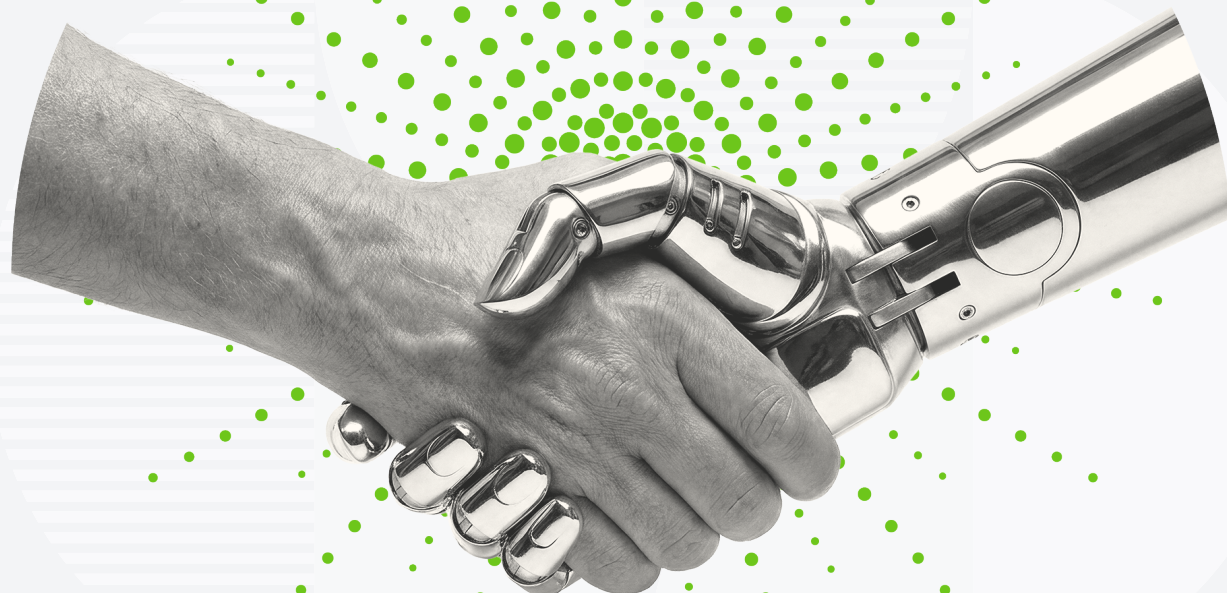




Research Initiative

Prompted: *AI in the Care Decision*

July 2026



About BPD Healthcare

BPD Healthcare is a strategic growth partner that delivers the future to healthcare's leading brands. We provide fully integrated solutions—branding, marketing, communications, and business consulting—that are technology-enabled, AI-infused and supported by our proprietary data platform.

Our clients include the largest health systems, prestigious academic medical centers, care delivery enablers, multi-location provider practices, and leading healthcare innovators. For more information, **visit bpdhealthcare.com**.

Introduction

Healthcare organizations have more data than ever before, from market research and patient data to consumer insights and social listening. Yet, too often, patients are still treated as over-generalized audience segments on a PowerPoint slide rather than people living complex, everyday lives.

The BPD Research Initiative is our proprietary national survey program tracking how healthcare consumers think, decide, and act. Drawing on proprietary data, cultural insight, and real-world behavior, it examines how people form beliefs about health through conversations, community influence, media, and lived experience. **Our goal is to understand what people do, and more importantly, why they do it and what it means for healthcare organizations.** By bringing these behaviors to life, we aim to help leaders navigate complex business challenges and drive measurable impact through strategic growth programs.

This pulse draws on findings from the May 2026 wave. **Findings indicate that AI is already becoming a meaningful layer in the healthcare decision journey,** as consumers increasingly use it to understand symptoms, diagnoses, treatments, side effects, and care options. AI is also starting to influence behaviors, including care-seeking, self-management, provider conversations, and medication-related actions.

At the same time, trust has not fully caught up with adoption. Consumers still trust providers much more than AI, and in care settings, they are most receptive to AI when it is transparent, clinically grounded, connected to trusted care relationships and used to support, not replace, care decisions.

