

# Reliable Cancer Information on the Internet

A Reference Guide



Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center

Community Health Library

Open Monday-Friday 9am-4pm

[hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/library](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/library)

Need help locating health information contact :

Linda Gorman at [lgorman@jhmi.edu](mailto:lgorman@jhmi.edu) or call 410-550-0678.

The library staff at Johns Hopkins Bayview hopes this booklet helps you find reliable information on the Internet. Library staff are available to help you locate information Monday-Friday from 8am - 4pm, or email Linda Gorman at [lgorman@jhmi.edu](mailto:lgorman@jhmi.edu) or call 410-550-0678.

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**Remember:** The information found on the websites in this brochure **does not take the place of your doctor.** Discuss any information you may find with your doctor.

# Community Health Library



Check out some of our books on topics including:

- Cancer
- Caregiving
- Spirituality
- Healthy Cookbooks

Take a break and enjoy some of our popular fiction, puzzle books, and coloring pages.



# Community Health Library

**Open to patients, visitors, families and  
community members.**

Visit the Community Health Library on the 01 level of the main hospital (right outside of Rehab) and get help finding reliable cancer information or use the computers in the library.

**Resources and services are free.**



## ***Library hours***

**9am - 4pm**

(Closed 12-1 for lunch)

**Monday - Friday**

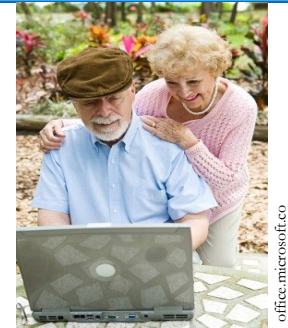
**Call Linda Gorman**

**410-550-0678**

[hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/library](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/library)

## Read This Before You Search

A Google search for **cancer** produces over **725,000,000** results! How do you know which of these sites has **reliable** information?



Reliable websites give you true information!

**Remember these four points when you search the Internet:**

### **Accuracy**

Does the website use reliable research? Check many sources for the same information - are the results the same?

### **Authority**

Websites that end in .org, .gov or .edu are usually the most reliable websites for health facts. Make sure the website is written by doctors, nurses, or others working in the health field.

### **Bias**

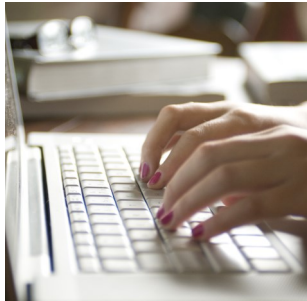
Who pays for the website? If a company supports a website they could have control over the website and give you wrong information.

### **Currency**

When were the facts last updated? Medical research never stops. Make sure the information is no older than **3** years.

## Signs of a Scam

How can you tell if websites are telling the truth? These signs can help you decide whether a website or an ad is a scam.



CDC/ Amanda Mills

- No one treatment works for everyone. Two people with the same problem may need different care. Don't trust any website with ads for products that say it can treat any sickness.
- "Natural" doesn't always mean safe or that it actually works.
- Fake marketers may trick you into buying their product. Products that claim to cure or treat a sickness might seem honest, but they can be completely made-up. An actor or model could have been paid to tell you they like the product. **Personal stories are not proof that the product works.**
- Big words might sound impressive, but aren't proof that the product works. Your doctor will know the facts.
- A money-back guarantee doesn't prove that a product works.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Anatomy of a Cancer Treatment Scam

[cancer.gov/cancertopics/videos/health-info-online](http://cancer.gov/cancertopics/videos/health-info-online)

Video about Internet scams. (2 minutes)

## Research Results in the News: A Users Guide (cont'd)

6. ***What does it mean when the results of a study are described as statistically significant?*** Statistically significant means the finding is not likely to be due to chance. It does not always mean, however, that the finding is important for your health decisions.
7. ***Are the results presented in an easy-to-understand way?*** Absolute risk, relative risk, or some other easy-to-understand number should be used.
8. ***If a new treatment was tested, were there side effects?*** Sometimes the side effects are almost as serious as the disease. Or, the drug might worsen a different health problem.
9. ***Who paid for the research? Do they stand to gain financially from positive or negative results?*** Sometimes the Federal Government or a nonprofit foundation helps fund research costs. They looked at the plans for the project and decided it was worthy of support, but they will not make money as a result. If a drug is being tested, the study might be partly or fully paid for by the company that is developing the drug.
10. ***Where did you see or hear the results? Is the newspaper, magazine, website, or radio or television station a reliable source of medical news?*** Some media outlets have special science reporters on staff. They are trained to interpret medical findings. Talk to your doctor to help you judge how accurate the reports are and what they could mean for your health.

