

## Risks and consequences surrounding Cyberchondria amidst COVID-19 outbreak

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**DoctorxDentist, a unique digital healthcare platform for trusted cost-free consultation by eminent and certified doctors in Singapore, including COVID-19**



In light of how COVID-19 has spread rapidly across the globe, Singapore's Fake News Laws were discussed prominently when it comes to debunking myths about the virus.

Singapore's First and Largest Medical Online Q&A Portal DoctorxDentist offers complimentary and convenient access to those who are curious and who wish to enquire more about COVID-19 or other major illnesses, DoctorxDentist is a portal that anyone can use to pose their burning medical questions. Thereafter, only doctors and specialists are allowed to reply to these public enquiries. BioSpectrum Asia explored more insight on the impacts of cyberchondria in a recent conversation with **Mr Tristan Hahner, Co-founder of DoctorxDentist** who also introduced the convenience, ease and benefits of the DoctorxDentist platform.

### **What are the trends and impacts of cyberchondria?**

Self-diagnosis of one's conditions can be a dangerous trend, often linked to anxiety, online addiction and other negative aspects associated with excessive Internet use. Our doctors that we work at DoctorxDentist bring up cyberchondria quite regularly, so they believe it's an emerging problem particularly in this day and age.

### **What are the risks and consequences surrounding heavy reliance on online pseudo-medical help or word-of-mouth advice?**

Today, we all have easy access to a plethora of medical information online, both good as well as possibly bad or incorrect. Medical information is uniquely sensitive, and as such we have to treat it differently compared to other online information.

Patients nowadays mistrust their doctors and professional diagnosis and present something they've read or heard from an unverified source. If a patient presents certain symptoms with a fixed diagnosis in mind (while leaving out other potentially relevant symptoms), they will be resistant to clinicians advice, this will prevent a physician from making an accurate diagnosis

when they aren't given a full understanding of the patient's condition and can create more harm.

There are far-reaching implications, where treatment options can spiral down unnecessary paths often with expensive tests if doctors are working with a misleading set of information presented by their patients.

### **How DoctorxDentist's can assist in identifying unverified and false medical information?**

Much of the information we find online is not written or verified by a medical professional, so for the typical reader, it's difficult to establish the relevance and credibility of the source.

Standing out from other online content in general, DoctorxDentist is written and medically reviewed completely by licensed doctors in Singapore, many of them specialists in their field. Doctors at DoctorxDentist are exceptional in explaining medical conditions in an easier, addressing concerns as they already do daily in their practice.

With this, we can remove the uncertainty of information from the equation. To reiterate, all doctors on our platform are verified and licensed by the Singapore Medical Council. DoctorxDentist also complies with the HONcode standard for trustworthy health information--with our latest assessment and recertification in March 2020.

### **What role is DoctorxDentist playing in tackling the COVID-19 outbreak?**

We are committed in our efforts to provide free articles and Q&As, with priority on updates for the COVID-19 situation. Users can expect medical information that's free from unverified sources because actual doctors are the experts supplying this information.

### **How convenient and beneficial is the DoctorxDentist platform?**

On DoctorxDentist, the immediate benefit is that doctors directly answer questions from users. Therefore, one does not have to worry about the reliability of the information provided.

Additionally, if the symptom or condition requires further attention, users can make an appointment right away to see the doctor who is addressing them in the Q&A. There's no need to search for specialists since they're already connected.

With DoctorxDentist as a resource, users better understand their health and when or where to seek help.

Our platform is easily accessible via mobile and desktop browsers, and we also have a live chat to ask questions, all for free. This is useful because one doesn't need to sign in. All one has to do is simply type a question and a GP or specialist will respond.