

Using AI to ask about health: 4 tips to help you get more accurate answers.

This guide explains how to use ChatGPT, Gemini, and Claude to properly check your health, avoid inaccuracies, and increase the reliability of the information.

Every day, millions of people turn to AI chatbots like ChatGPT, Gemini, or Claude to ask about health issues. However, what not everyone realizes is that getting the right answer isn't simple—even when the AI ??answers very confidently.

Several recent studies have shown that large language models (LLMs) still have significant limitations. One study indicated that chatbots frequently fail to detect misinformation in healthcare. Another study showed that AI systems specializing in healthcare tend to underestimate the severity of illness in many cases, including emergencies.

It's worth noting that the problem isn't just with AI, but also with how people ask questions. The combination of how chatbots are designed to 'please users' and how users provide information sometimes produces unpredictable results.

If you still want to use AI as a tool to assist with health research, here are some important principles to help you increase the accuracy of your answers.



'Test' chatbots before trusting them.

A rather clever approach is to challenge the chatbot with misinformation that you already know about.

For example, you might ask about a medical conspiracy theory, such as whether COVID-19 vaccines contain tracking chips, or controversies like whether fluoride in drinking water is safe. If the chatbot responds inconsistently or agrees with false information, that's a clear sign that you shouldn't trust it for more important questions.

Studies show that chatbots can be 'fooled' depending on how information is presented. Even when incorrect information is placed in a context similar to a doctor's note, AI is even more likely to miss the error. This demonstrates that the accuracy of AI depends not only on the data but also heavily on context.

The way you ask questions directly affects the results.

One notable finding is that the way users describe their symptoms can completely alter the AI's conclusions.

For example, if you add details like 'I don't think my relative is seriously ill,' the chatbot tends to downplay the alert level, even if the actual symptoms could be dangerous. In some tests, the AI was even 11 times less likely to recommend emergency medical attention simply because of such 'reassurance' signals.

This highlights a major problem: AI doesn't just read data, it also 'interprets' it according to the context you provide. If the input is inaccurate or biased, the output will also be affected.

Another study showed that the combination of users and AI sometimes yields worse results than traditional information retrieval. The main reason is that users do not properly assess the severity of symptoms or ask questions that are not precise enough.

Ask questions like an expert.

The same chatbot can produce completely different results depending on how it's used by doctors and patients.

Experienced healthcare professionals know how to select important information when asking questions, from medical history and current symptoms to related factors. Meanwhile, the average user often doesn't know which details are necessary, leading to inaccurate prompts.

This makes AI prone to drawing incorrect or incomplete conclusions. The risk is even greater when users misinterpret the chatbot's response.

Nevertheless, AI can still be useful if used correctly. It can give you an initial insight into a health problem, but it shouldn't completely replace professional medical advice—especially in serious situations like severe chest pain, shortness of breath, confusion, or weakness on one side of the body.

Always request sources and verify information.

One of the most important steps is to ask the chatbot to provide a source for the information it provides.

However, simply looking at the list of links isn't enough. You need to open those sources to check if they're reliable. If the information comes from unreliable sources, such as unverified posts on social media, you should be extremely cautious.

Conversely, if the source points to reputable health organizations, it is highly likely that the information reflects the current scientific consensus.

Another effective cross-checking method is to ask another chatbot with the same data. If two independent systems reach the same conclusion, the level of reliability will be higher.

AI is opening up a whole new approach to health information retrieval. However, it's not a perfect 'virtual doctor'.

The true value of AI lies in its ability to assist, not replace. It can help you understand problems faster, but it still needs verification and evaluation from humans—especially healthcare professionals.

In the future, AI tools may move closer to how a real doctor works: asking questions, gathering comprehensive information, and making decisions based on the overall context. But for now, the smartest way to use AI remains: **referencing, verifying, and not relying entirely on it**.

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