

Dos and Don'ts of Using AI

Many people use chatbots or receive AI-generated responses from internet searches. Artificial intelligence can be useful to become informed on cancer-related topics, but brings a range of risks. This fact sheet will discuss:

- **Important dos and don'ts of using AI for cancer information**
- **How AI generally works in answering your questions**
- **Tips on how to use AI in ways that can work best for you**



The Dos

- **Do use AI to help with general information:** AI can help explain difficult medical terms, understand basic cancer concepts about and learn more about various kinds of treatment.
- **Do use AI to organize information and develop questions:** AI can help prepare important questions to ask your health care team as well as organize the information you receive. You can also ask AI to use 'patient friendly' language.
- **Do check the sources AI gives you:** AI generally pulls most of its responses from publicly available websites. These sources should be checked for accuracy. You can ask your doctor for help.
- **Do talk to your health care team about what you learn:** It is always a good idea to review AI responses with members of your health care team to make sure they are accurate.
- **Do protect your privacy:** Do not give AI any personal identifying information, such as your name and medical records. AI is not compliant with HIPAA, a law that protects your medical information from being used by others.



The Don'ts

- **Don't use AI to diagnose yourself:** While AI can provide general information about many topics, it has no idea who you are and has no ability to make expert health evaluations of your personal situation.
- **Don't treat AI as a human doctor:** The information AI has available can be very out-of-date or from sources that are not correct. Never use a chatbot to make changes to your medications, interpret your scans, judge your symptoms or make other decisions for you.
- **Don't share sensitive personal information:** Do not give AI your lab results, ID numbers or your personal health history. These can be sold or used without your permission.
- **Don't assume everything AI says is correct:** AI may take information from inappropriate sources and will try to give an answer even when it does not have the right information.
- **Don't trust AI blindly:** AI is not always right. It will also try to give an answer when it does not have the correct information. The field of cancer can change quickly. Your own doctors have more up-to-date information and expertise than AI does.



Understanding How AI Works

It may help to understand how AI works including chatbots like ChatGPT and results from search engines like Google.

AI searches huge amounts of online information to find patterns in how words and sentences are used. It then makes a guess, or prediction, about what the next words should be in a sequence in order to answer you. Sometimes these predictions are incorrect.

AI cannot keep up with fast-changing fields like cancer research and treatment, or those where studies, journal articles, clinical trials results and other expert material are not available. It does not discuss things with other doctors and does not understand the emotional and personal situations of those who use it.

AI does not technically 'think' or really understand any of what it is doing. It is simply a computer program that re-organizes information that it finds.

This is why it is important to not rely too much on what AI can do for you.



Tips for Using AI

Using the right questions or prompts in your AI searches can give you better results. Here are some tips to receive AI results that can better help you:

- Ask for results using patient-friendly language
- Ask for information in bullet points or other easy-to-read formats
- Ask follow-up questions to get more context. For example: How recent is the information you gave me? Can you give me websites and other sources that support this information?
- Go to the websites AI provides for its answers to make sure they are reliable
- More detailed questions can deliver more detailed and specific responses

Always make sure the information you receive is accurate. Your health care team can help.

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