

Medical videos on YouTube often provide incomplete information

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Implantable cardioverter defibrillator (ICD) information on YouTube is of low and highly-variable quality, according to research presented at the American College of Cardiology (ACC) Quality Summit 2022. As more patients turn to the internet for medical education, the study identified an opportunity for medical institutions to help patients by understanding what information they are getting online and how institutions can

improve online resources in the future.

"Patients are likely seeking out information about their medical conditions and procedures online primarily due to convenience and familiarity with the [internet](#), particularly YouTube," said Thomas Lee, MD, [resident physician](#) at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School and the study's lead author.

"Most people only have limited time to talk to a clinician about an ICD placement, so it would make sense that they would take to the internet to learn more about it. While we can't stop our patients from getting information online, nor would we want to curtail their access to information about their conditions, it is important that the medical community work to ensure higher quality information that provides a full picture of a treatment or procedure is available."

According to the researchers, internet behavior data suggest that 80% of individuals search online for [health information](#), with 56% searching for information on [medical treatments](#) or procedures. A recent Health Information National Trends Survey estimated 40% of Americans viewed YouTube videos regarding health and [medical information](#) in 2020.

In this study, researchers performed a YouTube search using the term "Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator," before excluding lecture-styled videos, surgical and/or operating room videos, non-English language videos without subtitles, videos with irrelevant content, videos without audio or subtitles, and duplicates. Of the first 75 videos identified, 25 were excluded. The remaining 50 were categorized by uploader type: academic institution (29), medical device company (13) or independent uploader (8).

Video quality was assessed using modified DISCERN criteria (range:

0-25), which was developed to help patients judge information regarding treatment options and is used in patient-education literature to assess overall quality, bias and reliability of content. Using prior studies, the qualitative score cut-offs were: very poor (

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