Findings

- 1 AI adoption is already mainstream, but trust has not caught up
- 2 Health AI users are omnichannel information seekers
- 3 Consumers most use AI for understanding health information
- 4 AI is prompting real healthcare decisions
- 5 Provider trust remains strong, but AI is becoming a second-opinion layer
- 6 Trust depends on transparency, clinical alignment, and human connection



1

AI adoption is already mainstream, but *trust has not caught up*

Adoption is ahead of trust. AI is already part of the health information journey, but consumers are uncertain about how much to rely on it.



AI users

79%



AI for health info users

71%



Monthly+ AI users for health info

49%



Expect AI use for health to increase

32%



High trust in AI health info

25%

Base: 1,000; How often do you use AI tools? How often do you use AI tools for health-related questions? How do you expect your use of AI for health questions to change in the next year? How much do you trust the following sources for health information?

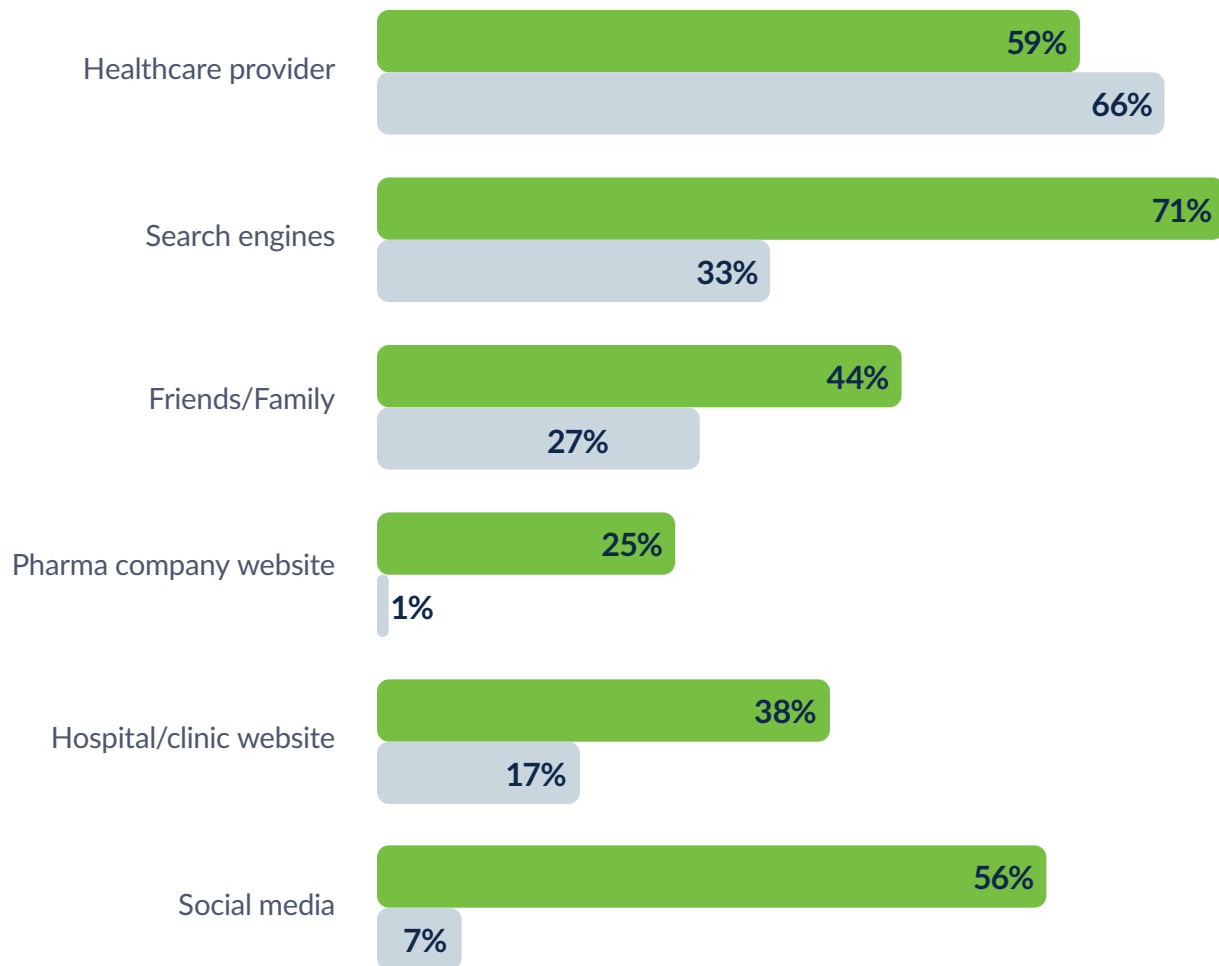
2

Health AI users are *omnichannel information seekers*

