

2019

Social Influencer Trend Report

healthline



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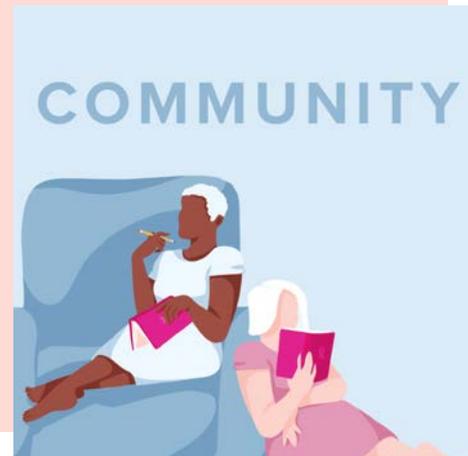
Executive Summary

Influencers have been impacting the health and wellness marketplace for years, but only recently are we beginning to see pharma catch on.

In a world of cluttered and often “fake” social content, condition-specific health influencers – who often refer to themselves as advocates – offer health and pharma marketers an authentic and direct line to patients and ultimately drive health actions.

One influencer said it best: *“Social media has become too much about working the algorithm and less about creating genuine content.”* Marketers looking to invest in sustainable, engaged relationships with patients should consider working with or aligning with content created by health influencers.

This report is brought to you by [Healthline](#), #1 fastest growing health source: real health information with a real human approach.



Overview

Healthline's **2019 Social Influencer Trend Report** brings forward data and insights about how influencer relationships can help your brand keep up with evolving social media strategies and consumer behaviors.

- Finding or providing a **space for community** fuels the behaviors of health influencers and people living with conditions.
- **Facebook** is the most common platform for engagement and community.
- Health condition influencers are driving health actions with 82% of people with conditions likely to **speak to a doctor about new treatment options** as a result of following an influencer.
- Influencers are most likely to work with a brand if **their message aligns with theirs**.
- People living with conditions who follow influencers trust the information that health influencers provide and have **positive perceptions toward the brands and companies** they support.

METHODOLOGY

Findings are based on two Healthline surveys and original reporting.

Health influencers

Understand how influencers across all social media channels work, what they value, and what they're planning for 2019.

- 337 respondents among Healthline influencer partners (current and prospective)
- Survey executed: Sep. 25 – Oct. 16, 2018

People living with conditions

Gauge the impact of health influencers among individuals with current medical conditions.

- 701 respondents among U.S. adults, sourced by Survey Sampling Inc.
- Survey executed: Mar. 2 – Mar. 11, 2018



A LOOK AT 2019

Health Influencers' Social Media Strategies

KEY FINDING #1

Authenticity of intent to inspire others fuels organic and inspirational relationships.

What They're Sharing

Social platforms are often used as a way to express what you're passionate about. **39% of survey respondents indicated that a specific health condition** (i.e., MS, mental health) is the main focus of their social media presence.

Throughout the report, we'll be comparing 'health condition influencers' to 'other influencers,' which include: general health/wellness, family parenting, and fitness.

HEALTH CONDITION INFLUENCERS' PRIMARY MESSAGE

53% – inspire and encourage others

40% – raise awareness about a condition or issue

6% – share lifestyle

1% – try to sell products



KEY FINDING #2

Social media drives distribution of message,
but blogs are the content platform of choice.

What Platforms They're Using

A majority of health condition influencers value their blog over their social media accounts. Many influencers are a byproduct of successful bloggers; in other words, a lot of influencers got their start with their blog, so it's a medium they have cared about since the beginning. Social media allows them to build relationships, provide an engagement platform, and drive users to their blog.

