MEDWIN PUBLISHERS
Committed to Create Value for Researchers

Clinical Dermatology Open Access Journal
ISSN: 2574-7800

Health Misinformation on Social Media: A Growing Challenge in Dermatology

Smit Sibinga*

Department of Dermatology, Leiden University Medical Center, Netherlands

***Corresponding author:** Smit Sibinga, Department of Dermatology, Leiden University Medical Center, Netherlands.

Letter to Editor

Volume 11 Issue 3

Received Date: July 10, 2026

Published Date: July 28, 2026

Dear Editor,

The widespread use of social media has transformed the way individuals access health-related information, including advice on skin care and dermatological diseases. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, etc.., have become popular sources of information for millions of users seeking quick solutions for common skin concerns, including acne, eczema, psoriasis, pigmentation disorders, and hair loss. While these platforms have improved public access to health education, they have also facilitated the rapid spread of misinformation, posing an increasingly important challenge for dermatologists and healthcare systems.

Dermatology is particularly vulnerable to misinformation because many skin conditions are visible and often associated with cosmetic concerns. Individuals frequently search for immediate remedies and may be influenced by attractive visual content, personal testimonials, or recommendations from social media influencers who lack formal medical training. As a result, unverified advice regarding home remedies, skin-lightening products, sunscreen avoidance, "natural" treatments, and cosmetic procedures can spread rapidly without adequate scientific evidence. Patients who rely on such information may delay seeking professional medical care, practice inappropriate self-treatment, or use products that worsen their skin conditions.

The growing popularity of short-form videos and algorithm-driven content further amplifies this problem. Misleading dermatology-related posts often receive greater public attention than evidence-based educational content because they are presented in a simplified and engaging manner. Unfortunately, scientific accuracy is not always a determining factor in the visibility of online content. Consequently, misinformation may influence patients' perceptions of disease severity, treatment expectations, and trust in medical professionals.

This issue extends beyond cosmetic concerns and has important clinical implications. Delayed diagnosis resulting from self-treatment may allow inflammatory skin diseases, skin infections, or even malignant lesions to progress before appropriate medical evaluation is sought. Furthermore, misinformation regarding prescription medications, biologic therapies, and topical corticosteroids may reduce treatment adherence and contribute to poor clinical outcomes. Such challenges highlight the importance of strengthening public awareness regarding reliable sources of dermatological information.

Dermatologists have an essential role in addressing this growing problem. In addition to providing evidence-based patient care, clinicians should actively participate in digital health communication by sharing accurate educational content through professional websites, institutional platforms, and responsible social media engagement. Professional dermatology organizations can further support public education by developing accessible educational campaigns, promoting evidence-based recommendations, and collaborating with digital platforms to reduce the spread of misleading health information. Improving digital health literacy among patients is equally important, enabling individuals to critically evaluate online medical content before adopting healthcare advice.

Although social media has become an invaluable tool for health communication, its benefits can only be fully realized when accurate, transparent, and scientifically supported information is prioritized. Collaborative efforts

CC BY

involving dermatologists, academic institutions, healthcare organizations, policymakers, and digital media platforms are essential to promote responsible dissemination of dermatological knowledge and protect patients from the harmful consequences of misinformation.

In conclusion, health misinformation on social media represents an emerging challenge that extends beyond communication and directly affects patient safety, clinical decision-making, and treatment outcomes in dermatology. Strengthening evidence-based digital education and encouraging responsible online health communication should become important priorities for the dermatology community as social media continues to influence public health behavior.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

Funding

None.

Acknowledgments

None.

Copyright© Smit Sibinga.