



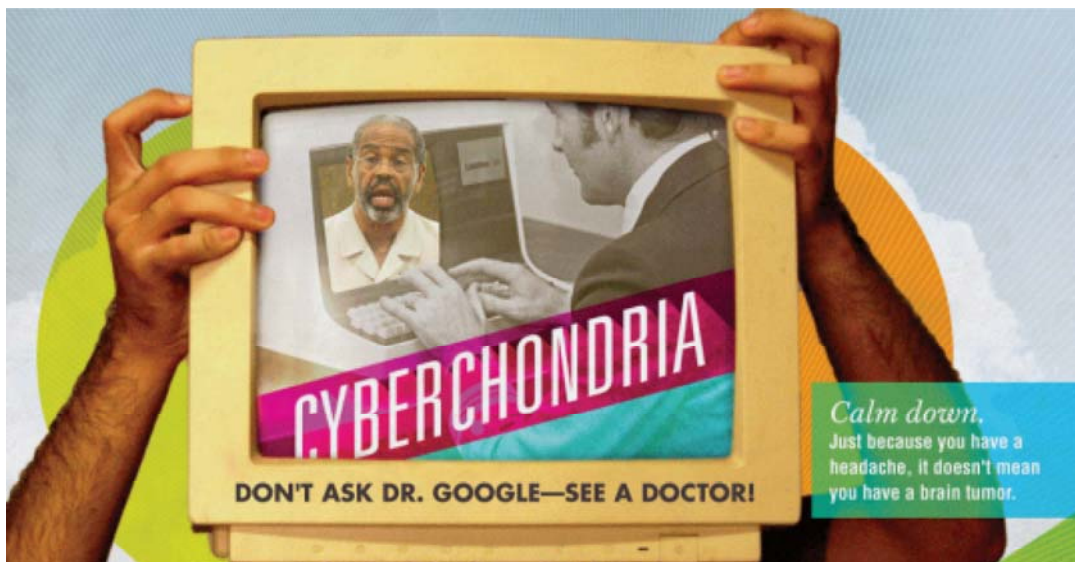
Don't Ask Dr Google – He's Not An Actual Doctor

📅 AUGUST 3RD, 2016  DR JOE ([HTTP://WWW.DRJOETODAY.COM/AUTHOR/ADMIN/](http://www.drjoetoday.com/author/admin/))

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WHAT IS CYBERCHONDRIA?

Using the web to worry over **IMAGINED ILLNESS** WITH **EXAGGERATION OF SYMPTOMS**

CHANCES ARE YOU'RE A CYBERCHONDIAC
(at least a little)

1 out of every 20 Google searches is *health related*

8 out of 10 internet users **LOOK ONLINE FOR HEALTH INFORMATION**

Ranked #3 most popular online activity

But 75% of searchers do not check the source of the info or the date it was created

WHAT HEALTH ISSUES ARE PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR ONLINE?

Numbers in Percentages

- 55 Specific disease or medical problem
- 43 Specific medical treatment or procedure
- 27 How to lose weight or how to control your weight
- 25 Health insurance, including private insurance, Medicare or Medicaid
- 19 Food safety or recalls

WHAT'S WRONG WITH SEARCHING FOR YOUR SYMPTOMS?

MARKETERS
THAT ARE NOT MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS USE YAHOO ANSWERS & WIKIPEDIA, AND IT'S EASY TO FALL INTO THEIR TRAPS!

GOOGLE INSTANT SEARCH WILL SHOW YOU PROBLEMS YOU WEREN'T EVEN THINKING ABOUT

YOU COULD FIND SEARCH RESULTS FOR CURES THAT *don't exist*

Do I have?
Do I have anxiety
Do I have depression
Do I have diabetes
Do I have ADHD
Do I have the flu

WAY WRONG?

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN GOOGLE SEARCHES GO WRONG

"Google Flu Trends" fail

- 2009** Google began tracking searches related to treatment of the flu in an effort to predict flu epidemics
- 2010** Reported as 25% less accurate than the CDC
- 2014** Accused of overestimating flu trends by around 50%

Risky Unreliable Research



Researchers searched for advice on **5 COMMON PEDIATRIC QUESTIONS** and analyzed the first 100 search results for 500 different sites

- Were completely incorrect
- Contained correct information
- Failed to answer the question at all

39

49

Harvard Weighs the Risks of Symptom Checkers

Researchers created standardized lists of symptoms used to teach and test medical students and input them into **23 SYMPTOM CHECKERS**

- 34%** of cases listed the **CORRECT DIAGNOSIS ON THE FIRST TRY**
- 80%** of the critical/urgent cases **CORRECTLY RECOMMENDED EMERGENCY CARE**

Paranoia Problems

ONLY **.002%** OR **<1 IN 50,000 PEOPLE** DEVELOP BRAIN TUMORS

According to research from Microsoft's research division

25% OF WEB SEARCHES FOR "HEADACHE" POINTED TO A BRAIN TUMOR AS A POSSIBLE CAUSE

Being a Hypochondriac Isn't a Choice!

The distress hypochondriacs feel is very real—though sometimes its origin is hard to pinpoint!

- Develops typically in the 20s - 30s
- Affects men and women equally
- Becomes an integral part of your identity
- May occur after bouts of depression or generalized anxiety disorder
- May ruin doctor/patient relationships and cause distrust for both parties
- Stress that accompanies a sufferer's worry can escalate symptoms

Estimates show that hypochondriac patients spend around **\$20 BILLION/YEAR ON UNNEEDED TESTS, MEDICINES, AND MORE!**


How Should You Deal With Dr. Google?

- 1 START GOOGLING AFTER YOU'VE SEEN A DOCTOR**
Once you have a diagnosis to work with—you'll get better results!
- 2 FIND BETTER INFORMATION SOURCES**
Look for credible, certified, and timely info as you search for specific symptoms
e.g., National Health Service, Mayo Clinic, CDC, US National Library of Medicine
- 3 GET HELP OFFLINE**
 - Pharmacists can be a great in-person resource
 - Friends, families, and support groups can help calm fears
- 4 BE PROACTIVE**
 - Pharmacists can be a great in-person resource
 - Friends, families, and support groups can help calm fears
- 5 JUST STOP GOOGLING**
INFORMATION IS ADDICTIVE
MORE INFORMATION doesn't equal ACCURATE INFORMATION

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