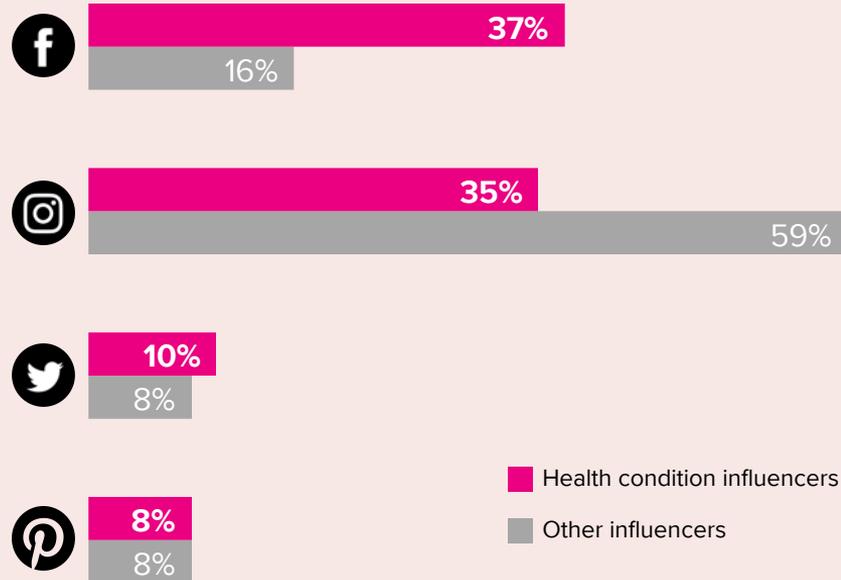
WHAT THEY VALUE

61%
blog

vs.

39%
social media

Health condition influencers are more likely than other types of influencers to focus on Facebook, and less likely to focus on Instagram.

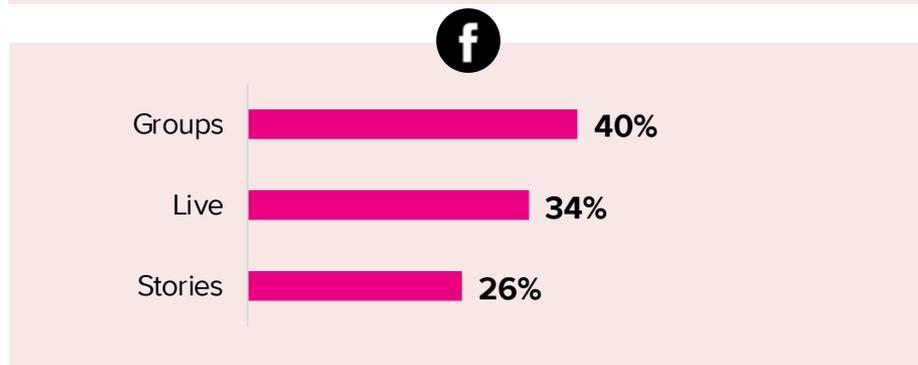
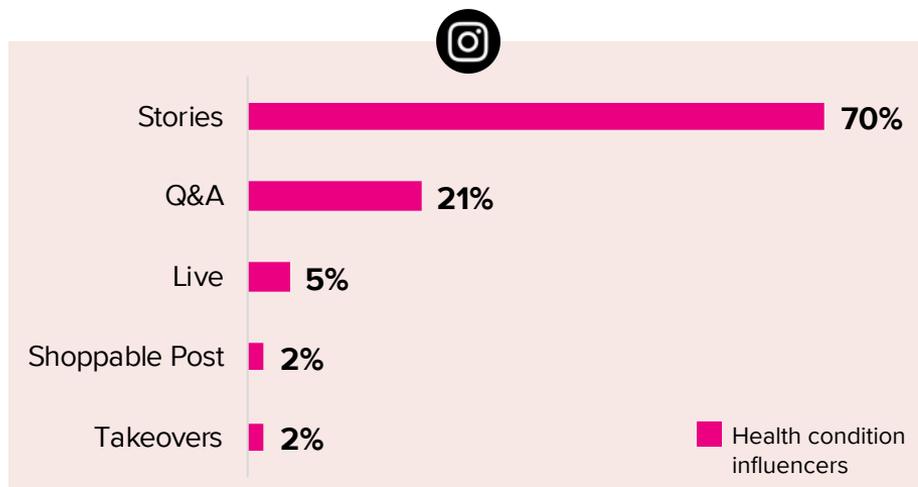


What Platforms They're Using

Within each platform, health condition influencers are planning to focus on **different social media features and tools in 2019**. Influencers are embracing stories and sharing in-the-moment experiences. In fact, story content is growing 15 times faster than feed-based content, as reported by [NewsWhip](#).

