

But I Saw it on TV! Where to Find Credible Joint Care Information

We all have our favorite commercials or advertisements that make us do a double-take or leave us reciting a catchy tag line. Direct-to-consumer marketing is a powerful tool and can be used to get people interested in and possibly purchase a company's product. In the material world this is an accepted form of advertising as it affords companies the ability to directly influence the consumer. It is through these mechanisms that a person can find themselves constantly upgrading their phone, buying the latest electronic device or trying new food products.

Do the research

Smartphones, tablet computers and breakfast cereal are tangible items that we can take for a "test drive" before purchasing. We cannot do the same in healthcare. It is important to research and read the fine print in the direct-to-consumer marketing that occurs in healthcare advertising. In 1991, there was approximately \$55 million spent on advertising prescription drugs; this has grown to more than \$3 billion.

Maintaining a healthy amount of skepticism is crucial. If the marketing sounds too good to be true, then it probably is.

Be skeptical

Recently a satellite cable company with some very memorable advertisements was forced to remove their television advertisements as they were making unsubstantiated claims. Consumers should be equally skeptical of advertising for implants, drugs, surgical procedures and specific approaches that may or may not have substantial data or research to support the claims.

Since the FDA relaxed the rules in 1997 on direct-to-consumer marketing, there has been a tremendous increase in advertisements via television, printed media, the Internet and radio ads. Guidelines to monitor such promotions are somewhat vague, so it is important to seek legitimate sources for accurate information.

Use credible sources

There are several sources of substantiated, peer-reviewed information on hip and knee replacements including the AAHKS website. These are just some of the examples of topics that have been thoroughly vetted by AAHKS members and experienced surgeons:

- Surgical Options for Hip Arthritis
- Surgical Options for Knee Arthritis
- Osteoarthritis Frequently Asked Questions

The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons offers similar educational materials as well as ANationInMotion.org with topics on hip and knee replacement and other joint care as well.

The American Joint Replacement Registry provides a report about hip and knee replacement surgery patient outcomes as reported by hospitals. The [2016 Report to the Public about Hip and Knee Replacements](#) is available for free download.

Other sources of education are the websites of the National Association for Orthopaedic Nurses, the American College of Rheumatology and the [Arthritis Foundation](#).

These web sites are good sources of information in treating hip and knee disorders and will offer a comprehensive, yet patient-friendly review of treatment options.

Your surgeon is your best resource

After reviewing information from a credible site, you should discuss it with your physician and develop a treatment plan that best suits your own individual needs.



This article has been written and peer reviewed by the AAHKS Patient and Public Relations Committee and the AAHKS Evidence Based Medicine Committee. Links to these pages or content used from the articles must be given proper citation to the American Association of Hip and Knee Surgeons.

