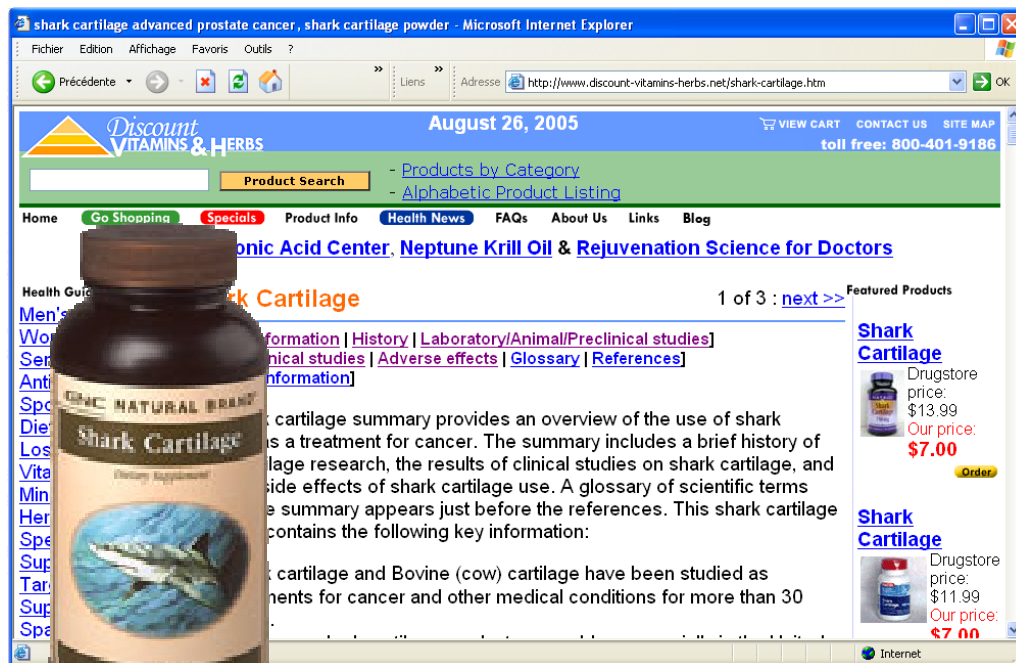
- **Guy-Olivier Segond, President of the Geneva State Council**

- **Prof. Jean-Raoul Scherrer (GUH, MIS)**

- **President:**
 - **Prof. Antoine Geissbühler**
Head of the Medical Informatics Service, Geneva University Hospital

- **Vice-presidents:**
 - **Dr. Don Lindberg, Head of the National Library of Medicine (NLM)**
 - **Mr. Michel Carpentier, European Commission, Director general, DG XIII**

How to judge the information on the Web?



The Health On the Net Foundation

- Established in 1995 under the auspices of the Ministry of Health of the State of Geneva
- Mission: To guide Internet users by highlighting reliable, understandable, relevant and trustworthy sources of online health and medical information

HON tackles the major obstacles of Internet usage: the overwhelming quantity of information and the uneven quality of health information available online.

HON initiatives for improving the quality of online medical information

- **The HON Code of Conduct: the HONcode principles and its accreditation program**
- **Database of accredited websites**
- **Multilingual search engines specialized in health issues**
 - **European Union projects**
- **Collaborative initiatives**

Standard HON

- The “HONcode” (Boyer, Selby, Scherrer, and Appel, 1996)
- Developed in 1996 by the Health on the Net Foundation, a non-governmental organization.

Excerpt from European Union ministerial meeting 2586, June 2004

“RECOGNISES that to make reasonable decisions about what **health information they will trust**, or what products or services they will use, **individuals** need to know what **standards** a site employs in developing content. Health-related websites must make **clear the sources** which **Principles 1 & 4** they have used and ensure that the information presented is **Principles 4 & 8** **appropriate, independent and timely**. Health-related websites should also **identify who** is most likely to visit the site and ensure that the **Principle 2** information presented is **as comprehensible and as easily accessible as** **Principle 6** possible to all visitors including disabled persons. As some sites may be **sponsored by one party** and hosted by a different one, these **Principles 7 & 8** relationships should be clearly disclosed on the site.”

The HONcode

Authoritative

Indicate the qualifications of the authors

Complementarity

Information should support, not replace, the doctor-patient relationship

Privacy

Respect the privacy and confidentiality of personal data submitted to the site by the visitor

Attribution

Cite the source(s) of published information, date and medical and health pages

Justifiability

Site must back up claims relating to benefits and performance

Transparency

Accessible presentation, identities of editor and webmaster, accurate email contact

Financial disclosure

Identify funding sources

Sponsorship

Clearly distinguish advertising from editorial content



HONcode Facts

- 5 533 sites
- 72 countries
- 32 languages
- 1,200,000 web pages accredited
- HONcode team: 13 persons
 - 6 physicians
 - 1 pharmacist
 - 1 Ph.D. in molecular biology
 - 2 law graduates
 - 3 medical students

Examples:

- ClinicalTrials.gov
- The National Urban League
- MEDLINEplus.gov
- PubMed
- Healthfinder.gov
- IntelliHealth
- WebMD
- Stop-tabac.ch
- Hospital 12 de Octubre
- Diabetes Netzwerk Deutschland
- Sociedad Argentina de Pediatría