HEALTH CONDITION INFLUENCERS

are **100% more likely** than other influencers to focus on Instagram Q&A's – a feature that allows them to continue to interact with their community.



KEY FINDING #3

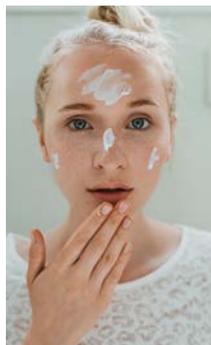
Successful influencer-brand relationships
stem from a common purpose.

Working with Brands

Health condition influencers **seek a shared purpose** in forming brand relationships and they are looking to brand partnerships to drive an increase in their recognition and reach.

REASON TO WORK WITH BRANDS

- Their message aligns with mine (59%)
- Already use their product/service (12%)
- Their reach will give me more exposure (12%)
- Compensation (9%)
- They give back to the community (7%)



BENEFIT OF WORKING WITH BRANDS

- Increase in recognition and reach (56%)
- Receiving goods/services/products for personal use (17%)
- Help marketing content (11%)
- Help creating content (9%)
- Access to events (7%)

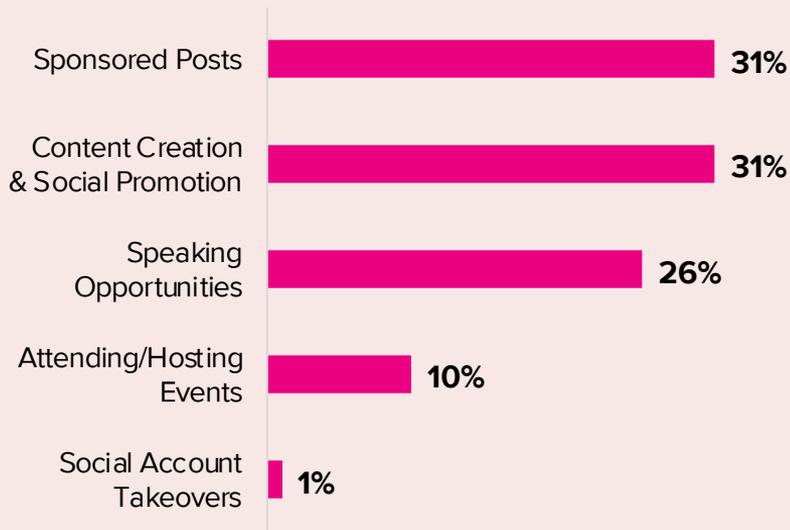
Working with Brands

Online and offline channels are both important methods for health influencers to work with brands. Sponsored posts – whether they are feed-based or stories – content creation, and social promotion are all ways brands and influencers can join together to educate and advocate around a shared purpose.

HEALTH CONDITION INFLUENCERS

are **67% more likely** than other influencers to see value in creating meaningful offline interactions through in-person events.

