

herbs-info.com

A website promoting natural and herbal remedies that has published false health claims, including links between vaccines and autism and unproven cures for cancer.



Proceed with caution: This website severely violates basic standards of credibility and transparency.

Score: 35/100

Ownership and Financing

Herbs-Info.com is owned and operated by Alex Newman, according to the site's About This Site and Privacy Policy pages. Newman describes himself as a writer, researcher, and website creator. He owns and operates another site, GemstonesList.com, which provides information on gemstones and jewelry.

The site runs advertisements.

Content

On the About This Site page, Newman describes Herbs-Info.com's goal to "create a reference work that gathered, organized and made sense of the centuries of herbal knowledge, putting it all together in a format that is useful to the professional without being daunting to the lay person."

The site primarily publishes articles that explain how herbal and natural ingredients can be used to cure illness, protect one's home from pests, or lose weight. Typical headlines include "12 Signs You Are Vitamin D Deficient (And How To Get More)," "How to Make Your Own Sunscreen Using Natural Ingredients" and "20 Mindblowing Reasons Why Epsom Salt Should Be In Every Home." The site's sections include Herbs, Essential Oils, General Health, and Weight Loss.

The site's Blog section features stories on newly published studies on herbal remedies and environmental news. NewsGuard found that approximately a dozen stories had been published in the Blog section in a year, as of July 2019. Articles in other sections on the site are undated.

- ✗ Does not repeatedly publish false content (22points)
- ✗ Gathers and presents information responsibly (18)
- ✗ Regularly corrects or clarifies errors (12.5)
- ✓ Handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly (12.5)
- ✓ Avoids deceptive headlines (10)
- ✓ Website discloses ownership and financing (7.5)
- ✗ Clearly labels advertising (7.5)
- ✓ Reveals who's in charge, including any possible conflicts of interest (5)
- ✗ The site provides names of content creators, along with either contact or biographical information (5)

Criteria are listed in order of importance.

[More information.](#)

Credibility

Herbs-Info.com articles will sometimes cite authoritative

sources such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Dermatology, along with peer-reviewed medical publications such as the British Journal of Anaesthesia. The site has also attributed information to websites promoting alternative medical treatments, like Natural News and Green Med Info, which NewsGuard has found repeatedly publish false content.

The website has promoted numerous false health claims in its articles, including stories promoting ineffective treatments for the COVID-19 virus. An undated article headlined “Herbs And Natural Remedies For Coronavirus Infections: FULL REPORT,” contained what it called “a detailed, up to date COVID-19 herbal protocol” that included garlic. “Garlic can be considered giving ‘generally useful antiviral support,’” the article stated.

The World Health Organization stated on its website that “Garlic is a healthy food that may have some antimicrobial properties. However, there is no evidence from the 2020 outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from the new strain of coronavirus.”

Herbs-Info.com has also promoted the false claim that vaccinations can cause autism. An undated article titled “Vaccinated vs. Unvaccinated: Guess Who Is Sicker” says, “The CDC has yet to admit vaccination’s major role in inducing autism.”

The article also cites a study, originally published online in November 2016 by Frontiers in Public Health, which concluded vaccinated children were at greater risk of developing autism based on an online survey of approximately 400 mothers of home-schooled children.

The journal later said the study was “provisionally accepted but not published” and then rejected, according to Retraction Watch, a news site that covers retractions in research publications. The study’s lead author was Anthony Mawson, a Jackson State University epidemiology professor, and the research

was funded by two anti-vaccine groups, Generation Rescue and the Children's Medical Safety Research Institute.

The CDC and many other health and science authorities, including the World Health Organization and the U.K. National Health Service, backed by an abundance of scientific evidence, have repeatedly stated there is no link between vaccines and autism.

Herbs-Info.com has also promoted false claims about thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative used in vaccines, including in multi-dose vials of flu vaccines. The article titled "Before You Get Another Flu Shot You Should Read This Info" states, "What's crazy is that despite it being well known that mercury is a highly toxic substance – a cumulative neurotoxin – pro-vaccine advocates insist that the mercury in the vaccines is completely safe! I am sorry, but I do not think there is such a thing as a safe dose of mercury."

The CDC and the World Health Organization have repeatedly stated there is no evidence to suggest that the thimerosal used in vaccines poses a health risk. The mercury compound in flu vaccines, called ethylmercury, is different from a separate compound called methylmercury, which is found in certain kinds of fish and can be toxic at high levels. As the CDC explains, ethylmercury from thimerosal is "cleared from the human body more quickly than methylmercury, and is therefore less likely to cause any harm."

