

SEARCHING THE INTERNET FOR CARDIOVASCULAR RESOURCES

The internet can provide clinicians practicing in preventive cardiology with a wealth of resources from patient education information to slides for presentation, helpful lifestyle resources, and the latest information about treatment strategies. Listed below are some of the most common websites used in cardiovascular prevention. While there are thousands of sites available to the clinician, we have chosen to highlight information that is both factual and useful.

If you are searching the internet, you may want to keep these suggestions in mind:

1. Always check the source of your information. Who put it together? For whom do they work? Who is the sponsor of the site? Many of the most reliable information sites come from medical centers, university hospitals, and government health agencies such as the National Institutes of Health.
2. Check to see if the information is based on reports from leading medical journals. If references are unfamiliar or if no references exist, be cautious about interpreting the data.
3. Attempt to find out if the site and information are comprehensive.
4. Determine if the information is current. A website on health should be updated monthly, and this information should be provided to you as a reader.

In the following pages, we have listed only a small number of sites for you to explore. The summaries provide you with an overview of some of the highlights noted within each website.

A. National Organizations and Major University Sites

Site: <http://www.PCNA.net>

Sponsor: Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association

Overview: The PCNA website provides the cardiovascular health professional with in-depth information on the management of cardiovascular disease in one easy-to-use location. The site includes information on upcoming courses, certification, reimbursement, and reference links.

Site: <http://www.acc.org>

Sponsor: American College of Cardiology

Overview: The American College of Cardiology's (ACC) site is updated frequently and provides you with edited talks from their educational center, the Heart House, a schedule of upcoming courses and scientific meetings, and consensus statements related to cardiovascular disease. The Patient Education Center will give you up-to-date guidelines on various aspects of heart disease. If you sign on as a member, you can print information free of charge. Another site sponsored by ACC is <http://www.cardiosource.com>, which offers topics such as: Editor's Choice, Expert Opinions, Clinical Trials, and Case Studies.

Site: <http://www.ahrq.gov>

Sponsor: Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality

Overview: The Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has several practice guidelines in formats for both healthcare professionals and patients. Practice guidelines for cardiac rehabilitation, unstable angina, heart failure, and depression are just a few available for your use. Many of the guidelines are also available in Spanish and English.

Site: <http://www.americanheart.org>

Sponsor: American Heart Association

Overview: An in-depth site on overall cardiovascular disease, this website has much information for both the healthcare professional and patient. Find the latest from *Circulation*, the official journal of the American Heart Association (AHA). There is also information from the Cardiovascular Nursing Council and links to the Pharmaceutical Roundtable of the AHA. Find the latest statistics on cardiovascular disease; take your patients through their risk for cardiovascular disease, and type in food items to get low-fat or low-sodium recipes from the American Heart Association's cookbook.

Site: <http://www.diabetes.org>

Sponsor: American Diabetes Association

Overview: The American Diabetes Association (ADA) focuses on current association activities and provides information to the public. *Diabetes Forecast*, the ADA's magazine, is also available on this site. In addition, links to other patient education materials, research, and legislative activities can be accessed.

Site: <http://www.eatright.org>

Sponsor: American Dietetic Association

Overview: This site is useful for both healthcare professionals and the public. Many nutrition resources are available on the site, including referral services for dietitians, daily nutrition tips and fact sheets, and information about the latest topics on nutrition published in the news. This site will help your patients sort out the latest diets and scientific facts about nutrition.

Site: <http://www.acsm.org>

Sponsor: American College of Sports Medicine

Overview: The American College of Sports Medicine offers conferences, continuing education, and certification for healthcare professionals. They also provide continuing education through their journals.

Site: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>

Sponsors: National Heart Lung and Blood Institute of the National Institutes of Health (NHLBI)

Overview: NHLBI provides you with in-depth information as a professional and gives you an opportunity to print some of the best health education materials for your patients. The NHLBI Obesity Education Initiative allows everyone to calculate their body mass index and includes tips on diet for those with high blood pressure. A variety of heart-healthy menus reside on the "Recipes for Health Eating" section.

Site: <http://www.stroke.org>

Sponsor: National Stroke Association

Overview: At this site patients can test their knowledge on stroke and its symptoms and learn more about stroke prevention from national guidelines. There are also caregiver resources here for family members, including stroke centers and support groups. Links highlight products and services for stroke survivors and their caregivers.

Site: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/nhanes/datatablelink.htm>

Sponsor: Centers for Disease Control- National Center for Health Statistics

Overview: This website features the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) data tables. The tables listed include reference values and prevalence tables for: 1) Hypertension in adults by gender, age and race, 2) Total Cholesterol and HDL cholesterol in adults and children, by gender, age and race, and 3) Overweight and obesity and BMI levels for adults and children by gender, age and race. This site has links to the NHANES home page, as well as the Center for Disease Control and the National Center for Health Statistics page.

Site: <http://www.niddk.nih.gov/>

Sponsor: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases and the National Institutes of Health

Overview: This website is a great resource from the National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse and includes information ranging from an introduction to diabetes to medications and complications geared for the lay public. You will also find updated statistics, research trials, and additional resources for patients with diabetes.

Site: <http://www.womenheart.org>

Sponsor: WomenHeart: National Coalition for Women with Heart Disease

Overview: WomenHeart is the nation's only national patient advocacy organization for American women living with heart disease and provides them support, information, and advocacy. They offer community-based Support Networks in nearly 40 communities across America which provide a variety of services to heart disease survivors, and well as national educational seminars and membership conferences. WomenHeart offers complimentary monthly e-mail newsletter and free membership.

Site: <http://www.intelihealth.com>

Sponsor: Harvard Medical Schools and Aetna Intellihealth

Overview: This site offers information on a wide range of health topics for people of all ages, as well as news on topics of the day.

Site: <http://www.mayoclinic.org>

Sponsor: Mayo Clinic

Overview: This official website for the Mayo Clinic has a wealth of information from links searching different diseases and medications to information on fitness and tools to help manage a chronic condition or disease.

Site: <http://www.healthfinder.gov>

Sponsor: US Dept. of Health and Human Services

Overview: This site offers hand-picked health information from A to Z — prevention & wellness, diseases & conditions, and alternative medicine — plus medical dictionaries, an encyclopedia, journals, and more. There is a directory of selected government agencies, clearinghouses, non-profits, and universities. Information about physicians, dentists, public clinics, hospitals, long term care, nursing homes, health insurance, prescriptions, health fraud, Medicare, Medicaid, and medical privacy. Selected health topics organized for men and women, by age from kids to seniors, by race and ethnicity, and for parents, caregivers, health professionals, and others on a variety of topics.

Site: <http://www.medscape.com>

Sponsor: Medscape from WebMD

Overview: This site offers the largest collection of free full-text clinical medicine articles, 12 easily-searched databases that include Medline, daily news, interactive case studies, free online continuing medical education resources, and conference summaries. It is a superb site for healthcare professionals accessing scientific information. You can also e-mail an article to a colleague directly from this site. Free site registration is required to obtain a password.

Site: <http://www.medscape.com/nurses>

Sponsor: Medscape from WebMD

Overview: This website is similar to WebMD, incorporating a focus on nursing. Key features include: original, professional medical content, review articles, journal commentary and patient education articles along with CME activities and summaries of major medical meetings. There is a simple one time, free registration to have all this information available to each member.