





Can I trust AI overviews for online health searches?

What are AI overviews?

AI overviews are short answers to your internet search questions created by AI. They are used by Google and other search engines. They appear at the top of your screen before the list of websites.

Summaries can be useful but they are still being developed and tested. This means they can get things wrong.

Problems include:

-  Giving answers which may be misleading.
-  Sharing irrelevant content from other countries.
-  Reduced signposting to further support.
-  Sharing threads like Reddit alongside evidence-based content.





When AI gets it wrong

The Eve Appeal charity searched for "vaginal cancer symptoms and tests". The AIO listed a PAP test as a test for vaginal cancer. It is not a test for vaginal cancer.

AI Overview

Vaginal cancer symptoms can include abnormal vaginal bleeding (especially after menopause or sex), blood-stained vaginal discharge, pain during urination or intercourse, and pelvic pain. Tests for vaginal cancer may involve a pelvic exam, Pap test, colposcopy, biopsy, and imaging scans like CT or MRI.

What can I do to get trusted results?

-  Go direct to NHS or PIF TICK certified sources.
-  Scroll down to the full search results.
-  Visit the source website to check its credibility.
-  Check what you have found with your healthcare team.

Top tip

🔍 -AI

Add "-AI" to the start of searches. This will remove the overview. You can also add "UK" to your search to get local results.

AI mode

Google now has an AI mode for searches. You should use the standard search when looking for health information.

Further help

AI and health information guide
piftick.org.uk/finding-trusted-health-information/tips-and-guides/ai-and-health-information

View all PIF TICK certified sources
piftick.org.uk/members/tick-members