

Appendix F  
Consumer Information You Can Trust

## Consumer Health Information You Can Trust

### MedlinePlus <<http://medlineplus.gov>> and Other Reliable Health Websites

#### What is MedlinePlus?

MedlinePlus is one of the best, most comprehensive websites for basic, quality consumer health information on the Web, including:

- **Health Topics** information pages for over 700 conditions
- **Drug Information** for over 9,000 prescription and non-prescription drugs, 100 herbs and supplements
- **Medical Encyclopedia** with over 4,000 articles
- **Medical Dictionary** for definitions and spellings of 60,000 medical words & phrases
- **Health News** for the past month
- **Directories** of doctors, dentists, hospitals, and helpful organizations
- **Other Resources** with information about 9,000 health organizations
- **Tutorials** for over 165 health conditions
- **Videos** of about 150 surgical procedures

#### MedlinePlus Homepage:

The screenshot shows the MedlinePlus homepage with the following elements:

- Address bar:** <http://medlineplus.gov/>
- Skip navigation:** A link to skip navigation.
- Header:** MedlinePlus® Trusted Health Information for You. A service of the U.S. NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE and the NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH.
- Search:** Search MedlinePlus
- Language:** español
- Health Topics:** Start here with over 650 topics on conditions, diseases and wellness.
- Drug Information:** About your prescription and over-the-counter medicines.
- Medical Encyclopedia:** Includes pictures and diagrams.
- Dictionary:** Spellings and definitions of medical words.
- News:** Health News from the past 30 days.
- Directories:** Find doctors, dentists and hospitals.
- Other Resources:** Local libraries, health organizations, international sites and more.
- Current Health News:**
  - ▶ [Eating Less at Any Age Prolongs Life](#)
  - ▶ [Poor Care Plus Dementia Equals Violence](#)
  - ▶ [FDA Issues Public Health Advisory on Cautions for Use of Antidepressants in Adults and Children](#)
  - ▶ [More news](#)
- Featured Site:** Protection Agency. New information about [mercury in fish and shellfish](#) from the Food and Drug Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency.
- In the Spotlight:** March is Colorectal Cancer Prevention Month. Learn more:
  - ▶ Go to [Colorectal Cancer](#)
- Interactive Tutorials:** Over 165 slideshows with sound and pictures.
- ClinicalTrials.gov:** Studies for new drugs and treatments.
- NIH SeniorHealth:** Health information for older adults.
- What's new on MedlinePlus?**
  - Sign up now!
  - ▶ [Add MedlinePlus to your site](#)
  - ▶ Take a [tour](#) of the site

## Why is MedlinePlus one of the best?

- The National Library of Medicine (NLM) produces it.
- It links to governmental and non-profit organizations' Web sites that NLM staff have reviewed and carefully selected.
- MedlinePlus has no advertising or links to commercial sites.
- MedlinePlus has URAC accreditation, which requires passing rigorous standards.
- MedlinePlus spell checks misspelled words and provides alternate correct spellings.
- It is continually updated.

## How to use MedlinePlus

Click on a category (Health Topics, Drugs and Supplements, Medical Encyclopedia, etc.) listed on the left side of the MedlinePlus homepage, and then browse through the subjects to find your topic. If no information is found, enter your topic in the search box at the top left of the page.

### 1. The Medical Encyclopedia

The ADAM Medical Encyclopedia gives general information and illustrations about a medical condition. Click on the Medical Encyclopedia link, then browse by the first letter of your topic. Clicking on an illustration will make it larger.

### 2. Health Topics

The Health Topics page shows a list of “Disorders and Conditions” by body location, also of “Procedures”, by “Demographics”, and “Health and Wellness” topics, as well as a list of “Frequently Requested Topics” on the right of the page. At the top of the page is the section “Find your topic by first letter”. For example, clicking on “M” shows a list of topics, including “Migraine, see [Headache and Migraine](#)”.

The “Headache and Migraine” Health Topic page provides links to the “Latest News” (any news articles about the topic within the last 30 days), websites from the National Institutes of Health, General/Overview websites, including tutorials, if a tutorial is available. Alternate Therapy information (from reliable sources, of course), Clinical Trials, Diagnosis, Prevention, Specific Conditions, Treatment, Dictionaries (if there are any specific to the topic), Organizations devoted to the topic, and information targeted to special age groups (children in this case). The left column on the Headache and Migraine Health Topic page summarizes these links. For a list of professional level journal articles, click on “Search Medline for...” The articles will be more technical than most people want.

Click on a link: clicking on a link from MedlinePlus opens a new web page; the MedlinePlus page remains open. To return to the MedlinePlus page, close the new page, instead of clicking on “back”.

