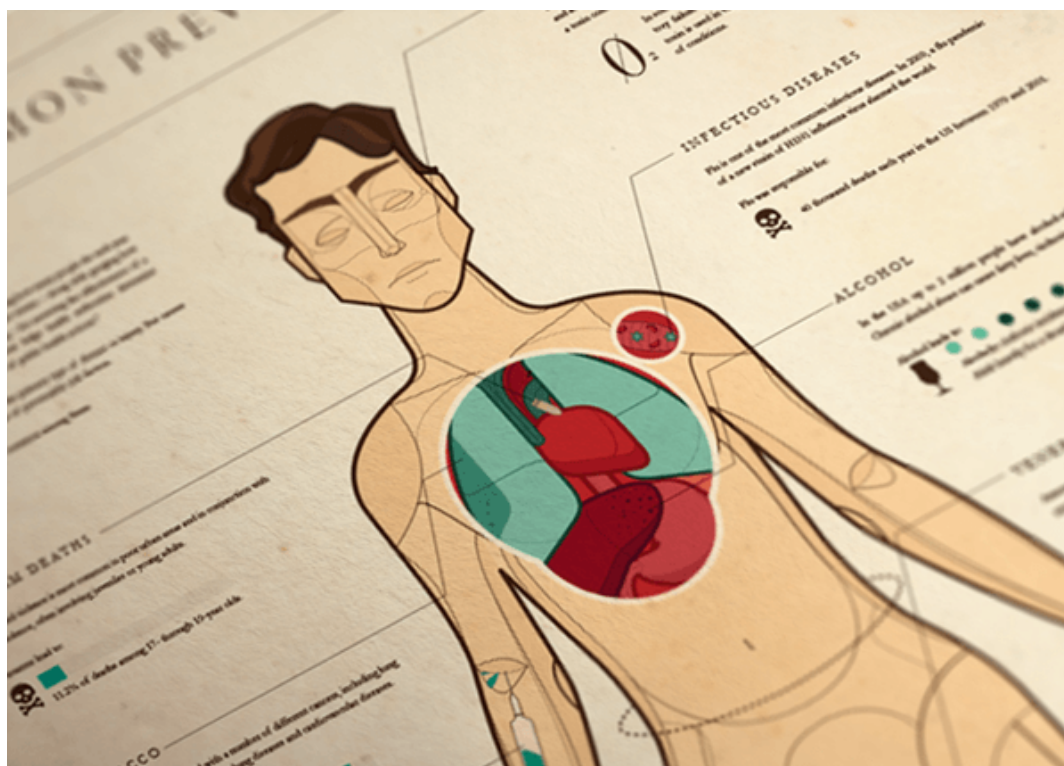


# 24 Outstanding Statistics & Figures on How Social Media has Impacted the Health Care Industry

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Social media is one of the most talked about disruptions to marketing in decades, but how is it impactful for the health care industry? In a generation that is more likely to go online to answer general health questions than ask a doctor, what role does social media play in this process? Let's dive into some meaningful statistics and figures to clearly illustrate how social media has impacted health care in the last few years.



**1. More than 40% of consumers say that information found via social media affects the way they deal with their health. (source: [Mediabistro](#))**

*Why this matters:* Health care professionals have an obligation to create educational content to be shared across social media that will help accurately inform consumers about health related issues and out shine misleading information. The opinions of others on social media are often trusted but aren't always accurate sources of insights, especially when it comes to a subject as sensitive as health.

**2. 18 to 24 year olds are more than 2x as likely than 45 to 54 year olds to use social media for health-related discussions. (source: [Mediabistro](#))**

*Why this matters:* 18 to 24 year olds are early adopters of social media and new forms of communication which makes it important for health care professionals to join in on these conversations where and when they are happening. Don't move too slow or you risk losing the attention of this generation overtime.

**3. 90% of respondents from 18 to 24 years of age said they would trust medical information shared by others on their social media networks. (source: [Search Engine Watch](#))**

*Why this matters:* A millennial's network on social media is a group of people that is well trusted online, which again, presents an opportunity to connect with them as health care professional in a new and authentic way.

