and doctors to communicate their own experiences. As an added bonus for the patients unlucky enough to suffer from associated conditions, there are sections on Ledderhose disease and Peyronie's disease. In summary, the basic topics are covered well and the many links will be sure to satisfy patients with insatiable appetites for knowledge about their condition.***

www.asssh.org

The American Society for Surgery of the Hand provides basic information on Dupuytren's contracture for patients. It is really designed to assist patients in deciding how to proceed once the diagnosis has been made. This includes a link to help 'find a hand surgeon near you' and, should the patient want more than the basics, links are provided for Medline, the National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. Excellent pictures make the information readily digestible, although the review is not comprehensive and patients visiting the site are instructed to glean more detail from their chosen surgeon with regard to surgical options and outcomes.**

www.mayoclinic.com

The Mayo Clinic website has a page dedicated to Dupuytren's contracture that is aimed at patients. The review covers important topics such as signs and symptoms, risk factors, when to seek medical advice, screening and diagnosis, complications and treatment. The website is user-friendly, allowing the reader to find specific information easily, whilst the uncomplicated language ensures an easy, yet informative, read. However, a lack of pictures or bibliography prevents a more fulfilling visit. Furthermore, the scope and appeal of the site could be broadened to include additional sections on topics such as pathology, patient experiences and provision of links to other related sites.**

www.wikipedia.org

Wikipedia is a multilingual, online encyclopaedia written by volunteers from around the world. The section on Dupuytren's contracture covers most areas, from anatomy and symptoms to epidemiology and treatment options. However, the article is shy on detail, allowing just two lines on surgical management, which is neither long enough to inform patients of the various options or instruct trainee surgeons. This Spartan text is remedied, to some extent, by numerous links to associated articles and references that allow further indulgence.**

Hidradenitis suppurativa

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e-medicine

<http://www.emedicine.com/derm/topic892.htm>

A well-structured site that covers the topic extensively including: historical aspects, epidemiology, symptoms and signs, investigations, associated disorders, treatments, complications and prognosis. There are numerous photographs that depict the condition at various anatomical locations. The website is aimed primarily at physicians as the information provided is in-depth with technical language with a plethora of references for those who wish to look at any aspect in greater detail.****

Patient UK

<http://www.patient.co.uk/comments/40024681/>

<http://www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/40024681/>

This site offers comprehensive, free, up-to-date health information for both patients and doctors. The 'PatientPlus' article has clear and systematic information on all aspects of hidradenitis including preventative methods, drugs used in acute and chronic stages and surgical indications for the three main stages of this disease. This article written for doctors uses technical language, can be a useful adjunct to other websites written for patients. There are useful links to sources of information and support, including the Hidradenitis Suppurativa Support Group. Personal experiences of sufferers can be posted on this website allowing them to share their views and opinions with others.***

The Hidradenitis Suppurativa Support Group – part of the Hydradenitis Information Development Exchange (HIDE) International Web

<http://www.angelfire.com/amiga/hssg/>

A UK-based website set up in 1999 by a support group specifically aimed at patients suffering from this condition. Although there is little background information regarding the condition itself, current treatment options are listed along with the general consensus from sufferers who have tried these treatments. The site includes simple tips on reducing progression of the disease, links to medical websites, and updates on any new developments in treatments. Further contact details of agencies that can offer social, psychological and economical support are provided and there are facilities that allow one to contact sufferers from around the world, ask questions, and read comments from other patients. A very useful resource for patients.****

*****CONSIDER BUYING SHARES *****TELL YOUR FRIENDS
***MAY BE USEFUL **LOOK IF YOU'VE GOT NOTHING TO DO
*BEST AVOIDED

SELECTED INTERNET VIEWINGS

British Association of Dermatologists

<http://www.bad.org.uk/patients/leaflets/hidradenitis.asp>

This official site from the British Association of Dermatologists provides information leaflets in a Q&A format. It covers the main topics using non-technical language, provides references, and links to other information websites and self-help groups. The information is fairly basic, without any indication of the likely success of various treatments, nor are there any photographs or illustrations to help the public understand this condition.***

The Hidradenitis Suppurativa Foundation

<http://www.hs-foundation.org>

The Hidradenitis Suppurativa Foundation is an American 'non-profit public benefit corporation' founded for funding the development of a more effective therapy to patients. It provides a good resource for physicians. Although there is some brief information on the disorder, the site is mainly geared towards latest developments, raising awareness, the scientific basis and funding for new research. Like most of the other sites, it does have useful links but lacks any photographs or illustrations.***

DermNet NZ

www.dermnetnz.org/dna.hidsup/hidsup.html

The New Zealand Dermatology Society provides information that is presented in a clear and concise manner. The site concentrates mainly on the causes, symptoms and signs, and treatment of this condition and

provides detailed information on each of the therapeutic drugs, including the indications, duration of therapy and side effects. It is one of the few websites that shows photographs of this relatively common condition. There is also a facility to translate the information into a number of other languages, giving the website a truly international feel!****

Hidradenitis Suppurativa USA

<http://www.hs-usa.org/default.htm> http://www.hs-usa.org/pub/articles/2001_HS_VDW.pdf

This official site of 'Hidradenitis Suppurativa USA' aims to increase awareness and understanding of the disease among the public and medical profession. There is some information on the condition on the general nature, its stages, and treatment along with some links to resources for physicians as well as support groups for patients. There are links to other websites that show photographs at various stages of disease progression.***

Ruth's Page

<http://www.frontiernet.net/~ruthb/HidradenitisSuppurativa.html>

A colourful and curious website set up by an American named 'Ruth' who is not a scientist or a doctor but 'just a woman with an attitude and a cause'(!) According to the website, she suffers from endometriosis, fibromyalgia and hidradenitis and provides a personal account of her remarkable experience. This website is included as it provides endless number of links to other web pages on every aspect of hidradenitis.**

ERRATUM

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Non-attendance at the colorectal clinic: a prospective audit

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We sincerely apologise for the incorrect order of author's names in the above article. They are listed correctly above.