

5 prompts to help patients get the most out of AI chatbots



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With more patients turning to large-language models such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude and others to answer their questions about symptoms, medical conditions and more, the American Medical Association (AMA) is offering some go-to advice that will help you get the most out of your experience with AI chatbots while staying safe.

The key to effectively using AI chatbots to help you achieve optimal health is to harness the amazing power of AI chatbots to learn, compare and prepare for care—not as a substitute for the evidence-based, personalized guidance you will get by asking your doctor.

“As technology evolves, it’s vital that patients use AI to complement—not replace—the advice of their doctors,” said AMA CEO and Executive Vice President [John Whyte, MD, MPH](#). “These recommended prompts empower individuals to ask better questions, cut through jargon, and understand their options. Safe and informed use of AI helps patients make smarter health decisions, but medical expertise remains irreplaceable.”

To do that, make use of these [five easy prompts from the AMA](#). The aim is to use AI to explore possibilities, not to be your doctor.

Explore possibilities

“I have these symptoms [description]. What are common causes, how do they differ and what details would help narrow them down?”

Simplify information

“Explain this to me in simple words: [medical term, doctor’s diagnosis or instructions].

Add relevant context

“Given my situation [my age and gender, lifestyle, goals, etc.] what do I need to know?”

Know your options

“What are the different ways to treat [diagnosis name] and what are the benefits, risks and side effects of each?”

Prepare for your visit

“What questions should I ask my doctor to better understand this situation?”

On the other side of the ledger, there are some critical limitations to be aware of when using AI chatbots to help answer your health questions.

Here are four caveats to keep in mind for safe AI use:

- AI can’t diagnose or know your full medical history.
- AI may rely on incomplete, outdated or unvetted information.
- AI can sound confident—even when it’s wrong.
- Results depend on how you ask.

The AMA also is reminding patients to protect their health data when interacting with AI chatbots. You should avoid sharing personal or identifying details. Notably, the privacy protections may differ from those available at your physician’s office.

Also, do not rely on AI chatbots for emergencies, diagnosis or treatment decisions, or as a replacement for your physician. For serious or sudden symptoms, call 911.

Doctors are using AI too

This and other great advice was detailed by Dr. Whyte this week at a meeting of the [Digital Medicine Society](#), which convenes and activates leaders, innovators and enthusiasts from around the globe at the intersection of digital innovation and healthcare.

The AMA describes AI tools as [augmented intelligence](#) to emphasize that their role is to help humans—and human physicians—make smarter decisions.

Nearly two-thirds of physicians, 66%, [surveyed by the AMA reported using healthcare AI](#)—often called artificial intelligence—in 2024. Among other things, physicians are finding uses for AI for documentation of billing codes, medical charts or visit notes; creation of discharge instructions, care plans or progress notes; translation services, assistive diagnosis and more.

The AMA survey found that physicians have a more positive sentiment and increased enthusiasm toward AI, with growing recognition of the benefits the technology can offer. Among physicians surveyed, most said that they recognized AI's benefits, with 68% reporting that AI had definite at least some advantage in patient care.

From AI implementation to digital health adoption and EHR usability, the AMA is [fighting to make technology work for physicians](#), ensuring that it is an asset to doctors. That includes recently launching the [AMA Center for Digital Health and AI](#) to give physicians a powerful voice in shaping how AI and other digital tools are harnessed to improve the patient and clinician experience.

Earlier this month, the AMA outlined [four ways that Congress can help boost safety](#) when it comes to AI chatbots and mental health, and also detailed seven keys to [stopping the deepfake “doctors”](#) that are popping up online and misleading patients.