



**Introduction:
How to Find Reliable
HIV/AIDS Treatment
Information on the
Internet**

How to Find Reliable HIV/AIDS Treatment
Information on the Internet

Introduction

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Introduction

- ? Many HIV/AIDS treatment resources can be accessed on the Internet.
- ? Some valuable resources will be highlighted in this course.

NOTE: Because of different protocols, software, and hardware, this course cannot equip each participant with a working knowledge of site-specific Internet access. Please consult your computer support staff when you return to your workplace to obtain information about your local system.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Objectives

Participants will:

- ? Be shown how to evaluate the accuracy of information on the Internet.
- ? Be exposed to quality Web sites with AIDS treatment information.
- ? Share their own experiences with AIDS treatment information on the Internet.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Evaluating Internet Resources

- ? Information on the Internet may be inaccurate.
- ? Be savvy by evaluating the information you find.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Why the Internet?

Why use the Internet to find HIV/AIDS treatment information?

- ? Abundance of FREE information:
 - ✗ Medical journals/databases
 - ✗ Prescription drugs
 - ✗ Clinical trials
 - ✗ Treatment information

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Why the Internet? (cont.)

- ? 24-hour-per-day availability.
- ? Current awareness.
- ? Ability to connect with people with similar medical problems.
- ? Anonymity/privacy.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Cases of Inaccurate Information on the Web

? Many home HIV test kits sold over the Internet supply inaccurate results according to the Federal Trade Commission.

✗ Correct information:

Only one home test is reliable, as per the FDA: Home Access Express HIV-I Test System.

Source: *USA Today*, 6/21/99, p. 5D

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Cases of Inaccurate Information on the Web (cont.)

? Johns Hopkins University's and C. Everett Koop's Web sites were slow to add information on new hepatitis treatments.

Source: National Public Radio, 1999

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Affiliation

? Affiliation = Publisher.

? What institution is connected with this information?

? Does the institution exercise quality control?

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Purpose

- ? Web sites can blend advertising, entertainment, and information.
- ? What is the purpose of this Web site?

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Objectivity

- ? Is there a minimum of bias?
- ? Is there any apparent conflict, such as advertising by the sponsor?

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Audience

- ? Who is the intended audience?
 - ✗ Professionals
 - ✗ Consumers
 - ✗ Patients

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Coverage

- ? What topics are included?
- ? What is the depth of exploration?
- ? Has unfavorable information been omitted?

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Buying Drugs Online

- ? Is the site a licensed pharmacy in good standing?
 National Association of Boards of Pharmacy:
www.nabp.net, or call 847-698-6227.
- ? Are the drugs for sale approved by the Federal Drug Administration?
- ? Are the drugs for sale by prescription only?
- ? Is a physical exam required for a first time prescription?

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Buying Drugs Online (cont.)

- ? Is a registered pharmacist available to answer questions?
- ? Does the site provide identification and a U.S. address?
- ? Is a phone number provided in case you have a question or problem?

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Buying Drugs Online (cont.)

- ? Stay away from sites that:
 - ✗ Advertise a "new cure" for a serious disorder or a quick cure-all for a wide range of ailments.
 - ✗ Use impressive-sounding terminology to disguise a lack of good science or those that claim the government, the medical profession, or research scientists have conspired to suppress a product.
 - ✗ Include undocumented case histories claiming "amazing" results.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Locating Information on the WWW

- ? Use a search directory/engine to find Web sites.
- ? Be persistent.
- ? Ask a librarian for assistance.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Locating Information on a WWW Site

- ? Look for topics of interest to click on.
- ? Look for a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) selection.
- ? Look for an electronic forum.
- ? Look for a search tool on HIV/AIDS sites.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points

- ? AIDS Clinical Trials Information Service (ACTIS)
<http://actis.org>
 - ✗ Government-sponsored information on government and private clinical trials
 - ✗ AIDSDRUGS, AIDSTRIALS databases

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

- ? AIDS Education Global Information System (AEGIS)
<http://www.aegis.org>
 - ✗ Comprehensive coverage - largest HIV/AIDS Web site
 - ✗ Edited for inclusiveness, not quality
 - ✗ Updated frequently
 - ✗ *HIV Daily Briefing* on home page
 - ✗ Site search engine

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

- ? AIDS Treatment Data Network
<http://aidsinfonyc.org/network/index.html>
 - ✗ About 40 simple fact sheets on treatment topics
 - ✗ *Treatment Review*
 - ✗ Contains some Spanish resources

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

? HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Service (ATIS)
<http://hivatis.org>

✍ Government-sponsored treatment guidelines

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

? Johns Hopkins AIDS Service
<http://www.hopkins-aids.edu/>

✍ Mostly practitioner-oriented

✍ Medical expert Q & A for patients and doctors

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

? MEDLINEplus AIDS Info
<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/aids.html>

✍ Web sites reviewed for quality

✍ Broad coverage of topics

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

? New Mexico AIDS InfoNet
<http://www.aidsinfonet.org/>

⚡ About 60 fact sheets on treatment topics

† Written for 8th- or 9th-grade level

† Medical review

† Also in Spanish

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Starting Points (cont.)

? Project Inform
<http://www.ProjectInform.org/>

⚡ About 80 fact sheets on treatment topics

† Technical, but readable

† “Introductory Package”

† Medical review not mentioned

† Many items also in Spanish

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 

Last Word

? Use your professional judgment and these criteria to evaluate information on the Internet.

? Consult your health care professional before making any treatment decisions.

HIV/AIDS Treatment Information on the Internet 