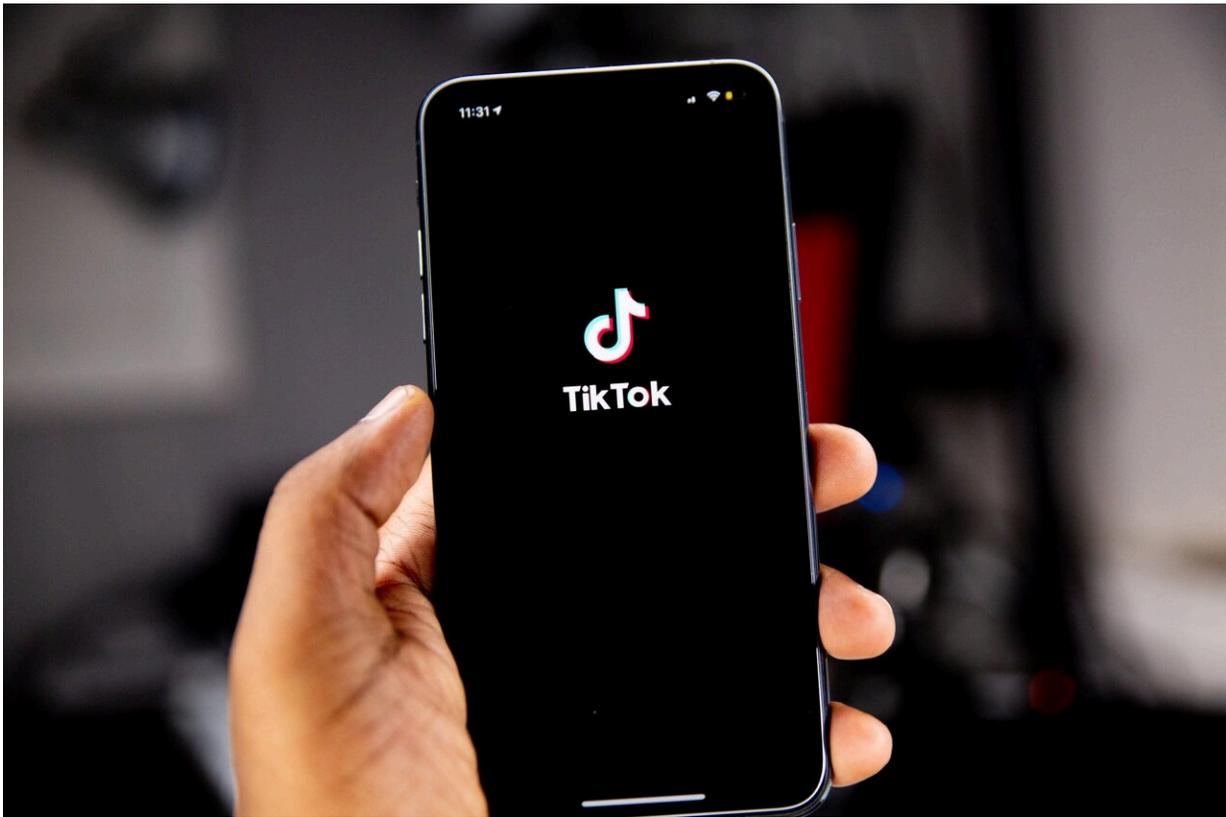


Medication abortion TikTok videos tend to be accurate and reliable, study finds

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Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

Popular TikTok videos that highlight ways to obtain a medication abortion are typically informative and useful, according to a study led by Duke Health researchers.

Duke Health researchers Jenny Wu, M.D. and Melissa Montoya, M.D., both residents in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at Duke University School of Medicine, and Jonas Swartz, M.D., an assistant professor, led the study published Jan. 31 in *American Journal of Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

The researchers evaluated the 100 most-viewed TikTok videos tagged #abortionpill, #medicalabortion, and #medicationabortion. Those videos often detailed what a medication abortion is, how to obtain a medication abortion, and the pills involved.

Of the 65 videos that presented public health information, 89.2% were mostly accurate and 10.8% were mixed. Of the 51 videos that presented scientific claims, 86.3% were mostly accurate and 13.7% were mixed.

"When we started the study, we expected to find more videos with misinformation," Wu said. "After looking at the data we were surprised by how accurate the videos were. A significant number of videos were created by [healthcare professionals](#) and organizations providing abortion. TikTok says it has internal policies for blocking inaccurate information which might also have helped on this topic."

In a Post-Roe era, [social media platforms](#) can help educate patients and combat the stigma surrounding abortions.

"It's important that people in more restrictive states have the opportunity to learn about medication abortions even if they don't have in-person access," Montoya said. "People are experiencing decreased access to reproductive health services. TikTok can be a way to engage [patients](#) and share reliable information."

The researchers noted that the focus on [health education](#) and accuracy of information about medication abortion contrasts with some other

reproductive health topics.

"Videos on this topic often mirror what a patient would learn from a clinician or [abortion](#) educator, in part because of the fact that TikTok removed some hashtags, like #DIYabortion, where individuals were sharing non-FDA-approved regimens," Swartz said. "This demonstrates one area where [health care organizations](#) have been able to shape a narrative and use the platform to disseminate important information."

More information: Jenny Wu et al, Medication Abortion on TikTok: misinformation or reliable resource?, *American Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology* (2023). [DOI: 10.1016/j.ajog.2023.01.023](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2023.01.023)

Provided by Duke University

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