People who use AI for health information are not only using AI. Non-users of AI for health information are more provider-centered in seeking information or advice, while heavy users are more omnichannel and digitally engaged across search, social, hospital sites, and pharma sites.

Health information sources: (excluding AI)

■ Heavy users of AI for health info (n=207)
■ Non-users of AI health info (n=303)



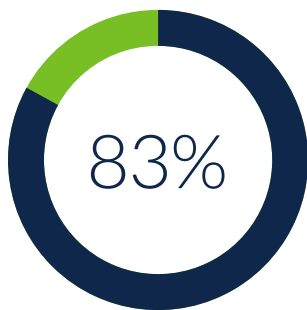
% of each group using source for health information

Base: 1,000; In the past 12 months, where have you gotten information or advice about your health or the health of someone else, such as a family member? How often do you use AI tools for health-related questions? (Heavy users = weekly or more; non-users = never)

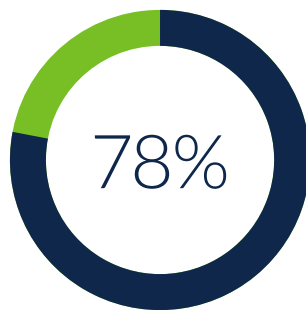
3

Consumers most use AI for *understanding health information*

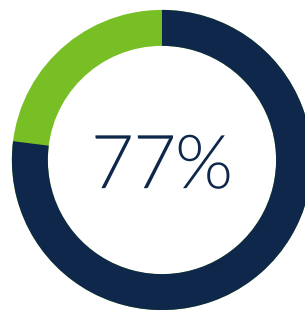
AI is becoming a trusted resource for helping consumers understand symptoms, diagnoses, treatments, and wellness information. Its strongest role today is helping people make sense of complex healthcare information in clear, accessible language.