METHODS OF WORKING WITH BRANDS

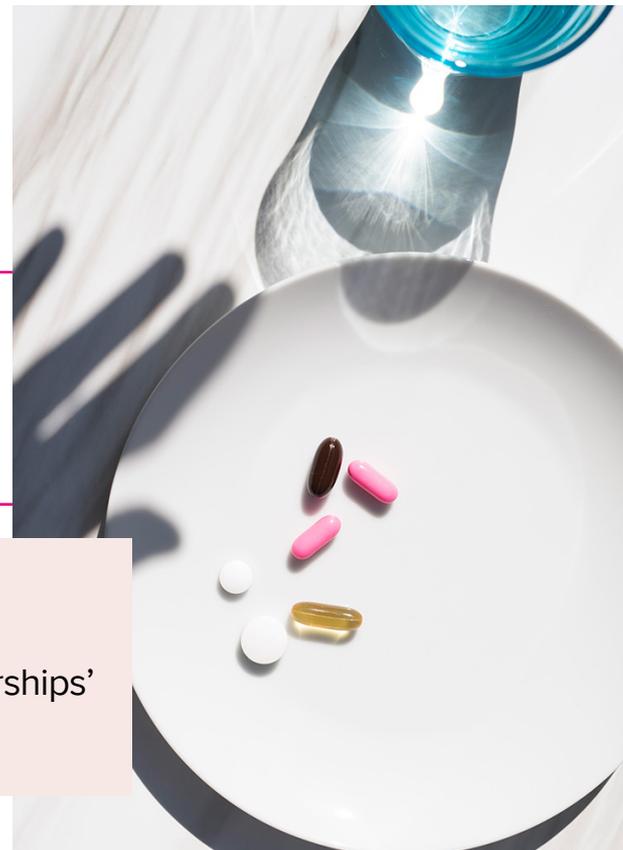


Working with Brands

There is an **opportunity for pharma** to work with health condition influencers in 2019. Many influencers are already engaged in sponsored partnerships, and anticipate this to increase in 2019. However, the healthcare industry – due to its many regulations and not knowing how to work with influencers – only makes up less than 1% of sponsored posts, according to [NewsWhip](#).

52% of health influencers participate in sponsored partnerships

68% want to do more ‘sponsored partnerships’ per month in 2019





A LOOK AT THE

*Impact of Health
Influencers
on People Living
with Conditions*

About the Respondents

Findings are based on a Healthline survey to gauge the impact of health influencers among individuals with current medical conditions.

701 respondents
(U.S. panel, not Healthline audience)

42% Millennials

24% Gen X

25% Boomers+

53% female | **45%** male



MOST PREVALENT MEDICAL CONDITIONS

39% – anxiety

37% – depression



KEY FINDING #4

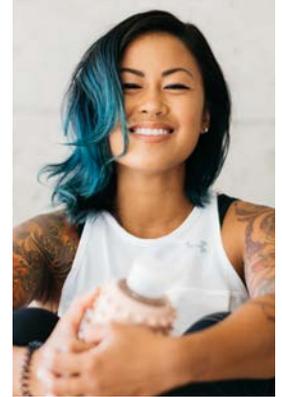
Facebook leads the way in patient engagement with condition communities and influencers.

Role of Social Media in the Condition Journey

Social media continues to play a large role in the health landscape. **71% of survey respondents actively participate in a social community** related to their diagnosed medical condition.

TOP REASONS FOR JOINING

- Share experiences with others (51%)
- Receive emotional support & inspiration (48%)
- Learn about coping strategies (45%)
- Stay current on treatment options (39%)

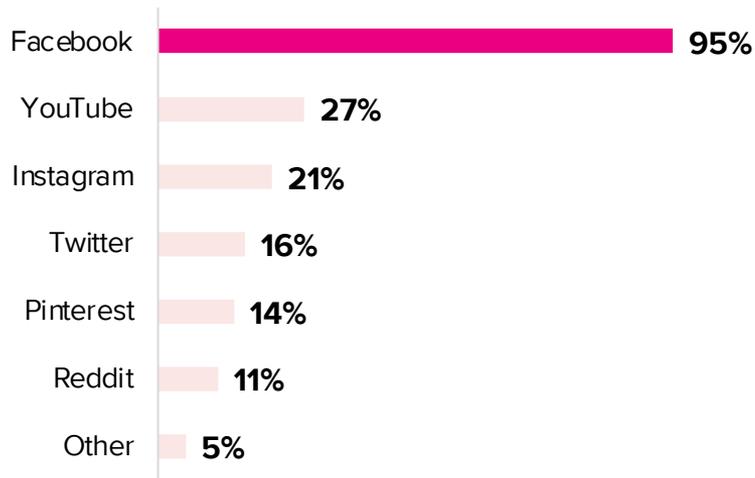


TOP REASONS FOR NOT JOINING

- Trust the information received from their doctor (47%)
- Choose to keep their medical conditions private (45%)
- Not aware of social communities specific to their condition (31%)

Social Platforms of Focus

While **Facebook is the most widely used social site** specific to their medical condition, there are significant generational differences among survey respondents when it comes to Instagram and Pinterest.