The site has also falsely promoted potentially dangerous "natural" cancer cures. For example, an undated article titled "Is Vitamin B17 The Greatest Cover-Up In The History Of Cancer?" said that Vitamin B17 -- which is not a recognized vitamin, but actually a substance found in the pits of fruit such as apricots -- is "an interesting natural remedy for cancer that has been all but forgotten... or possibly even, hushed up?" The article states that "numerous people have claimed that it may help eliminate cancer cells."

The substance, also called laetrile or amygdalin, has been promoted as a cancer cure since the 1950s, according to a July 2017 BuzzFeed News article. According to the U.S. National Cancer Institute, laetrile has shown “no anticancer activity in human clinical trials,” and can have serious side effects that “mirror the symptoms of cyanide poisoning,” including liver damage, coma, and death.

Other Herbs-info.com articles misrepresent published research. For example, an undated article falsely stated that a British Journal of Cancer study found in 2006 that 124 patients died because “the chemotherapy did not work at all, and instead caused the death of the patient.”

The study, which examined how many cancer patients at a single British hospital died within 30 days of undergoing chemotherapy, found that the deaths of 124 patients were attributed to progression of their cancer. Only 19 of those deaths were related to chemotherapy, the study found.

Herbs-Info.com includes a disclaimer on every page of the site saying the information it provides should not “be construed as medical advice.” The disclaimer also states the website “makes no actual recommendations or claims whatsoever to the use of herbs” or other treatment it discusses and “no guarantee is made as to the accuracy, timeliness or usefulness of this information, nor of its suitability for any purpose whatsoever.”

Because the site has promoted false and unsubstantiated health claims in order to advocate for alternative medical treatments, while also stating it is not responsible for the accuracy of the information it shares, NewsGuard has determined the site repeatedly publishes false content and fails to gather and present information responsibly.

Herbs-Info.com does not articulate a corrections policy and NewsGuard could not find any corrections on the site.

The About This Site page makes it clear that Herbs-Info.com believes in herbal remedies, stating that “one of the philosophical ideals of this site is to help ‘restore herbalism to its former glory,’” and expresses its skepticism about mainstream medicine, saying “as many people grow weary of the destructive nature of the mechanized modern world, many people are returning to herbs as they consider other methods to have failed them.” Because Herbs-Info.com discloses an overall point of view and does not label its opinionated articles as news, NewsGuard has determined that it handles the difference between news and opinion responsibly.

Headlines reflect the content of articles. Stories that contain false or misleading information generally avoid including those deceptive claims in the headline.

Newman, the site’s owner, did not respond to four emails, including one sent in 2020, from NewsGuard seeking comment on the site’s editorial practices.

Transparency

Newman writes on the About This Site page that he is the site’s owner and top editor.

A general email address is listed on the bottom of most pages on the site.

Authors are generally not named on articles. Blog posts are typically credited to “admin.” The About page includes a list of contributors but provides no other information beyond their names.

Articles often embed advertisements that resemble the rest of the site’s content and are not labeled. For example, an unlabeled advertisement headlined as “I Can’t Help Showing This Off,” featured on most of the site’s articles as of July 2019, redirects users to a page selling a book on how to make “wild medicine” extracts.

Newman did not respond to four emails, including one sent in 2020, NewsGuard seeking comment on the site’s use of unlabeled advertising and lack of information about content creators.

History According to the site's About page, Herbs-Info.com was launched in 2011. Its associated Facebook page, Herbs, Health and Happiness, was created in December 2012.

Editor's Note: This Nutrition Label was updated on April 16, 2020.

Written by: [John Gregory](#)

Edited by: [Nina Zweig](#), [Amy Westfeldt](#)

Send feedback to NewsGuard: [Click Here](#)

Sources

Ownership and Financing

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<http://www.gemstoneslist.com/policies/privacy.html>
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Content

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July 7, 2018 article: <http://www.herbs-info.com/blog/msg-is-hiding-under-different-names-even-in-your-favorite-all-natural-foods/>
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Credibility

Coronavirus story:

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<http://www.jsums.edu/health/dr-anthony-a-mawson/>

NHS on vaccines/autism:

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Transparency

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Unlabeled ad:

[https://www.thelostways.com/vsl/index.php?](https://www.thelostways.com/vsl/index.php?r=3708&r=8025&hop=zen442&rx=1)

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History

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