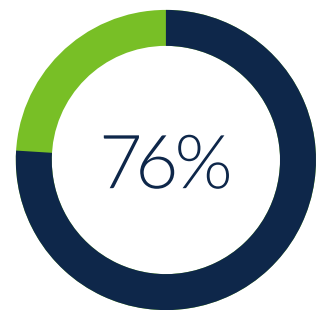
Understand symptoms



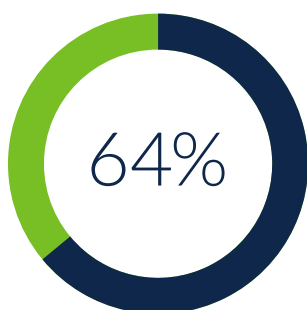
Understand a diagnosis



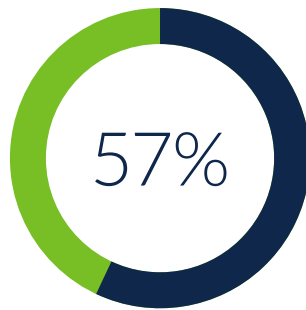
General wellness questions



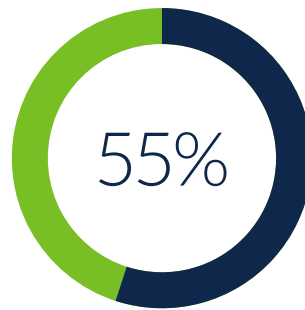
Treatment questions



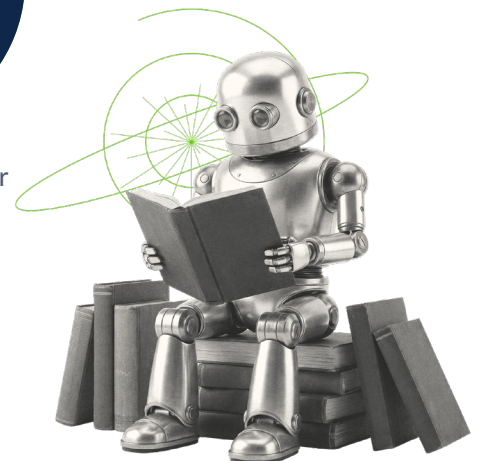
Prepare for/follow up a doctor visit



Mental health



Find/choose a provider



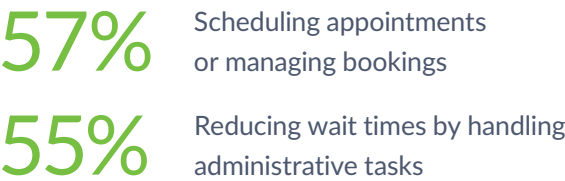
■ Base: 697; How often do the following situations lead you to turn to AI for health questions? (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always)

In a clinical setting, consumers are also most open to AI that makes healthcare *easier to access and understand*



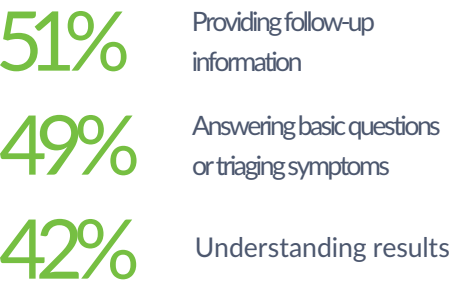
ACCESS & NAVIGATION

Consumers are most accepting of AI when it removes care friction.



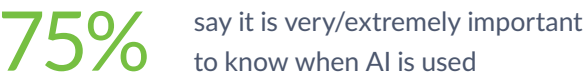
EXPLAINING

AI helping to explain, prepare, or follow through.



NEEDED TRANSPARENCY

Consumers want disclosure when AI is used.



DO NOT REPLACE CARE

Consumers are open to AI for support and explanation, but more cautious when AI gets closer to clinical judgment.



Base: 1,000; How comfortable would you be with your doctor's office or hospital using AI for the following? In which of the following situations would you be open to using an AI tool provided by your hospital or doctor's office? When your healthcare provider uses AI as part of your care, how important is it to you that they tell you?

4

AI is prompting *real healthcare decisions*

AI is an action trigger. It can push people toward care, toward self-management, or away from care.



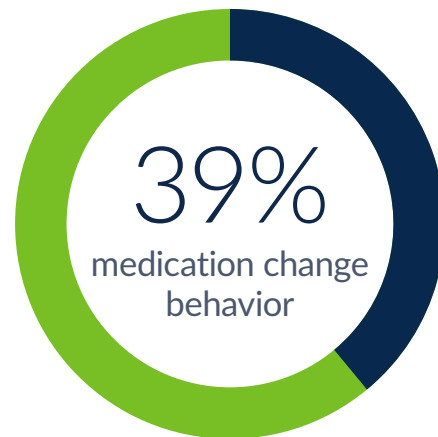
After using AI for health, scheduled a doctor's visit, sought more information, or shared the information with a doctor.



After using AI for health, self-treated symptoms or changed how they manage an ongoing condition.



After using AI for health, delayed care or decided not to see a doctor.



After using AI for health, started, stopped or changed medication.

