

## Avoiding Harmful Information

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Reading inaccurate or misleading health information can be harmful to us if we use that information to make decisions about our health. Likewise, receiving recommendations or advice from someone without the appropriate medical credentials can lead us to make choices that may cause us harm.

Because of this risk, Della wants to avoid these types harmful sources of online health information. Della is already taking some precautions by evaluating health information websites.

Click each button to learn more.



Discussion Forums

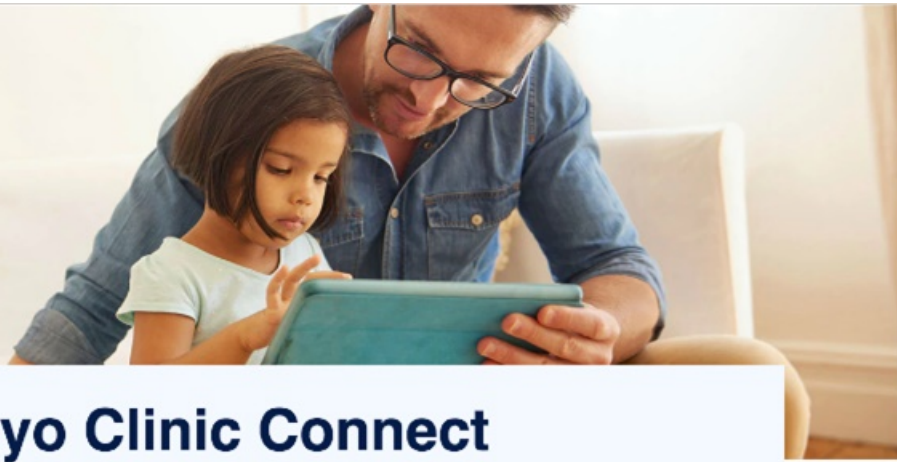
Symptom Checkers

Blogs, Videos, Podcasts

She can also reduce her risk by exercising caution with specific types of websites. These sites can be helpful when sponsored by a trusted health organization. However, it is important to watch for the dangers associated with some of these types of websites.

Click each button to learn more about each type.

- Discussion Forums
- Symptom Checkers
- Blogs, Videos, and Podcasts



## Mayo Clinic Connect

Ask questions. Get answers. Connect.

Mayo Clinic Connect is an online community where you can share your experiences and find support from people like you. You'll also receive trustworthy information from Mayo Clinic experts.

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Discussion forums are websites where people write short messages to share their experiences, similar to a support group you might attend in person. Discussion forums provide a place for people to talk about their experiences with a specific health condition. In an online discussion forum you can send your message any time, and you don't need to be in the same location as the other people in the group. However, people may share bad advice or bring a negative attitude. Be cautious about taking advice from strangers on the internet, and consult your doctor before acting on information received from any discussion forum. Forums that are sponsored or moderated by your healthcare provider may provide the best environment for safe sharing.

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Health Care Tools

Your 24-Hour Nurse

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**24-Hour Nurse**  
Get advice from a nurse, 24/7

When you have questions about your health, it helps to have an expert to turn to. With 24-Hour Nurse, you can get advice from a registered nurse - anytime, 24/7. Just call and you can ask a nurse your questions - whether you're worried about a child's fever, need help with managing a health condition like diabetes, want to ask a medication question or have any other health concern.

**24-Hour Nurse can help you:**

- Decide when to visit your doctor, or go to an Urgent Care or ER.
- Find network doctors and schedule appointments.
- Understand your medications and how to take them safely.
- Learn about checkups or preventive care.

Symptom checkers are websites that ask a series of questions to help determine if you have a serious health condition. Some people like to use symptom checkers to determine if they need to see a doctor, or to identify over-the-counter medications to help them feel better. However, symptom checkers can be dangerous tools to use. If you think you have a serious health condition, you should always go see a doctor for a diagnosis. If your condition is not serious, you may be able to call a nurse's hotline through your healthcare provider. A registered nurse can help determine if you need to see a doctor for further diagnosis.

The screenshot shows the Stitcher website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the Stitcher logo and links for 'GET THE APP', 'LEARN MORE', 'PREMIUM', 'TOP SHOWS', 'LISTEN', a search icon, and 'SIGN IN'/'SIGN UP' buttons. The main content area features a podcast player for 'Autism Explained Podcast with Dr. Brittany Travers' with a duration of 55 minutes. Below the player, there is an 'Episode Info' section with a description: 'In this episode of the Autism Explained, Inc podcast series, Dr. Mark interviews Dr. Brittany Travers about her exciting research into neuroimaging using MRI and fMRI of children with autism.' This section is highlighted with an orange border. Below the description are social media sharing options for Facebook and Twitter, and an 'EMBED' button. Further down, there is a 'Show Info' section with a small thumbnail and the text 'The Autism Explained Podcast: A guide to the scientific...'. At the bottom, there are 'Episode Options' (Listen Later, Embed this Episode) and 'Shares' (Share Via Facebook, Share Via Twitter). A vertical 'HELP' button is located on the right side of the page.

Blogs, videos, and podcasts are examples of content that anyone can create and share on the internet. Blogs are websites where anyone can write their own articles or journal entries. Videos and podcasts are recordings, like those you might find on a site like YouTube or Stitcher. When it comes to health information, there are some blogs, videos, and podcasts that contain trustworthy content. However, it can be difficult to verify the accuracy of the information and the expertise of the person creating it. Always be sure to carefully evaluate this type of content to determine if it is a source you can trust.



Now Della knows to avoid certain types of health information content on the internet that could be harmful. She is ready to use her new skills to search for and evaluate health information online.

Remember that if you are searching for health information online and need help, you should ask for assistance at your local public library.