

Consumer Health Information

Web Site Evaluation

(Based on [HON Code of Conduct \(HONcode\) for medical and health Web sites](#))

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|--|--|
| Name of Site: Orthoinfo: Your connection to expert orthopaedic information | URL: http://orthoinfo.aaos.org/topic.cfm?topic=A00056 |
| Date Reviewed: February 15, 2015 | Your Name: Ellen Phillips |

1. Information must be authoritative

Does the site provide general information about the organization or individual responsible for its operation and content, and a person is named as editor or principal author? If the site provides medical/health information or advice, are there health professionals training/credentials listed? Does a clear statement (e.g. a disclaimer) appear whenever the information or advice is offered by non-health professionals?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | | X |

Comments: Most of the articles are signed, dated and peer reviewed. There is a link to the editorial staff at the bottom of each page. Like the authors, the editors are all physicians, categorized by specialty. Additional geographic information, which might possibly provides clues to their institutional affiliation, is supplied. There is also a Spanish language version of the site.

2. Purpose

Is a statement regarding the purpose of the website and its intended audience is displayed on the website? If the site is designed to support, not to replace, the relationship between patient and physician, is this clearly stated?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | X | |

Comments: According to the homepage the site is “the patient information web site of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons...[has] over 400 articles about fractures, sports injuries, joint replacement and other orthopaedic topics written specially for patients and families.” The site clearly supports the relationship between patient and physician and suggests following up with a medical professional if the conservative measures that are recommended are not successful.

3. Privacy - Confidentiality

Are Privacy/Confidentiality policies regarding e-mail addresses, personal and medical information displayed? Does the site acknowledge legal requirements, including those concerning medical and personal privacy, that apply in the stated location?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | X | | |

Comments: All of the content on the site is freely available, but it is unknown to what extent the site tracks individual users. Since there is advertising, it is safe to assume there is tracking. There is a very comprehensive privacy policy that is thorough, but geared towards members of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, not the general public.

4. Information must be Documented, Referenced and dated

Are modification dates provided for the site as a whole, each page containing medical content? Is content from external sources acknowledged, and when appropriate, referenced?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | | X |

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Comments:

Other than the advertising banner and some YouTube videos that are produced by AAOS.org, there does not seem to be any content from external websites. Article review dates are at the bottom of the articles along with the name of the reviewer.

5. Justification of claims

Does the site make claims relating to the benefit or performance of a specific medical treatment, commercial product or service, and are claims accompanied by references to published articles or scientific results?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | | X |

Comments: The site has a disclaimer at the bottom of almost every page stating that they do, “not endorse any treatments, procedures, products, or physicians referenced herein. This information is provided as an educational service and is not intended to serve as medical advice.” Not every article has citations, but some of them do.

6. Website contact details

Is a valid email address for the Webmaster or a link to a valid contact form is easily accessible throughout the site?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | X | |

Comments: There is one general email address given. However the entire editorial staff is listed by name and title, and the link to that is clearly identified at the bottom of every page. The headquarters for the AAOS is also pictured in another part of the site alongside their physical address.

7. Disclosure of funding sources

Is a source of the funding of my site clearly described?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | | X |

Comments: This site relies on a combination of advertising revenue and sponsors. There is a banner ad at the top of every page and this is a combination of unrelated commercial ads and those for their sponsors and other non-profit organizations. There are links to the site’s sponsors at the bottom of the main page.

8. Advertising policy

Is there an advertising policy, with separation between editorial content and advertising clearly stated? Is there link exchange implying a relationship between this site and other websites?

| Dangerous | Invisible | Unclear | Acceptable | Good | Exemplary |
|-----------|-----------|---------|------------|------|-----------|
| | | | | | X |

Comments: There is a comprehensive document outlining the advertising and sponsorship policies. The banner at the top of the page has the word “advertisement” and is well separated from the rest of the content by a wide blue border. There is another, wider banner under the advertising that is for the site itself. Visually the two types of content are well delineated.