



AB252. Assessing the quality and readability of online resources for plantar fasciitis: what are our patients reading?

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Background: The purpose of the present study was to evaluate the quality and readability of information available online for plantar fasciitis.

Methods: Websites were identified using the search term 'plantar fasciitis' and the first 25 websites from five separate search engines (Google, Bing, Yahoo, Baidu and Yandex) were selected for evaluation with a total of 125. Readability of each web site was assessed using the Flesch Reading Ease score, the Flesch-Kincaid grade level, and the Gunning Fog Index. Quality was calculated using the DISCERN instrument (www.discern.org.uk) and *The Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)* benchmark criteria. The presence of Health on the Net (HON) code

certification was also assessed. After disregarding duplicated or overlapping websites within and among search engines, 85 websites pages were evaluated. A one-way analysis of variance test was used to compare differences in DISCERN and *JAMA* scores between five categories of authorship (physician, academic, commercial, non-physician, other e.g., blog).

Results: The majority of the websites evaluated were authored by physicians (31%) and blogs (24%). Only 24 websites were HON certified (28%). Physician and academic websites were the most credible sources with the highest mean DISCERN ($P=0.00001$) and *JAMA* ($P=0.0278$) scores respectively. Conversely these websites were the most difficult to read according to the readability score testing.

Conclusions: The information available on the Internet pertaining to plantar fasciitis is highly variable and provides moderate quality information about treatment choices with some limitations based on the DISCERN instrument and *JAMA* score.

Keywords: Online; information; plantar fasciitis; readability

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