ANALYSIS OF SCOLIOSIS-SPECIFIC INFORMATION ON SOCIAL MEDIA:

Is Social Media the new source of online medical information and support?

DAVID TRUUMEES; ASHLEY DUNCAN, MBA, RN; KANO MAYER, MD; DEVENDER SINGH, PHD; MATTHEW GECK, MD; EERIC TRUUMEES, MD

ASCENSION TEXAS SPINE AND SCOLIOSIS CENTER
AUSTIN, TEXAS UNITED STATES

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David Truumees: None

Ashley Duncan, MBA, RN: None

Kano Mayer, MD: Indiago (b), Lanai Health Solutions (b), IOPIP (b)

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Background

Social media is a mainstay in modern culture. People share their daily thoughts, celebrations and struggles with one another and the world at large.

The ability to connect with one another, providing both information and support has never been more ubiquitous, thanks to the Internet and various social media platforms.

When patients with chronic conditions are given the right information and support they can empower themselves, contributing to a better functional and overall outcome.

Purpose

To analyze what footprint scoliosis has in social media

Study Design

Cross Sectional Analysis

Methods

Independent searches were conducted across four major social media platforms for the key word "scoliosis" or "#scoliosis"

Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn

The top 50 posts from each platform were evaluated based on:

- Overall tone of the post
- Who made the post
- Intent of the post
- Credentials of the poster
- Type of media used in the post
- Did the post contained an external link
- What was the content of the external link

Methods (cont'd)

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Results

	Facebook	Instagram	YouTube	LinkedIn
Average number of Likes	22322	1296	4075	17
Tone (%)				
Positive	30%	62%	31%	41%
Negative	10%	6%	2%	2%
Neutral	54%	32%	67%	57%
Perspective (%)				
Business	68%	15%	53%	61%
Family/Friend	10%	10%	0%	2%
Hospital/Physician	16%	4%	35%	33%
Patient	6%	71%	12%	4%
Intent (%)				
Advertisement	14%	8%	25%	32%
Educate	41%	21%	41%	26%
Patient experience	8%	36%	19%	12%
Raise awareness	25%	12%	10%	21%
Research	0%	0%	0%	3%
Support	12%	23%	5%	6%
Authorship (%)				
Clinician (not a physician)	6%	6%	23%	4%
Non-clinician	20%	81%	41%	29%
Physician	28%	3%	14%	14%
Unknown	46%	10%	22%	53%
Media type (%)				
Text	2%	0%	0%	8%
Miscellaneous	2%	0%	0%	0%
Picture	74%	92%	0%	78%
Video	22%	8%	100%	14%
Contains external link (%)	66%	39%	57%	63%
Content of external link (%)				
Academic	0%	0%	4%	7%
Alternate treatment	58%	5%	46%	6%
Business	3%	37%	0%	29%
Health news outlet	12%	0%	0%	0%
Other	9%	6%	10%	29%
Personal blog	3%	47%	11%	3%
Physician/Hospital	15%	5%	29%	26%

Results (cont'd)

196 unique postings

- Overall, the majority of posts were made by non-clinicians (42.75%) representing a business (49.25%) with the intent to educate (32.25%) using a neutral tone (52.5%).
- 56.25% of posts contained links promoting alternative treatments

Instagram deviated the most from the other patterns

- 71% postings coming from actual patients
- Intent of the posts were to describe their experience with or their daily life living with scoliosis

YouTube had the highest presence of hospitals and physician groups (35%)

Physician authorship was highest on Facebook (28%)

Conclusions

- Social media can be a powerful tool to disseminate information and create supportive communities for patients with chronic conditions
- **We as providers are underutilizing this outlet to provide accurate and reliable information to our patients and help guide them toward trusted support networks**

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Thank you