



Evaluating Vaccine Information on the Web

Many websites offer accurate immunization information. Other websites contain misinformation. Below are some tips to help you find your way through all of the information available and determine its accuracy. Health information found on the web should supplement rather than replace the information or advice given by your doctor. **Always discuss with your doctor or health professional the information that you find on the web.**

How do I know if the vaccine information I find on the Internet is accurate?

- Consider the **source** of information.
- A good health website will display who is responsible for the site. Also, there will be a way to contact the information provider or webmaster.
- Do scientific experts review the medical information before it is posted on the website? What are their credentials?
- Does the information display the date of last revision, and is it kept up to date?
- What is the scientific evidence for claims made? The original source of facts and figures should be shown. For example, the website should provide citations of medical articles or other sources of information. You should be able to distinguish facts from opinions. Also, facts are more reliable if they come from a published scientific study on humans rather than from unpublished accounts or from reports of a single person or of animal studies.
- Consider the **purpose** of the website. The purpose should be to provide accurate and unbiased information about that topic. If the purpose is to advertise about a health care product, be skeptical about the information provided.

Two websites for vaccine information:

www.vaccineinformation.org

At www.vaccineinformation.org you will find a website from the Immunization Action Coalition. This site presents information about vaccine-preventable diseases and vaccines. Photos, video clips, case histories, journal articles, and resources for parents are available at this site.

www.vaccine.org

The Allied Vaccine Group is comprised of websites dedicated to presenting valid scientific information about the sometimes-confusing subject of vaccines.