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The CUA exists to promote the highest standard of urologic care for Canadians and to advance the art and science of urology.



Advances in technology continue to amaze me on a daily basis. The ability to call for a car using Uber or other lift services, where you know the name of the driver, the type of vehicle they're driving, their user rating, and the precise cost of the planned trip with an estimated timing for the route before you step into their vehicle, is just one small example. Driverless car services, use of GPS guidance, and of course, the explosion of the internet, which has infiltrated almost all aspects of our daily lives over the past decade, is astounding.

I may be dating myself, but I still remember having to use a landline telephone to call for a cab. In contrast, currently, many patients now come to our first consultation visit with detailed information about their presumed diagnosis and often an exhaustive list of research related to treatment options. Patients often fail to be able to differentiate the real sites from the "fake" ones and real treatments from snake oil. As a urologist focusing on sexual function, my area of research and clinical activity is particularly at risk for snake oil and treatment claims of success that have no supporting medical evidence. In the U.S. and in selected Canadian sites, use of platelet-rich plasma (PRP) for erectile dysfunction has become a common practice, with outlandish claims of success despite zero studies in erectile dysfunction having been performed.

In an online posting dated February 16, 2018, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health listed a series of key aspects helping consumers evaluate the reliability of medical information, including: Who runs or created the site or app? Can you trust them? What is the site or app promising or offering? Do its claims seem too good to be true? When was its information written or reviewed? Is it up-to-date? Where does the information come from? Is it based on scientific research? Why does the site or app exist? Are they selling something?

At the Canadian Urological Association (CUA), we recognize the value of credible, evidenced-based medical information for our members and the patients we treat. As the voice of urology in Canada, we believe that with increasing reliance of the public on the internet for their information, we need to increase our presence and profile among targeted patient groups through partnering with advocacy groups, publicizing our meeting activities, and direct patient educational initiatives.

We have initiated a large-scale, member-based assessment via an email request of your knowledge and comfort related to men's health. With the recognition that this area remains undertreated and that we are the recognized leaders in the field, the CUA leadership is initiating a series of local educational events based on what you believe needs to be covered. It is through these feedback mechanisms that we can provide our membership with timely and accurate evidenced-based programs that will result in better patient outcomes, even in the age of Dr. Google.