

Doctors frequently encounter patients seeing or asking them about health information obtained from the Internet. The phenomenon is obvious for the doctors. However, it is still unclear whether the effect is beneficial or harmful on the treatment of the patients. The pros are the convenient and fast access to large volume of information that can easily be updated and made interactive. The success rates of the treatment of better-informed patients are higher, patients use the health service resources more appropriately and the physician-patient relationship improves. On the other hand, health-related information on the Internet may be misleading, or misinterpreted which is harmful to the treatment of the patients and may result in unnecessary requests of clinical interventions. Additionally, some physicians may have difficulty handling these “enlightened” patients. Little experience is available on the effects of information from the Internet on daily medical practice. The present paper summarises the experiences with information from the Internet in relation to the physician-patient relationship.