



## Consumer Health Tip Sheet

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### Points for Library Staff to Remember

- Respect Confidentiality/Privacy
- Listen to what the consumer has to say
- Ask if a consumer has researched the subject before
- Identify the purpose & specific information needed
- Determine the correct format(s)
- Ask about electronic literacy level/computer comfort

### Ethical Issues Concerning Health-related Reference

- Provide **information**
- Neither diagnose nor recommend treatment
- *Always* refer specific medical questions to health care providers

### Consumer Health Information and Contacts

- Closest consumer health collection
- Resources from other public libraries
- Academic and medical libraries
- Local, state, federal Public Health
- State libraries
- Health organizations
- Free health clinics

### Tips for Networking with Medical Libraries

- CALL AHEAD!
- What are your policies concerning using the library?
  - Can it be used by the public?
  - Is a written referral from a doctor required?
- Do you have a Patient Information Center?
- Do you have a contact person for consumers? For librarians?
- What are the library's hours of operation?
- Is a map available with directions and parking information?

### Additional Resources

For more information on:

- Guidelines on handling medical questions in the Public Library
- Special care required for telephone inquiries
- Referring medical questions
- A medical question worksheet

See the STAR (Statewide Training for Accurate Reference) Reference Manual at [www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/star/chapter9.html](http://www.nlc.state.ne.us/ref/star/chapter9.html)