

Four-Nation Survey Shows Widespread but Different Levels of Internet Use for Health Purposes

14 million cyberchondriacs in France, 31 million in Germany and 48 million in Japan

For the last four years, Harris Interactive has been tracking the number of people who go online to look for information about health topics; we call them “cyberchondriacs”. In the U.S., their numbers have grown from 54 million in 1998 to 110 million in our latest (March 2002) survey.

Now our newly released four-country study finds that there are 48 million cyberchondriacs in Japan, 31million in Germany and 14 million in France. In all four countries, fully 69% or more (up to 90% in Japan) of those online qualify as cyberchondriacs.

TABLE 1
Incidence Of Cyberchondriacs In The Big Four Pharmaceutical Markets: January 2002

	U.S. %	France %	Germany %	Japan %
Online population (% of all adults online)	66	35	44	42
Cyberchondriacs:				
% of all those online who ever looked for health care information on the Internet	80	69	86	90
% of all adults who ever looked for health care information on the Internet	53	24	38	38
Number of adults who ever looked for health information on the Internet	110M	14M	31M	48M

Source: Global Cyberchondriacs Study, Harris Interactive, January 2002 and The Harris Poll, March 2002.

Much, but not every, use of the Internet for health care purposes involves looking for information on specific medical conditions. This is most common, among cyberchondriacs in those four countries, in the U.S. (26% do it often), and Germany (25%), and much less common in Japan (6% do it often). In Japan, a third (34%) of all cyberchondriacs never look for information about a specific medical condition.

♦ EDITORS ♦

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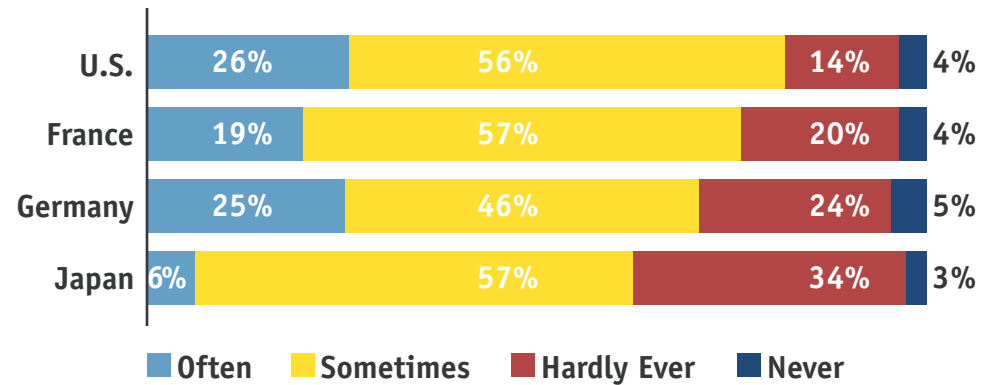


TABLE 2

Medical Conditions Information: Frequency of Internet Use

“How often do you use the Internet to look for information about specific medical conditions?”

Base: All cyberchondriacs



Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002.

It would be a mistake to think that cyberchondriacs only look for health information for themselves. Large numbers do this, in all four countries, for their spouses, children, friends, parents, and other family members.

TABLE 3

Who Uses the Information?

Base: All cyberchondriacs

	U.S. %	France %	Germany %	Japan %
Myself	87	80	81	92
My spouse	48	38	32	58
Child or grandchild	34	18	21	45
Friend or colleague	33	29	35	24
Parent or in-law	31	32	31	43
Another family member	20	8	11	17
Brother or sister	17	10	11	23

Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002.

The types of websites visited vary somewhat from country to country. In the United States, the most visited sites are medical journals (45%), commercial health pages (44%) and academic or research institutions (43%). In France and Germany, they are commercial health pages (52% and 40%), academic or research institutions (50% and 50%). In Japan, patient advocacy or support groups (46%) top the list, followed by hospital sites (36%) and government sites (34%).

TABLE 4
Types of websites Visited
Base: All cyberchondriacs

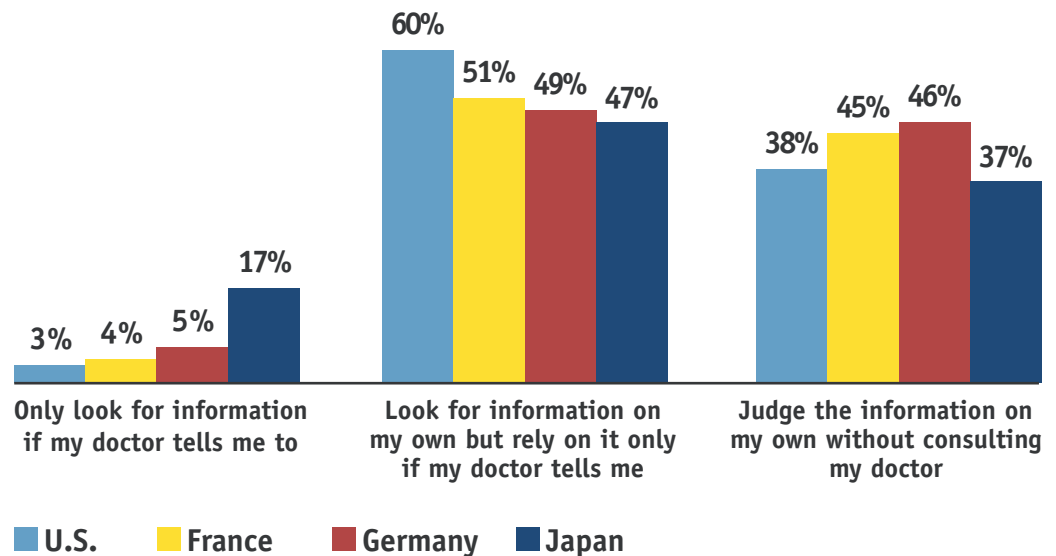
	U.S. %	France %	Germany %	Japan %
Medical journals	45	45	33	27
Commercial health pages	44	52	40	32
Academic or research institutions	43	50	50	33
Pharmaceutical companies	34	18	27	23
Medical societies	34	21	45	35
Patient support or advocacy group for specific diseases	29	30	42	46
News media	29	28	40	33
Government sites	25	29	24	34
Hospitals	16	21	14	36
Individual doctors	11	10	15	25

Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002.

The Role of the Physicians

In a few cases, particularly in Japan, people only look for information if their doctor tells them to do so. Most people can be divided between two large groups (in all four countries). One group (from 60% of American cyberchondriacs to 47% in Japan) says they look for information on their own but **rely on it only if their doctor tells them to do so**. The other large group (from 37% in Japan to 46% in Germany) says they mainly **judge the information on their own without consulting their doctors**.

TABLE 5
Role of Doctor in Evaluating Information
"Percent who say they..."
Base: All cyberchondriacs



Source: Harris Interactive Inc., January 2002.

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We plan to release more information from this four-nation study in other issues of *Harris Interactive Health Care News*. It is mainly based on research conducted online in January 2002 with 309 cyberchondriacs in the U.S., 327 in France, 407 in Germany and 275 in Japan.

About Harris InteractiveSM

Harris Interactive (www.harrisinteractive.com) is a worldwide market research and consulting firm best known for *The Harris Poll*[®] and its pioneering use of the Internet to conduct scientifically accurate market research. We combine the power of unique methodologies and technology with international expertise in predictive, custom and strategic research. Headquartered in Rochester, NY, with offices across the United States, in the United Kingdom, Japan and a global network of local market and opinion research firms, the Company conducts international research with fluency in multiple languages. EOE M/F/D/V

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