

Create 2 pages
handout of criteria to
ensure that
information found on
the intern...

[Health & Medicine](#), [Nursing](#)



Nursing The purpose of this paper is to provide criteria upon which nursing can use to evaluate the accuracy and reliability of information gathered from websites. The objective of this paper is to demonstrate how students can access reputable websites and ultimately translate that information into a form that is usable by a patient. The format that this paper will utilize is to first compare a credible website against a suspect website. It is upon this foundation that criteria will be generated that will lead interested parties to more scholarly sources.

For the purpose of this paper the source that will be evaluated as a suspect website will be NaturalNews. com (2011) and the source of information that will be considered a reliable source of accurate information will be the Health Canada: Drugs and Health Products Website (2011). Most of the criteria used to evaluate the websites will be based on the University of Colorado: Library Resources on how to evaluate the validity of a website (2011)

In regards to why Natural News can be considered a suspect website can be broken down into several reasons. Firstly it is the case that most articles are written in a opinionated style, for example articles will often try to place blame on an individual or organization rather than the illness itself. Secondly the language being used often incorporates, pseudo-scientific words and phrases such as karma, secret conspiracy etc. Upon examination of the website any reader will notice that there are a whole host of so called natural medicines being sold. Although it is not necessarily a bad thing for a website to utilize advertising, it is the case that the articles seem to tie into products that are being sold on the article in question. Most articles on natural news

incorporate links to other websites although the links typically bring the reader to other pages on Natural News and other sites such as Wikipedia (Which typically is not acceptable material for academic works). Finally, articles are not typically being written by professionals such as medical doctors, scientific researchers, nurses etc. Moreover the articles do not seem to be peer reviewed by these sorts of professionals as well.

An example of a good website that may be of some use to anybody interested in nursing would be the Health Canada: Drugs and Health Products Website (2011). Upon early examination one notices that the website does not feature any advertising of any kind which means that there is no direct financial incentive for the existence of the website. The links provided are all directed to either government published resources or peer reviewed academic journals. The language used on the website is purely medical and does not include any specialized social commentary.

In terms of a rubric that can be used to critically evaluate the validity of a website one can look at the following criteria.

Who is the author? If the author is not medical professional than it is more likely to be an unreliable source.

What if anything is being advertised on the website? For example if the article is regarding cancer treatment and most of the advertisement is selling so called cancer fighting supplements than the website is probably not credible.

What is being referenced on the website? If the site is not referencing government publications, peer reviewed academic journals etc. Than it is

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probably not a reliable source.

Does the website offer peer reviewed journals that have been examined by credible sources? If the website links to articles published by the same author exclusively or other non peer review journals than the source is probably not reliable.

What sort of language is being used on the website? If the website speaks heavily to conspiracies or uses a great deal of pseudo scientific language it is probably not a good source.

What sort of links does the website use? For example if the website links to wikipedia, or to other sources that are not considered applicable for academic use than it is probably not a good source.

References

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