Abstract

BACKGROUND:
Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a common neurodevelopmental disorder, prevalent among 2-10% of the population.

OBJECTIVE:
The objective of this study was to describe where, what, and when people search online for topics related to ADHD.

METHODS:
Data were collected from Microsoft's Bing search engine and from the community question and answer site, Yahoo Answers. The questions were analyzed based on keywords and using further statistical methods.

RESULTS:
Our results revealed that the Internet indeed constitutes a source of information for people searching the topic of ADHD, and that they search for information mostly about ADHD symptoms. Furthermore, individuals personally affected by the disorder made 2.0 more questions about ADHD compared with others. Questions begin when children reach 2 years of age, with an average age of 5.1 years. Most of the websites searched were not specifically related to ADHD and the timing of searches as well as the query content was different among that prediagnosis compared with postdiagnosis.

CONCLUSIONS:
The study results shed light on the features of ADHD-related searches. Thus, they may help improve the Internet as a source of reliable information and promote improved awareness and knowledge about ADHD as well as the quality of life for populations dealing with the complex phenomena of ADHD.