Finding Health Information on the Internet

When looking for health information on the Internet, you should only look at information you can trust. How do you know if a website is a credible source for health information? Here are a few guidelines that you can use to help with your information search:

- Consider the source. In general, good sources for health information include sites from the federal government (.gov), educational institutes (.edu), and organizations (.org).

- Look for an "about us" link on the site that provides information on who runs the site. This may also include a mission statement that can offer an understanding of where the information is coming from.

- Check who reviews the information that you are reading. Is there a Medical Advisory Board? If you are looking at cancer information, there should be medical professionals on the board that specialize in cancer.

- When was the page last updated? Health information changes quickly and you want to make sure the information you are reading is current and up-to-date.

- Focus on Quality. Do you see spelling errors on the page? Are there dead links (links that do not connect to a page)? Does the page look disorganized? If so, you may want to try another website.

- Is the information you are reading too good to be true? If there is any doubt with what you are reading, try to find the information on another website.

- Be cautious since anyone can put information on the Internet.

- Be careful to protect your privacy. Most websites have a link to their Privacy Policy. This should explain how your information is collected, used, shared, processed and protected. Remember that your health information is confidential.

- Always verify information that you obtain on the Internet with your healthcare team before you make any medical decisions.

- For assistance, email the librarian at Rutgers Cancer Institute at cinj-rlc@cinj.rutgers.edu.

Recommended websites for general cancer informaton:

- American Cancer Socity   https://www.cancer.org/
- MedlinePlus   https://medlineplus.gov/
- National Cancer Institue   https://www.cancer.gov/
- Resource and Learning Center   https://cinj.org/rlc