**THEA**

**About the user**

36 years old, mother of two. Chronic migraine sufferer. Takes no medication daily and migraine medications as needed.

*“I don’t do my own research often; I tend to trust my doctor”*

**Did you read about or research any drugs that you have been prescribed in the past year?**

* No I have not researched because I trust my doc and do not have any side effects
* When I have had side effects, you’ve googled. Avoid super scientific articles—don’t understand them and don’t want to wade through. I use whatever comes up that looks legitimate—webmd always comes up, but I also look at message boards related to my ailment. I look up name of drug and side effects as key words.

**Have you used government-related resources for food and drug information?**

* Maybe if it comes up in google search. I don’t pay that much attention to the source. I am not the kind of person that thinks about that kind of stuff

**What were some of your primary concerns and questions about the drugs you were prescribed?**

* What are the normal side effects, how long do I need to take it, how do I take it? is there a generic? Is there a limit to how much I can get per month…not concerned with contraindications between drugs because I don’t take others.

**Have you ever had an adverse side effect or reaction related to a medication? What did you do?**

* For prescription meds, I have had a psychiatric side effect—panic attack, sweating. Both times I tried it I had to take it at the doctor’s office and had those issues while at the doctor. I also received a sample to try and had a negative reaction related to blood pressure—I called the doctor for information.
* When I’ve had over the counter drugs and issues with those, I would typically google.

**MICHELLE**

25 years old, professional nanny. Chronic nerve pain and numbness requires daily medication. She only takes a single medication to treat this issue and no other medication.

*“I steer clear of Web MD and related sites because it tells you the worst possible scenario and encourages self-diagnoses. It’s too vague.”*

**Did you read about or research any drugs that you have been prescribed in the past year?**

* Not really, no. I read the pamphlet that came with it. Focused on side effects mainly. I had some side effects when I first started. Found her side effects in the pamphlet and called her doctor who informed her that they would eventually go away.
* Researched illnesses: researched MS. Googled it at first. Found MS society and other reputable sources.

**Have you used government-related resources for food and drug information?**

* I have for food, but I can’t remember what. I never have for drugs.

**What were some of your primary concerns and questions about the drugs you were prescribed?**

* I usually want to know how they work in your body—what they do. What’s the difference between an SSRI vs another type of antidepressant, for example, in terms of how it works in the body and in which body parts it works. Possible side effects. How hard it is to come off of it once you start taking it. I don’t really have to worry about mixing drugs because I only take one drug now, but I have in the past and I’ve found issues that doctors did not inform me of when I’ve googled and came across some information. I can’t recall the source.

**Have you ever had an adverse side effect or reaction related to a medication? What did you do?**

* I either call the doctor or stop taking them completely if I’m concerned. I do the latter for over the counter meds mostly

**RACHEL**

**About the user**

30 years old, single woman. Meds taken daily: thyroid meds, antidepressant, mood stabilizer. Meds as needed: Xanax, Excedrin, Aleve. Depressed, Migraine sufferer, Hypothyroidism.

*“I don’t do my own research often; I tend to trust my doctor”*

**Did you read about or research any drugs that you have been prescribed in the past year?** Yes. Usually I google side effects of medication and then convince myself that I have them all. I do tend to click on WebMD articles first because they seem more trusted. Wikipedia. Other times I’ll be drawn to patient forums, which are depressing. I feel like doctors don’t offer up this information when they prescribe it. They fully expect you to do your own research.

**Have you used government resources for food and drug information?**

Not that I am aware of.

**What were some of your primary concerns and questions about the drugs you were prescribed?**

* Side effects, especially for depression medication. I’ve had such a rollercoaster of side effects as I’ve tried different medications.
* I don’t do enough research about medication interactions. I tend to trust my doc to tell me, but I probably shouldn’t.
* I am also interested in knowing how long drugs have been on the market. I tend to trust those that have been around a long time. I might read an actual medical study on newer drugs.
* What happens if you miss doses? Withdrawal. Also, how long it takes to work or start working.

**Have you ever had an adverse side effect or reaction related to a medication? What did you do?**

* Yes. Pretty much every antidepressant I’ve been on. I’ve had insomnia, exhaustion, reduced sex drive, manic episodes, nightmares, losing hair.
* It depends on how bad the side effects are. Sometimes I will go against the doctor’s advice and stop them. If I can, I will wait and see a doctor to make a call. I never call to ask a doc usually…I’ll schedule an appointment.

**FEATURES/IDEAS COLLECTED FROM ALL**

* Provide more than just negative stuff. What about nutrition information? Other positive information that I may be interested in that the FDA gathers and analyzes
* For ailments, it’s interesting to filter on a part of the body, allow you to answer questions in context to further filter results. Wed MD has this.
* What about the “good” related to medication—successes, successful trials
* What about the story behind a drug? The history? That could be very useful and interesting. How long has it been around and what was it used for? This is pertinent for old and new drugs.
* Can you expose trends in effects reported before they make their way in to the official paperwork?
* Mash up food and drug information—so, for example, if I have heart disease, I should be seeing dietary and drug information together.