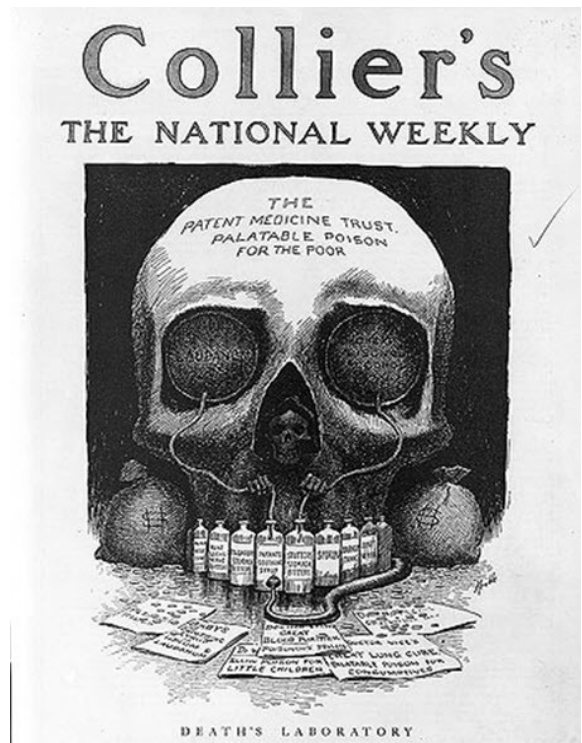


Credible Health Information Online

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The patent medicine industry is alive and well in America, with websites peddling all sorts of questionable herbal supplements and weight-loss aids. Many of these substances are presented as an alternative to traditional medical treatment, and use ridiculous paranoid appeals such as “the secret cure your doctor doesn't want you to know about!” Unfortunately, a significant number of Americans fall for these claims. Conspiracy theories regarding the Federal government and pharmaceutical companies are widespread. Consumers must be careful, as the Internet is loaded with websites peddling misinformation, fad cures and nonsense.



People will spend a lot of money to avoid ending up dead or having to live with chronic pain, and there are people in this world who will gladly take advantage of others' desire for survival and pain relief. This class will focus on navigating four websites that are excellent sources of medical information for seniors:

- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
- MedlinePlus from the National Institute of Health (NIH)
- Mayo Clinic Diseases & Conditions website
- Cleveland Clinic Health Information website

These four sites covered in this handout were chosen because they are all reliable sources of information on a variety of health conditions. There are other credible sites on the web, and you'll find links to other sites from the four listed below. With medical information, finding credible data can be tricky, and these four can be thought of as a “safe list”. Also, if you follow a link that is posted on one of these sites, you can trust that information is credible also. It is strongly recommended that you look at multiple sites when trying to learn about a particular topic, so you can see where different institutions overlap or vary from one another.



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC 24/7: Saving Lives, Protecting People™

<http://www.cdc.gov>

Click on the *Diseases and Conditions* tab at the top of the page, or use the Search box at the top right of the page to begin your search for information. This site includes articles on many preventive topics for seniors such as fall prevention and dealing with diabetes.



http://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases_conditions

Use the A-Z index to find encyclopedia style articles on particular diseases and conditions, or use the links at the left for survey introductions to assorted health topics.



<http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions>

Use the search box at the top of the page to search for articles on a particular condition, or click on the letter boxes for alphabetical indexes of topics. You can search by symptom or condition.



<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/>

Use the *Search Medline Plus* search-box at the top of the page to look for information on particular topics. or scan the front page for articles on health-topics that are currently being addressed in the media.