MedlinePlus Magazine Spring 2012

## Research Results in the News: A Users Guide

Ask these questions when reading about a research study:

1. ***Was this a study in the laboratory, in animals, or in people?***  
Results of research in people are more likely to apply to you.
2. ***Does the study include enough people like you?*** Were the people in the study of a similar age, sex, education level, income group, and ethnic background as you? Did they have the same health concerns and lifestyle?
3. ***Was it a randomized controlled clinical trial involving thousands of people?*** These trials give scientists the most useful information about whether a treatment or a lifestyle change is effective. But they are the most costly to do, and scientists hope to find more efficient, less expensive ways to study this in the future.
4. ***Where was the research done?*** Scientists at a medical school or large hospital, for example, often lead complex experiments or have more experience with the topic. Many large clinical trials involve several institutions or clinics, but the results may be reported by one coordinating group.
5. ***Are the reported results in line with previous studies?***  
Sometimes a study will report something very different from what scientists expected to find. Any result needs to be repeated elsewhere several times before it might be considered truly valid.

## General Internet Site for Cancer

The 1st place to search:

**National Cancer Institute (NCI)** (en español)  
[cancer.gov](http://cancer.gov)

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is the **first place** to begin a search for reliable cancer information. The website is devoted entirely to information and research on all types of cancers.

NCI can be contacted via:

- Phone: **1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET. Services to the deaf or hard-of-hearing are also available. La información de salud en español.
- Chat: Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. ET (English only).
- Email: “contact us” link La información de salud en español.
- U.S. Mail : BG 9609 MSC 9760  
9606 Medical Center Drive  
Bethesda, MD 20892-9760

NCI provides information on cancer symptoms, diagnosis, and treatment: including information on genetics, clinical trials, and research. A dictionary of cancer and drug terms is available. Links are provided to clinical trials.

## General Cancer Sites

### American Cancer Society (en español)

[cancer.org](http://cancer.org)

General information about cancer and treatments. Cancer Information Specialists are available 24/7 to answer questions.(1-800-227-2345)  
Live chat available.

### Cancer Care (en español)

[cancercares.org](http://cancercares.org)

Free support services including counseling from cancer social workers.

### Cancer Dictionary (en español)

[cancer.gov/dictionary](http://cancer.gov/dictionary)

National Cancer Institute (NCI) Dictionary of 7,500+ cancer terms.

### Cancer.net (en español)

[cancer.net](http://cancer.net)

Dealing with cancer resources and help finding a cancer doctor. Videos and podcasts available.

### Look Good, Feel Better (en español)

[lookgoodfeelbetter.org](http://lookgoodfeelbetter.org)

Managing hair loss and changes in skin and nails. Information on local “Look Good, Feel Better” programs.

### American Society for Radiation Oncology

[rtanswers.org](http://rtanswers.org)

Explains to patients, their families and the public how radiation oncologists use radiation therapy to treat cancer safely and effectively.



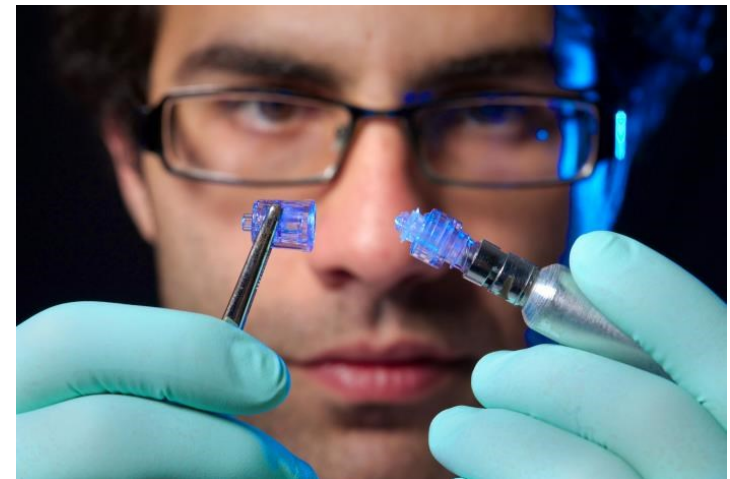
## Research

### PubMed

[ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed](http://ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed)

Pubmed is the database from the National Library of Medicine, containing thousands of research articles written by doctors and other health professionals.

