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### ONLINE RESOURCES FOR IN VITRO FERTILIZATION (IVF) AND INTRAUTERINE INSEMINATION (IUI): AN ANALYSIS OF THE DIGITAL LANDSCAPE

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**Title:**

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**Study Type:**

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**Category - Subcategory(ies):**

**Patient Centered Care:** Access to Care

**Patient Centered Care:** Education & Information

**Patient Centered Care:** General

**References:**

1. Brochu F, Robins S, Miner SA, et al. J Med Internet Res. 2019;21(12):e15132. doi: 10.2196/15132.
2. Kasthuri V, et al. N Am Spine Soc J. 2023;14:100214. doi: 10.1016/j.xnsj.2023.100214.
3. Silberg WM, et al. JAMA. 1997;277(15):1244–5. doi:10.1001/jama.1997.03540390074039

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**Abstract Text:**

**OBJECTIVE:** As digital resources become increasingly accessible, patients often turn to online platforms to seek information about fertility treatments.<sup>1</sup> This study aims to examine the most frequently searched online questions related to IVF and IUI, with a focus on identifying key themes of concern and evaluating the credibility of online resources providing answers.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS:** Using Google's "People Also Ask" (PAA) feature, the study analyzed frequently searched questions related to fertility treatment. A Python-based automated extraction tool retrieved the top 200 questions and linked to website pairs when the following search terms: "IVF", "in vitro fertilization", "IUI" and "intrauterine insemination" were used. Each query was conducted using a fresh incognito browser session. Duplicate combinations, irrelevant questions, or invalid links were excluded. Extracted questions were categorized according to Rothwell's Classification system (Fact, Policy, Value).<sup>2</sup> Corresponding websites were categorized into academic, commercial, non-academic medical practice, government, or news media.<sup>2</sup> Website credibility was evaluated using the JAMA Benchmark Criteria, which assesses Authorship, Attribution (sources), Disclosures (ownership and funding), and Currency (publication date), with sites scored 0 (low credibility) to 4 (high credibility).<sup>3</sup>

**RESULTS:** A total of 329 unique questions and website pairs across search terms were included in the analysis. Fact-based questions comprised the majority for both IVF (50.0%) and IUI (55.0%), followed by Policy (IVF: 25.6%, IUI: 18.1%) and Value (IVF: 24.4%, IUI: 26.9%) questions. Across both treatment types, the most commonly asked-about topics were technical details about the procedure (IVF: 20.6%, IUI: 26.9%), cost (IVF: 18.1%, IUI: 11.7%), and evaluation of procedure (including invasiveness, success rates, costs vs. benefits) (IVF: 17.5%, IUI: 24.6%). When comparing IVF and IUI specifically, pain-related questions were more frequently associated with IVF (6.9% vs. 2.3%,  $p=0.029$ ). Questions about the evaluation of procedure were also significantly more common in IUI queries (24.6% vs. 17.5%,  $p=0.028$ ). Regarding information sources, medical practices were the most commonly linked across both IVF (46.9%) and IUI (58.5%) queries. The overall JAMA Benchmark score averaged  $2.2 \pm 1.3$  across all websites, reflecting moderate information quality.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Patients most frequently searched for fact-based information about IVF and IUI, with particular focus on procedural details and associated costs. While overall patterns were similar, certain topics—such as pain and procedural evaluation—differed between treatment modality. The majority of linked websites originated from medical practices, though credibility and consistency of information varied.

**IMPACT STATEMENT:** Including information about technical details, costs, and success rates for fertility treatments in digital content could target the majority of patient concerns. Given the limitations and variability in website credibility, ensuring that accurate and high-quality resources are available is critical to patient counseling.

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Biographical Sketch Early success, marked by his first publication in CELL at Harvard Medical School, inspired Joseph to continue his research endeavors in reproductive endocrinology and infertility. Joseph has been with Reproductive Medicine Associates of New York since 2011. Joseph has authored over 400 peer-reviewed abstracts & manuscripts. Passionate about development, he cultivates relationship with investors & entrepreneurs to advance reproductive endocrinology & infertility care.

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