USAGE BY AGE GROUP

	Millennials	Gen Xers	Boomers+
Facebook	93%	95%	97%
YouTube	29%	26%	26%
Instagram	32%	16%	9%
Twitter	18%	12%	17%
Pinterest	21%	3%	3%
Reddit	18%	13%	9%
Other	6%	3%	5%

KEY FINDING #5

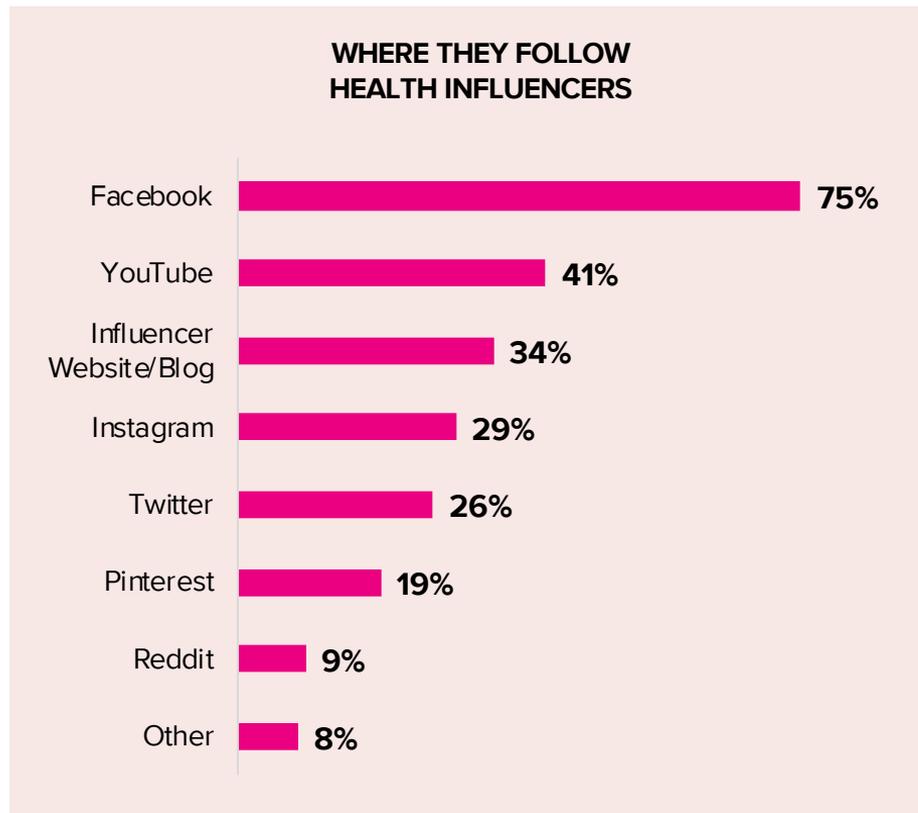
A small but impactful audience follows health influencers.

Role of Health Influencers

While a large percentage of people with conditions participate in social around their health, **only 1 in 7 choose to follow a health influencer online**. However, this small but mighty group is hyper engaged and taking health actions as a result of following health influencers.

WHO IS FOLLOWING ONLINE HEALTH INFLUENCERS?

- **53%** – Millennials
- **53%** – Gen Xers
- **28%** – Boomers
- **66%** – receiving treatment for less than 3 years
- **94%** – active in social for their health



KEY FINDING #6

Influencers humanize health and
drive health actions.

