

## Resources for Healthcare research: What Are The Best Resources For Healthcare Research?

Although your primary care physician is the most important relationship for your health, he or she is not your only resource. Before, during, and after talking with your doctor, you can add to your knowledge by using the following sources of information:

- **Printed material** available in your doctor's office. If you don't see brochures or handouts on your condition, ask the nurse if they are available. They are produced by reliable organizations like the American Cancer Society, hospitals, and scientific journals.
- **Hospitals.** In addition to comprehensive libraries, videos, and other materials, hospitals often offer volunteers who have had the same disease and who are available to talk to you on a one-on-one basis.
- **Support groups** are some of the best resources around, and there are groups for nearly every medical condition these days. Check online, with your doctor, or a nearby medical center.
- **Websites.** The internet can be a Pandora's box of misinformation, of course, but also a vast and convenient resource—if you know how to use it. Always start with government, hospital, or medical organization sites as opposed to commercial sites. (See Sharecare blog “Should I Use the Internet for Healthcare Information?” for more advice, including some specific websites.)

**Second opinions.** Last but not least, talk to more than one doctor about your options. You may be surprised at how similar the advice is—or by how contradictory it is! Either way, you'll have a better basis on which to make choices.