For similar information in Spanish, click on “Espanol” (the yellow box in the upper right corner of the page). Not all of the information is available in Spanish

### 3. Drug Information

MedlinePlus' Drugs and Supplements section provides information about prescription and non-prescription drugs from two sources: Medmaster (American Society of Health-System Pharmacists) and USP DI (US Pharmacopeia). The Medmaster information is generally easier to understand. MedlinePlus provides information in Spanish for most medications. The Drugs and Supplements section also provides evidence-based information in both English and Spanish for more than 100 herbs and supplements from the Natural Standards database.

The Drug Digest at <[www.drugdigest.org](http://www.drugdigest.org)> has a Drug Library based on the Clinical Pharmacology database. The Drug Library includes pictures of 6,000 medications. Try the Check Interactions section to check a list of drugs for possible interactions. Use the Compare Drugs sections to compare medications for some common medical conditions.

### 4. Directories

This section of MedlinePlus provides general and specialized directories for doctors, dentists, hospitals, and other healthcare facilities. DocFinder lists information about physicians by state. The "States with Links Only" on the right side of the DocFinder page links to the New York State Physician Profile <[www.nydoctorprofile.com](http://www.nydoctorprofile.com)>, sponsored by the New York State Department of Health. Practicing physicians in New York State are required to provide information for this database, but at the moment no one is checking the information to make sure it's correct. The record shows the physician's license number and date of licensure, education, practice location, including affiliated hospital privileges, types of insurance accepted, and professional activities. Under "Legal actions", it's important to look carefully. To see if any actions have been taken, click on "OPMC" (Office of Professional Misconduct). Documentation of the action can be found at the OPMC site.

### 5. Other Resources

The Other Resources category lists these useful databases:

- **DIRLINE**, a searchable database with contact information for 9,000 health-related organizations.
- **TOXNET**, which includes the Household Products Database, with health and safety information for household products, and the Haz-Map of Occupational Exposure to Hazardous Agents, which can be searched by occupation or substance.

## Other High Quality Health Websites

**CLIC on Health** <[www.cliconhealth.org](http://www.cliconhealth.org)>

This site provides local health information for the Rochester area, including health news and links to reliable health websites.

**Familydoctor.org** <[familydoctor.org](http://familydoctor.org)> (American Academy of Family Practitioners)

This site provides patient handouts covering over 500 health topics; some are also available in Spanish. For a sample, click on "Conditions A-Z" and browse for "Migraine headaches". The "Health Tools" section includes "Search by Symptom", which has

flowcharts for making decisions about when to use homecare and when to see the doctor. To see a flowchart, browse “Search by Symptom” for “Headaches”.

**Kidshealth** <[www.kidshealth.org](http://www.kidshealth.org)> (Nemours Foundation)

This site provides health information at a level children can understand. It also includes TeensHealth and a section for parents.

**Healthfinder** <[www.healthfinder.gov](http://www.healthfinder.gov)> (US Dept. of Health & Human Services)

Healthfinder provides a directory to health information organized for specific groups such as men, women, parents, kids, teens, seniors, and caregivers in English and Spanish. It includes support and self-help groups.

**NOAH** (New York Online Access to health) <[www.noah-health.org](http://www.noah-health.org)> (sponsored by New York Academy of Medicine, New York State Library, New York Public Library, others)

NOAH is a directory to health sites that have been reviewed and selected by medical librarians. You will find more commercial sites listed here than on MedlinePlus.

**MayoClinic.com** <[www.mayoclinic.com](http://www.mayoclinic.com)>

MayoClinic provides easy-to-understand information on diseases, drugs, conditions, healthy living, self-care and coping skills.

**Cancer.gov** <[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)> (National Cancer Institute)

This is the best cancer Web site, and it’s easy to use. See the PDQ section for the most current treatments for any type of cancer. Two other reliable sites for cancer information are the American Cancer Society website at <[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)> and University of Pennsylvania’s Oncolink <[www.oncolink.org](http://www.oncolink.org)>, which includes information in Spanish.

**Lab Tests Online** <[www.labtestsonline.org](http://www.labtestsonline.org)>

This is the best website for information about lab tests for patients.

**MyPyramid.gov** <[MyPyramid.gov](http://MyPyramid.gov)> (U.S. Department of Agriculture )-

This site explains the new food pyramid and personalizes the pyramid guidelines especially for you. For a quick estimate of what and how much you need to eat, enter your age, sex, and activity level in the MyPyramid Plan box. For a detailed assessment of your food intake and physical activity level, click on MyPyramid Tracker.

**Alternative Medicine: Health Care Information Resources**

< <http://hsl.lib.mcmaster.ca/tomflem/altmed.html>> (Tom Flemming, McMaster University Health Sciences Library)

This site provides a comprehensive listing of annotated links to information about alternative therapies and their definitions, as well as information about evaluating their effectiveness.