

Letter to the Editor

Letter to the Editor: Can Internet Information on Vertebroplasty be a Reliable Means of Patient Self-education?

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We read the article by Sullivan and colleagues [3] with great interest.

The authors concluded that quality of health and medical information available on the Internet regarding vertebroplasty is both “inadequate for proper patient education” and “potentially misleading as sites are more likely to present benefits of the procedure than risks.” [3].

Sullivan and colleagues did not mention the frequency in which

patients use outside sources for health information. Do patients regularly check the Internet for health and medical information? If yes, have they encountered problems? The answers to these questions will likely require further in depth quality research.

Finding an adequate and reliable means of patient education is of great concern to us. Recently, Lee et al. [1] studied orthopaedic management on femoroacetabular impingement and reported the high variance of information found on the Internet. Mathur et al. [2] reported similar findings regarding scoliosis.

As orthopaedists, we have to ask ourselves whether we offer enough information to our patients. According to a recent report by Vasri et al. [4], if a patient is offered sufficient information from a physician in charge, that patient is less likely to seek further information on the Internet.

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