Top Benefits of Following a Health Influencer

Health influencers are seen to provide help in **multiple areas of the patient and condition journey.**



FUNCTIONAL/MEDICAL

- What to expect from my medical condition
- Learn about things I should discuss with my doctor
- Get tips for managing my medical condition
- Make medical information easier to understand

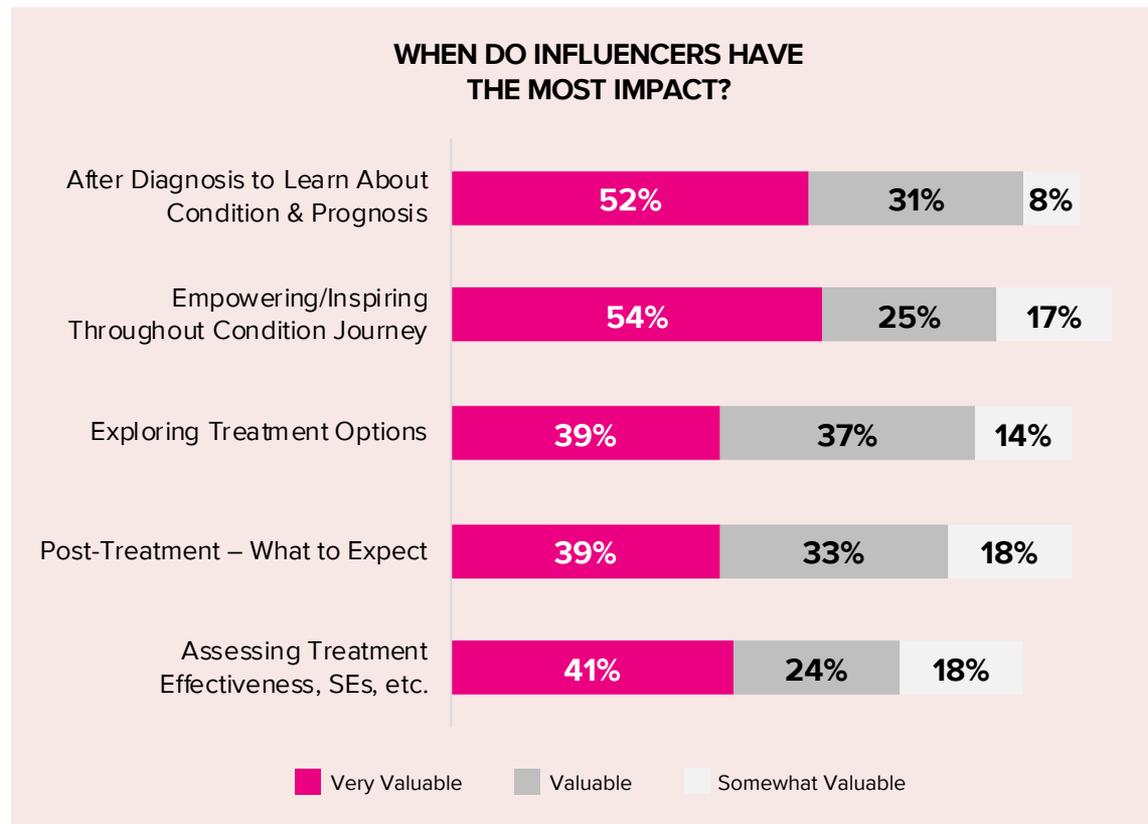
EMOTIONAL

- Makes me feel human
- Encouragement & emotional support
- See what it really means to be living with the condition
- Makes me feel less alone