Popular Google Links

cismef	5'700
medlineplus.gov	19'400
adam.com	26'000
cdc.gov	27'700
medscape.com	41'700
webmd.com	42'000
hon.ch	42'000
nih.gov	53'100

Second highest rate of web penetration in health issues

<http://tools.marketleap.com/publinkpop/>
MARKETLEAP – Digital Impact Company

Specialized search engines

● National projects: Personalization

- Health themes: Provisu (eye diseases), stop-tabac.ch (smoking prevention)
- Regional: SantéRomande (french speaking directory)

● European research projects

- WRAPIN: World-Wide online Reliable Advice to Patients and Individuals (5th FWP)
- ActiveHealth: Active Environment for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (5th FWP)
- PIPS: Personalized Information Platform for Life and Health Services (6th FWP)

International activities

- **Partnerships with:**
 - **The World Health Organization**
 - **National Library of Medicine**
 - **Google**

- **Local representation in:**
 - **Mali,**
 - **South Africa,**
 - **Spain**

Collaborative projects with WHO

- 2006-2007, project funded by the Geneva International Academic Network
- Study on cultural determinants of trust in French-speaking African countries
- Partners:



Institute of Social
Sciences in Mali

University Institute of
Development Studies



Working with Google

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Web Images Groups News Froogle Maps more »

hepatitis more:clinical_trials

Search

[Advanced Search](#)
[Preferences](#)

Web

Results 1 - 10 of about 1,430,000 for hepatitis more:clinical_trials with Safesearch on. (0.34 seconds)

[Recombinant proteins](#)

Sponsored Link

www.york-bio.com for virology and diagnostics Yorkshire Bioscience

Condition info

Misc

Info type

[Treatment](#)

[Practice guidelines](#)

[From medical authorities](#)

[Symptoms](#)

[Patient handouts](#)

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[Clinical trials](#)

[For health professionals](#)

[Clear refinements](#)

[ClinicalTrials.gov - Information on Clinical Trials and Human ...](#)

Recruiting, Low-Dose Peginterferon and Ribavirin to Treat Chronic **Hepatitis C** in Patients Infected with HCV Genotype 2 or 3 Condition: **Hepatitis C - 19**

www.clinicaltrials.gov/ct/screen/BrowseAny?path=%2Fbrowse%2Fby-condition%2Fhier%2FBC06.b%2FD006505%2BHepa... - 35k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)
Labeled [Clinical trial](#) [Medical author...](#) [Professionals](#) by [HON](#) [CDC](#)

[Clinical Trials - The American Liver Foundation](#)

Phase II **clinical trial** for treatment of **hepatitis C** with pegylated interferon ... SciClone Pharmaceuticals' US phase 3 **clinical trials** testing thymalfasin ...

www.liverfoundation.org/db-list/clinicaltrials/1/ascend/ID/Validated - 35k -

[Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

Labeled [Clinical trial](#) [For patients](#)

[Clinical Trials Resource Center - Hepatitis Foundation International](#)

Welcome to the **Hepatitis** Foundation International **Clinical Trials** Resource ... and what to expect when you volunteer to participate in a **clinical trial** ...

www.centerwatch.com/ctrc/hepfi/ - 23k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#)

Labeled [Clinical trial](#)

[Clinical Trials at Mayo Clinic](#)

Clinical Trials found within the Condition / Disease = "**Hepatitis**" (click the Trial Title link to see detailed information about that Trial) ...

Sponsored Links

[Dramatic Pathogen Images](#)

For Teaching or Publication.
Price online or ask for a quote!
www.rkm.com.au
Geneva

[Have a Chronic Illness?](#)

Take Surveys & Aid Medical Research
Get Paid For Your Opinions
CurePursuit.com

[Hepatitis Information](#)

Hepatitis resources and information
Patient group directory and links
www.heplinks.com

[Chinese Medicine Hospital](#)

Hepatitis B and **hepatitis C** to be treated by TCM experts in China.
www.tcm-treatment.com

[Hepatitis B](#)

Hepatitis Symptoms and Treatment
Medical Info and Resource
www.MedKuz.com

[SelfTest Medical Kits](#)

Aids tests, ALT, cancer, drug test
Discrete shipping, reliable & cheap
www.medical-shop.ca

[Hepatitis](#)

International recognition

- In 2002, HON Foundation was recognized as a non-governmental organization and granted special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council
- In May 2004, HON won the «eEurope Award for eHealth» presented by the European Union and the EU Commission



Conclusion

- The quality of the content can be deduced from the information production process using the HONcode *de facto* standards
- Ethical quality standards overcome difficulties posed by large volumes of information and disagreements on scientific matters.
- Local identity of sites can be preserved by implementing the HONcode, which is essential.
- The HONcode enhances overall quality : editorial pedagogy.
More than just a mouse click: Research into work practices behind the assignment of medical trust marks on the World Wide Web
Adams SA, de Bont AA. IJMI, June 2006, PMID: 16807085



| SPEECH: **ON** / OFF More info? | **FR** - **EN** - **SP** - **CN** |

PATIENT / INDIVIDUAL **MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL** **WEB PUBLISHER**

HONcode Accredited | **Medical Web** | **HONselect** | **News** | **Conferences** | **Images**

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Health On the Net Foundation is the leading organization promoting and guiding the deployment of useful and reliable online medical and health information, and its appropriate and efficient use. Created in 1995, HON is a non-profit, non-governmental organization, accredited to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. **(Read more about HON)**

<http://www.hon.ch/index.html>

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