**4. 31% of health care organizations have specific social media guidelines in writing. (source: [Institute for Health](#))**

*Why this matters:* It is crucial to have social media guidelines in place for

your health care facility to ensure everyone is on the same page, your staff is aware of limitations to their actions on social media and that a systematic strategy is in place for how social media should be run across your organization.

**5. 19% of smartphone owners have at least one health app on their phone. Exercise, diet, and weight apps are the most popular types.** (source: Demi & Cooper Advertising and DC Interactive Group)

*Why this matters:* This drives home the need for your health care organization to look into possibly launching a health related app focused on your specialty. This statistic doesn't mean every health care facility should have their own app, but they should have a strong mobile focus across their marketing no matter their size.

**6. From a recent study, 54% of patients are very comfortable with their providers seeking advice from online communities to better treat their conditions.** (source: Mediabistro)

*Why this matters:* If the context of a group or community online is high quality and curated, then many trust that crowd sourcing of information from other like mind individuals is reliable. This shows how people perceive the Internet to be beneficial for the exchange of relevant information, even about their health.

**7. 31% of health care professionals use social media for professional networking.** (source: MedTechMedia)

*Why this matters:* This helps shine a stronger emphasis on the many applications and benefits of social media, one of which being professional development for health care workers from networks like Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

**8. 41% of people said social media would affect their choice of a specific doctor, hospital, or medical facility.** (source: [Demi & Cooper Advertising and DC Interactive Group](#))

*Why this matters:* This statistic shows that social media can be a vehicle to help scale both positive and negative word of mouth, which makes it an important channel for an individual or organization in the health care industry to focus on in order to attract and retain patients. Consumers are using social media to discuss everything in their lives including health and it is up to your organization to choose whether it's time to tune in.

**9. 30% of adults are likely to share information about their health on social media sites with other patients, 47% with doctors, 43% with hospitals, 38% with a health insurance company and 32% with a drug company.** (source: [Fluency Media](#))

*Why this matters:* Social media is slowly helping improve the way people feel about transparency and authenticity, which will hopefully lead to more productive discussions and innovations regarding an individual's health.

**10. 26% of all hospitals in the US participate in social media.** (source: [Demi & Cooper Advertising and DC Interactive Group](#))

*Why this matters:* If your hospital isn't using social media, then you're way behind the learning curve. Social media is really important for hospitals to communicate with past, present and future patients, despite the many regulations to what can and can't be said on behalf of the hospital.

**11. The most accessed online resources for health related information are: 56% searched WebMD, 31% on Wikipedia, 29% on health magazine websites, 17% used Facebook, 15% used YouTube, 13% used a blog or multiple blogs, 12% used patient communities, 6% used Twitter and**

**27% used none of the above.** (source: [Mashable](#))

*Why this matters:* Understanding where a majority of consumer health information comes from is an important way of knowing of its value, credibility and reliability. It is important to differentiate sources of quality content from other less desirable sources of info.

**12. Parents are more likely to seek medical answers online, 22% use Facebook and 20% use YouTube. Of non-parents, 14% use Facebook and 12% use YouTube to search for health care related topics.** (source: [Mashable](#))

*Why this matters:* Parents are more concerned about the well-being of their children than they were before having children, therefore they often source more information about a loved one's health on social media and online more than ever before.

**13. 60% of doctors say social media improves the quality of care delivered to patients.** (source: [Demi & Cooper Advertising and DC Interactive Group](#))

*Why this matters:* This statistic is important because it shows that many doctors believe that the transparency and authenticity that social media helps spur is actually improving the quality of care provided to patients. Let's hope this is a continuing trend among the industry for patients at all levels.

**14. 2/3 of doctors are use social media for professional purposes, often preferring an open forum as opposed to a physician-only online community.** (source: [EMR Thoughts](#))

*Why this matters:* It is interesting that a majority of doctors chose a more open forum as opposed to discussion in a health care specific community online. It is a fascinating statistic because it feeds into the same premise

that a certain level of transparency spurred by social media is taking ahold of the entire industry.

