



# Health Awareness

## Doctor-Approved, Online Health Content Made Simple

(NAPSA)—Doctors often schedule follow-up visits to see how their patients are doing after they prescribed a particular treatment. Increasingly, however, the first follow-up visit after seeing a doctor is likely to be to the Internet for more information on a diagnosis or medication that was prescribed. This is a visit that can be time-consuming and frustrating.

The Web can be a confusing place and, if you're not careful, the search for information can lead to inaccurate and unverifiable information. All health information is not equal and recent research confirms that. Consumers have begun to grasp that what seems impressive may be lacking in medical credibility.

The uneven nature of health on the Web is no trivial problem. An estimated 63.3 million Americans use the Internet to find health information and this group in turn influences another 60 million caregivers and family members. There is a pressing need for consumers to have confidence that the information they download is accurate, credible, easy-to-read—and easily accessible.

Recent research finds that the majority of online users are not satisfied with the accuracy and quality of the health content they encounter on the Web. Key findings from the research include:

- 61 percent say the accuracy and quality of health information online needs to improve;
- 20 percent say they have difficulty understanding the health information they find online; and
- 26 percent say they have diffi-

**SimplyStated.com provides comprehensive information on the following conditions:**

- Alzheimer's Disease
- Breast Cancer
- CML—Chronic Myeloid Leukemia
- Diabetes
- Eczema
- Epilepsy
- Genital Herpes
- Heart Failure
- Hypertension
- IBS—Irritable Bowel Syndrome
- Nail Fungal Infection
- Osteoporosis
- Parkinson's Disease
- Shingles



**When they go online, consumers are looking for accurate, up-to-date health information.**

culty reading pharmaceutical information online.

The research also finds that the leading “drivers” that make consumers trust a health content source online include content that is up-to-date and reviewed by health professionals, a site that is well organized and a site with a reputable medical editorial board. In short, consumers are demanding improvements in online health information.

“Evaluating the accuracy, credibility and applicability of online health information is a challenge for many consumers faced with the number of resources today—even the relatively advanced online consumer,” says Mark Bard, president of Manhattan Research,

LCC, which conducted the research. “The research clearly shows a need for health information that is timely, relevant and deemed reliable by health professionals. Of course, consumers also want it in a format that is easy-to-understand and use.”

Now a top-level pharmaceutical company is pioneering an effort to make health information on the Web friendlier, reliable, and, equally important, comprehensible. It's a formidable task, but one highly regarded site, which has earned the prestigious Good Housekeeping Web Site Certification, answers this critical, unmet need. It is called SimplyStated.com.

Sponsored by Novartis Pharmaceuticals Corporation, Simply Stated.com provides consumers with a single Web site that supplies information on a variety of diseases, all reviewed and approved by an independent advisory board of physician experts. SimplyStated content answers the most commonly asked questions about a health condition and is organized in a way that is easy-to-read, understand and print. Additionally, SimplyStated.com offers a list of tips for evaluating online health sites. Having received the Good Housekeeping Web Certification, SimplyStated.com meets standards for privacy, security and content. SimplyStated content is also available across all of Novartis' product and disease Web sites.

Disease information is available on an increasing number of different conditions and more are added over time. For more information visit [www.SimplyStated.com](http://www.SimplyStated.com).