

Medical Questions

How to answer and when to refer
them on



General guidelines: Do

- # Give the correct information
 - Drug and disease names can often sound similar but may be totally different
 - # Give what the patron asks for, even if it may seem unsuitable
 - # Refer the question on to a medical library if it is a complicated question and you don't have the resources
 - # Advise them to discuss information they receive with their health practitioner
 - # Make it clear that you are not qualified to diagnose
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General guidelines: Don't

- # Don't interpret for the person
 - # Don't try to diagnose
 - # Don't try to figure out the correct spelling
 - # Don't make recommendations
 - # Don't tell them about your experiences with the same condition
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First choice online: MedlinePlus

MedlinePlus

- medlineplus.gov
 - Over 90% of medical questions can be answered here
 - Has everything from low literacy information to clinical research
 - English and Spanish
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Second choices

- # NOAH (New York Online Access to Health)
 - www.noah-health.org/
 - # Health Reference Triage: Health Resources for the Public
 - www.ohsu.edu/library/ref/ohslaaclass.shtml
 - # OHSU Consumer Health
 - www.ohsu.edu/library/consumerhealth/
 - Sections for health links, young women's and young men's health, school nurses
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EBSCOhost Health Databases

- # AltHealthWatch
 - # CINAHL
 - # Clinical Pharmacology
 - # Health Source: Consumer Edition
 - # Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition
 - # MedicLatina
 - # Medline
 - # Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection
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For in-depth information

PubMed

- pubmed.gov

National Cancer Institute

- www.cancer.gov/

eMedicine Clinical Knowledge Base

- www.emedicine.com/

Merck Manuals

- www.merck.com/pubs/

Toxicology and environmental health

- TOXNET toxnet.nlm.nih.gov/
 - Tox Town toxtown.nlm.nih.gov/
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When to refer

- # You've gone through all the basic sources and haven't found what the patron wants
 - Refer the question on to OHSU through L-Net
 - Refer the patron to the OHSU Health Information by Mail/E-mail service
 - www.ohsu.edu/library/consumerhealth/himrequest.shtml
 - List of medical libraries that patrons can call or visit
 - www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/libraries.html
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For health professionals

- # All licensed health professionals in Oregon can get access to some resources at OHSU, including Ovid MEDLINE.
 - # Refer health professionals in your area to www.ohsu.edu/library/offcampus/nonohsu.shtml
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Remember

Always tell the patron

- You are not a health professional and cannot diagnose
- The information you are giving to them may not apply to their particular case
- That they should talk to their health practitioner about the information they get

Confidentiality

Training at your library

- # Members of the Oregon Health Sciences Libraries Association (OHSLA) have a grant to provide training for non-medical librarians in Oregon
 - # If you are interested in training, contact Judith Hayes at tuality.library@tuality.org
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