Using the Internet for Health-Related Information

What is the best way to start a search?

- The Internet is a powerful resource, but can have both reliable and misleading information.
- Begin with a “search engine” such as Yahoo, Google, Ask, or Bing. Type in a phrase, diagnosis, or question in the “search bar,” press the “enter” bar, and review the results. Narrow down the choices, or use a more specific phrase.
- Think about where the health information is coming from.
  - Websites that end in “.edu” (a period followed by “edu”) may be from a University, or other place of learning.
  - Those ending in “.gov” are government websites, and “.org” are non-profit websites (charities).
  - Commercial sites (owned by a specific company/companies) end in “.com.”
  - A health care article should have the writer’s names and credentials. Look for articles written by health care professionals, such as doctors or nurse practitioners. Any statistics or facts quoted in the article should have a reference to check the facts.

What information do I need to know to help my child?

- Think about what type of information you need to help you understand your child’s health condition and/or the treatment choices your family needs to make.
- Depending on your child’s age and ability to understand their diagnosis and treatments, it may also be helpful to find resources appropriate for your child’s level of understanding.

Resources:

- The neurology clinic staff (neurologist, nurse practitioners/nurses, and social workers) can provide you with helpful internet and other resources specific to your child’s needs.
- If you find information on the internet about your child’s condition, ask your providers to confirm the information is correct.
- Reliable general websites:
  - Child Neurology Foundation – connects caregivers with information, providers, research, and support on a large variety of topics in pediatric neurology: [http://www.childneurologyfoundation.org/patients-or-caregivers/](http://www.childneurologyfoundation.org/patients-or-caregivers/)

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