Health & Medical Website Guide

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AVOID BEING FOOLED!

(Ask these questions to keep on the safe side of the web)

1. Are the authors of the information **identified**?
2. Are the **authors' credentials** listed, and are they qualified to write on the subject?
3. Are the authors **board certified** in their specialty? Have they received **extra training** in their specialty such as fellowship training?
4. Is the **website focused on the sale of certain products** rather than on providing medical and health information?
5. Does the **site look professional**?
6. Does the site have a **valid e-mail address** where feedback can be sent to the author or Web master?
7. Is there a **published disclaimer** on the site emphasizing that the information provided is not a substitute for a physical examination by a health-care provider?
8. Are **references listed** for the information presented?

Health on the Net Foundation: "HONcode Principles"

A **HONCode** emblem guarantees that a website offers credible health and medical information.

1. Medical and health information must be **published by qualified professionals**, unless otherwise stated.
2. The practice of **confidentiality** must be honored.
3. **References** must be documented where appropriate.
4. Web users must be **able to contact** the Website author(s).
5. Any **sources of funding** for the site must be clearly documented.

Reference: Hughes, J. A., Megan Schimpf, and Edward G. McFarland, M.D. "Riches on the World Wide Web: Best Info Sites for Health & Fitness." ACSM's Health & Fitness Journal 3:5 (1999): 28-34.

✽ *Ron Jones (9.5.07)*