**15. YouTube traffic to hospital sites has increased 119% year-over-year.** (source: [Google's Think Insights](#))

*Why this matters:* Video marketing converts to traffic and leads much more easily than other forms of content because it more effectively gets across the point, shares a human element and is able to highlight the value of the facilities more quickly. Other hospital facilities should look to create video content based around interviews, patient stories and more.

**16. International Telecommunications Union estimates that global penetration of mobile devices has reached 87% as of 2011.** (source: [mHealth Watch](#))

*Why this matters:* Once again, it's time to think mobile first, second and third for your healthcare facility. With mobile penetration reaching an all time high, an age of connected devices is on the horizon for many healthcare facilities and it is time to develop a plan.

**17. 28% of health-related conversations on Facebook are supporting health-related causes, followed by 27% of people commenting about health experiences or updates.** (source: [Infographics Archive](#))

*Why this matters:* This statistic supports and highlights two common uses of Facebook related to your health like sharing your favorite cause or interacting with others recovering. Social media has penetrated our society very deeply to the point where it has become a place where we share our interests and give support to others. This could be one of the many factors affecting why many trust the information found on social media about healthcare. The masses are continually accepting social media as a part of

their everyday life, it is time your healthcare facility incorporated this marketing medium as part of your culture as well.

**18. 60% of social media users are the most likely to trust social media posts and activity by doctors over any other group.** (source: [Infographics Archive](#))

*Why this matters:* Doctors as respected members of society are also highly revered for their opinions when they are shared on social media, which is even more reason to help boost your reach as a healthcare professional and actively use social media to discuss the industry.

**19. 23% of drug companies have not addressed security and privacy in terms of social media.**(source: [Mediabistro](#))

*Why this matters:* This is an unsettling statistic about privacy concerns with drug companies that drastically needs to be addressed in order to guarantee that sensitive data is not accidentally released to the public on social media. It shows how many companies in health care still don't know the first thing about the use of social media. This can be corrected by creating clear and concise guidelines on how social media should be used by the organization and its staff.

**20. The Mayo Clinic's podcast listeners rose by 76,000 after the clinic started using social media.** (source: [Infographics Archive](#))

*Why this matters:* This is a clear cut example of how to successfully bolster the reach of your organization's messaging by echoing it appropriately on social media. Mayo Clinic already had a regular podcast that they helped grow by effectively using social media to share content and chat with their audience. Don't get left behind in the digital age, take this example and run with it.

**21. 60% of physicians most popular activities on social are following what colleagues are sharing and discussing. (source: [Health Care Communication](#))**

*Why this matters:* Many people on social media are passive participants since they aren't creating or commenting on content, but instead reading and observing the content and conversations of others in their network. This is also true for many doctors that find value using social media to exchange information but don't always choose to join the conversation. Many doctors are seeing the value of social media, regardless if they are a participant or an observer.

**22. 49% of those polled expect to hear from their doctor when requesting an appointment or follow-up discussion via social media within a few hours.(source: [HealthCare Finance News](#))**

*Why this matters:* This is a surprising statistic because of how many people are comfortable with connecting with their doctor on social media, as well as how quickly they expect their doctor to personally respond to their outreach. This is a telling sign that the way in which we typically book appointments and handle follow-up conversations after an appointment, will continue to be disrupted by the use of social media in the process.

**23. 40% of people polled said information found on social media affects how someone coped with a chronic condition, their view of diet and exercise and their selection of a physician. (source:[HealthCare Finance News](#))**

*Why this matters:* The opinion and viewpoints of the people in our social circles online are continuously influencing our decision making even it when it comes to our opinion on healthcare options. Health care professionals should take note of this fact by using social media in an impactful way to ensure they become a part of the process of forming an opinion of a



person's health care options.

**24. Of more than 1,500 hospitals nationwide who have an online presence, Facebook is most popular. (source: WHPRMS)**

*Why this matters:* The fact that most hospitals use Facebook over other social media channels is important to note because time, staff and budget are always limited and your efforts with social media should be targeted and focused to where your organization can make the most impact.