

The OTA Website: A Powerful Educational Tool for Orthopaedic Trauma Patients

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Purpose: With 8 million Americans seeking health information online daily, educational websites have gained popularity as tools for addressing the prevalent gap in patient health literacy and post-surgical understanding. Yet the effectiveness of online patient resources varies significantly. This study evaluates the Orthopaedic Trauma Association (OTA) Patient Education tool's effectiveness in enhancing patient knowledge, reducing anxiety, and improving overall patient experience.

Methods: 93 new and follow-up (less than 3 months) English-speaking adult patients presenting to the orthopaedic trauma outpatient clinic for fracture and/or dislocation were included. Each patient completed their injury-related Knowledge Quiz and the Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) questionnaire before and after utilization of the OTA Patient Education tool. They were then asked to assess the tool's usability with the Perceived Health Web Site Usability Questionnaire (PHWSUQ) and 4 "Overall Experience" questions.

Results: After using the OTA Patient Education tool, patient knowledge scores significantly increased from 71.4% to 92.9% ($P < 0.001$), and state and trait anxiety levels significantly decreased (from 6.61 and 7.10, respectively, to 7.16 and 8.0, respectively) ($P < 0.001$). The OTA website received high marks on the PHWSUQ, with 87.41% of patients being "very satisfied" with its ease of use, usefulness, and logical structure.

Conclusion: The freely accessible OTA Patient Education tool demonstrated a significant positive impact on enhancing patient knowledge and reducing anxiety levels. Its high ratings in usefulness and overall satisfaction highlight its potential as an effective tool in patient care and education. These findings support the continued development and utilization of patient-centered digital resources in health care.