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APSF Initiative Against Medical Misinformation

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Patient Guide to Anesthesia & Surgery

Learn more about anesthesia side effects, surgical risk factors and other frequently asked questions patients have before surgery.



Technological advances, including online platforms, present both opportunities and challenges in health care communication. As the article by Tewfik and Malapero on medical misinformation describes, while these platforms enable widespread information sharing, they can also facilitate the spread of misleading and unscientific content that can negatively impact patients and their families.

As health care professionals, we have a fundamental responsibility to counter misinformation with evidence-based, scientifically accurate

information from reliable sources. Since we cannot control what others post on the internet, our best strategy is to establish a strong presence in digital spaces, providing scientific evidence and medical information to help combat misinformation.

Many national organizations have established a digital presence, including the APSF who most recently launched the *APSF Patient Guide to Anesthesia & Surgery*, developed by the APSF Patient Engagement Working Group. Our methodology focuses on identifying and addressing

the most common concerns about anesthesia side effects and surgical risk factors, as well as other frequently asked questions patients have before surgery. Since its launch last year, we have seen consistent organic growth, reaching 9,000 monthly visits to the *APSF Patient Guide to Anesthesia & Surgery* by October 2024, and demonstrating the public's desire for trustworthy medical information.

The perioperative period presents a crucial opportunity for anesthesia professionals to effectively communicate with patients. By actively listening with empathy and sensitivity, clinicians can build and strengthen trust. This relationship serves as the foundation for combating misinformation and enhancing patient safety.

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