Value of Health Influencers

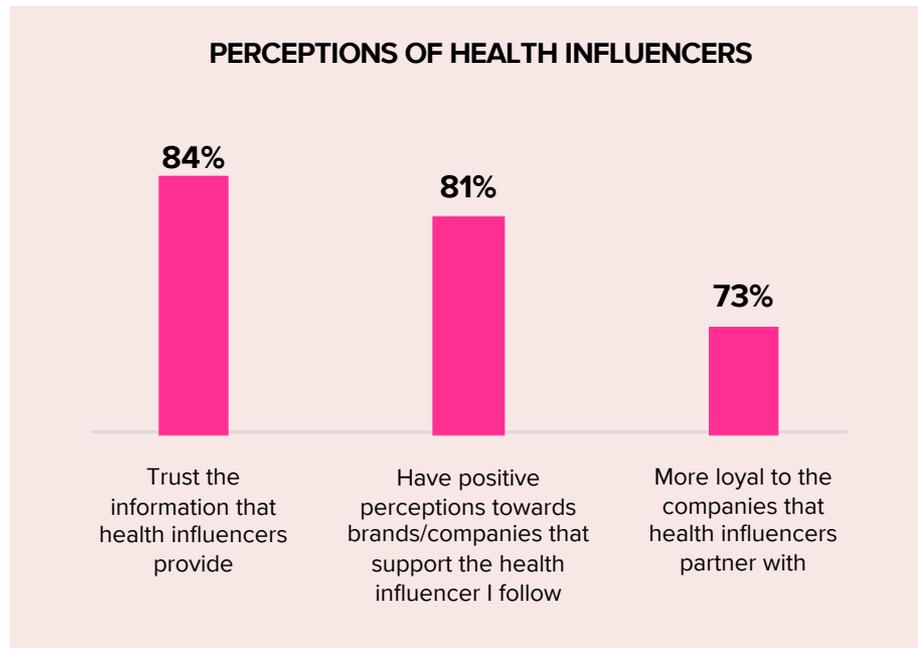
76% of survey respondents that follow a health influencer indicate that health influencers have a very high level of impact on the **day-to-day living and management of their condition**, and it continues throughout their journey.



Perceptions of Health Influencers

Health influencers are seen as a trustworthy source of information and **positively impact companies and brands they work with.**

However, it is important to most followers (96%) that health influencers **disclose their ties to companies and brands** they work with.



Influencers are Driving Actions

A recommendation by a health influencer is very likely to translate into **action taken by their followers**, from visiting websites to tracking symptoms and making brand requests to doctors.

LIKELIHOOD TO TAKE ACTION

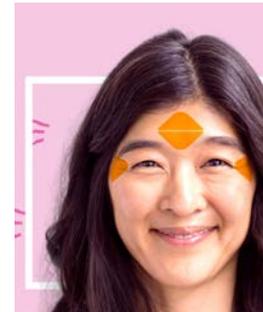
85% – visit websites that health influencers partner with

85% – share information or posts from health influencers with others

82% – speak to a doctor about a new treatment option

76% – speak to a doctor about switching medications

70% – request a specific brand from a doctor





KEY LEARNINGS

Bridging the Gap for Health & Pharma

SOCIAL MEDIA &
INFLUENCERS
HUMANIZE HEALTH

Framework for Success



Perspective:

Consider working with health influencers as an access point to investing in sustainable, engaged relationships with patients.



Platform:

Maximize the synergy between social media, search, and content to deliver the most effective marketing strategy.



Performance:

Leverage publishers to build bridges with social influencers, increase reach, and drive a more qualified audience.



The Boss Babes' Guide to Sex with Endometriosis



Hey Girl: Here's Why You Should See a Doctor for Severe Period Pain



Chronic Pain Isn't a Side Effect We Should Have to "Just Live With"

Living with endo | Pain management for endo | Endo, femininity, and identity



Value of Working with a Trusted Partner

High-quality publishers can open doors for pharma brands in social, helping them connect in authentic and meaningful ways in the social space.

- Access to vetted influencers
- Brand safe environment
- Nimble process
- Scalable programs
- Proven success



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Make an Influence in 2019

Interested in learning more about this study or other insights to help you with the evolving health and media landscape?

Healthline is your bridge between ***Real Health*** — expert opinions and clinical authority in the world of health content and marketing — and ***Real Human*** — a deep understanding of who patients are and the lives they're living.

Contact us at corpmarketing@healthline.com or visit our corporate insight hub, [Healthline Insider](#), to learn more today.