PubMed can be hard to use. Call Linda Gorman (410-550-0678) or visit the Community Health Library for help.



# Clinical Trials

## CancerTrialsHelp.org

[cancer.org/clinicaltrials](http://cancer.org/clinicaltrials)

Learn about clinical trials. Search for clinical trials. (800-227-2345).

## CenterWatch

[centerwatch.com](http://centerwatch.com)

Help with the research process and what to expect if taking part in study. Information on drugs in clinical trials and new FDA approved drugs.

## Clinical Trials at Johns Hopkins

[hopkinsmedicine.org/kimmel\\_cancer\\_center/research\\_clinical\\_trials](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/kimmel_cancer_center/research_clinical_trials)

Information about studies offered at the Johns Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center.

## ClinicalTrials.gov

[clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov)

Database of privately and publicly funded clinical studies conducted around the world.



CDC/ Melissa

# Hopkins Cancer Resources

## Hopkins Kimmel Cancer Center

[hopkinsmedicine.org/kimmel\\_cancer\\_center/patient\\_information](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/kimmel_cancer_center/patient_information)

Patient and family services. (410-955-8934)

## Hopkins Health Library

[hopkinsmedicine.org/healthlibrary](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/healthlibrary)

Health topics and Hopkins doctors.

## MyChart at Hopkins

[mychart.hopkinsmedicine.org](http://mychart.hopkinsmedicine.org)

Access your Hopkins medical records. (Mobile app available.)

## Johns Hopkins Home Care Group

[hopkinsmedicine.org/homecare](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/homecare)

Home care services including training, medical supplies and equipment, infusion, hospice, and caregiving help. (410-288-8100)

*Called to*  
**CARE**

## Called to Care

[hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/calledtocare](http://hopkinsmedicine.org/jhbmc/calledtocare)

Program to assist and recognize caregivers. (410-550-8018)

## Support

### **4thAngel.org**

[4thangel.org](http://4thangel.org)

Specially trained volunteers and cancer survivors.

### **Lotsa Helping Hands**

[lotsahelpinghands.com](http://lotsahelpinghands.com)

Set up a personal group calendar for organizing helpers.

### **Cancer Care Support Groups**

[cancercaresupportgroups.org](http://cancercaresupportgroups.org)

Online, phone, and face-to-face free support groups for cancer patients, caregivers, and family members led by cancer social workers.

(1-800-813-4673) or email [info@cancercaresupportgroups.org](mailto:info@cancercaresupportgroups.org)

### **Cancer Support Community**

[cancersupportcommunity.org](http://cancersupportcommunity.org)

Links to support groups, caregiving, research and more during cancer treatment.

### **I Can't Believe I Have Cancer**

[cantbelieveihavecancer.org](http://cantbelieveihavecancer.org)

Links to prayers. Request prayers or chat with a chaplain.

Chat with a Chaplain: (844-322-4642). Mon-Fri 9am-11pm ET



caifa.org

## Payment Help

### **American Cancer Society Hope Lodge**

[cancer.org/hopelodge](http://cancer.org/hopelodge)

Programs and services to help patients and family members manage their lives with cancer.

### **CancerCare (en español)**

[cancercaresupportgroups.org/financial](http://cancercaresupportgroups.org/financial)

Payment assistance for cancer patients.

Social Worker: (800-813-4673) Mon-Thurs 9am-7pm, Fri 9am-5pm ET

Provides limited payment help to qualified cancer patients. Provides links to more payment help.

### **Cancer Net (en español)**

[cancer.net/all-about-cancer/managing-cost-cancer-care](http://cancer.net/all-about-cancer/managing-cost-cancer-care)

Help with cancer costs, including health insurance, and the 2010 Health Reform Law.

### **Corporate Angel Network**

[corpangelnetwork.org](http://corpangelnetwork.org)

Fly free to treatment for qualified cancer patients. (914-328-1313)

### **Needy Meds (en español)**

[needy meds.org](http://needy meds.org)

Free or low cost medicine payment programs. (800-503-6897)

### **Vickie's Angel Walk**

[vickiesangelfoundation.org](http://vickiesangelfoundation.org)

Payment information for medical and non-medical expenses. (717-774-3800)

### **Patient Resource**

[patientresource.com](http://patientresource.com)

Many links to payment help.