

Quality and Diversity of Information About Prostate Cancer Clinical Trials on YouTube

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Background: The majority of U.S. adults obtain health information online, and YouTube is the most commonly used social network. Internet-based resources may serve as an important mechanism for improving patient awareness of clinical research, and by extension, diversity in clinical trials. The objective of this study was to examine the quality of information and representation of racial diversity in YouTube videos about prostate cancer clinical trials.

Methods: We examined the first 150 out of 1930 YouTube videos for "prostate cancer clinical trials" using two validated criteria, the DISCERN instrument for quality of consumer health information and the AHRQ Patient Education Materials Assessment Tool (PEMAT). Videos were also evaluated by a consensus of multiple investigators for the presence of frank misinformation compared to prostate cancer guidelines, commercial bias, and representation of race/ethnicity in the video.

Results: Overall, 77% of videos were moderate to poor quality according to the DISCERN criteria, 6% contained frank misinformation compared to guidelines and 10% had a commercial bias. The mean understandability and actionability scores of the videos were 22.5% and 15.4% out of 100%. The majority of videos (86%) portrayed people in the video, most of whom were perceived as racially White, and only 9% perceived as Black.

Conclusions: YouTube videos regarding prostate cancer clinical trials lack depth, understandability, actionability and diversity. An effort to create higher quality online videos with more diverse representation may serve as an important step towards addressing disparities in clinical research.

Conflicts of Interest: SL reports reimbursed travel to the Prostate Cancer Foundation Retreat from Sanofi, consulting fees from Lilly, Lumenis and Bayer, and equity in Gilead.

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