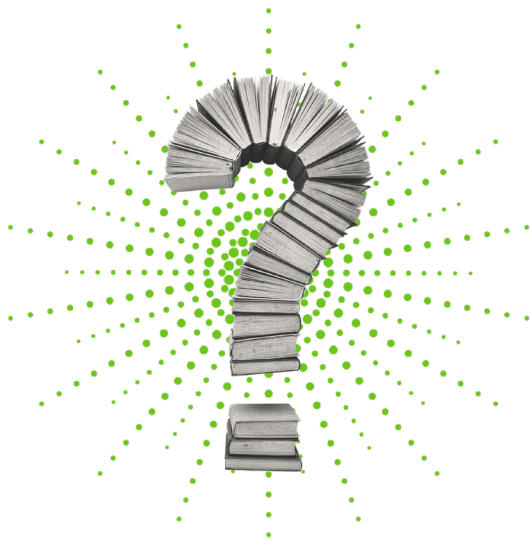
Base: 697; In the past 12 months, which of the following have you done after using AI for health questions? (Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always). %s are % of AI-for-health-users who reported behavior at least sometimes.

5

Provider trust remains strong, but AI is becoming a *second-opinion layer*

Consumers still trust doctors far more than AI...

- 74% have high trust in providers
- 25% have high trust in AI



...but AI can introduce doubt, especially among frequent users.

- 36% of AI-for-health-users would be somewhat or very likely to question or reconsider provider advice that contradicts AI
- This increases to 56% among participants who use AI for healthcare questions weekly or more

Base: 1,000; How much do you trust the following sources for health information?

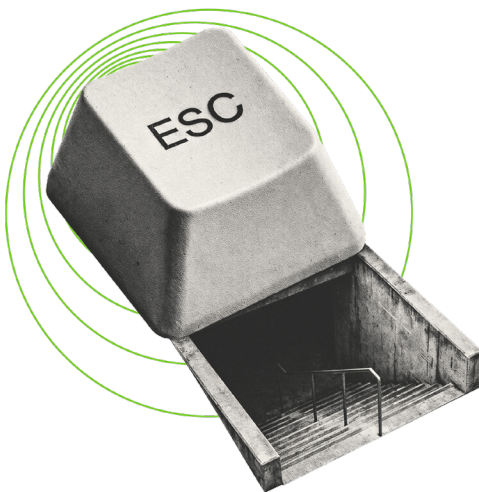
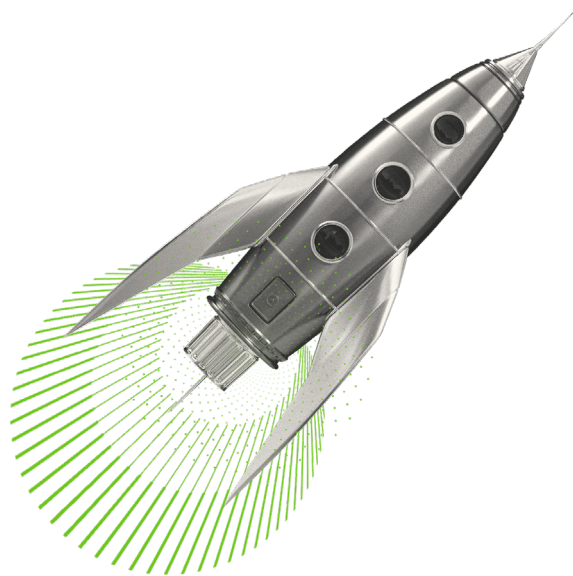
Base: 697; If AI provided health information that contradicted what a doctor or healthcare provider told you, how likely would you be to question or reconsider the provider's advice?

6

Trust depends on *transparency, clinical alignment, and human connection*

What increases trust

- AI matches what doctor told me (40%)
- AI clearly shows sources (38%)
- AI is provided by a trusted hospital/health system (31%)
- AI is recommended or endorsed by doctor (31%)



Top concerns

- Information might be inaccurate (44%)
- Prefer talking to a real person (36%)
- No human oversight (34%)
- Data privacy/security (30%)
- Might miss something important (29%)

Base: 1,000; Which of the following would make you trust AI health information MORE? Select up to 3.
Which of the following concerns you MOST about using AI for health information? Select up to 3.

Methodology

Median 6-minute online survey

Fielded May 26, 2026

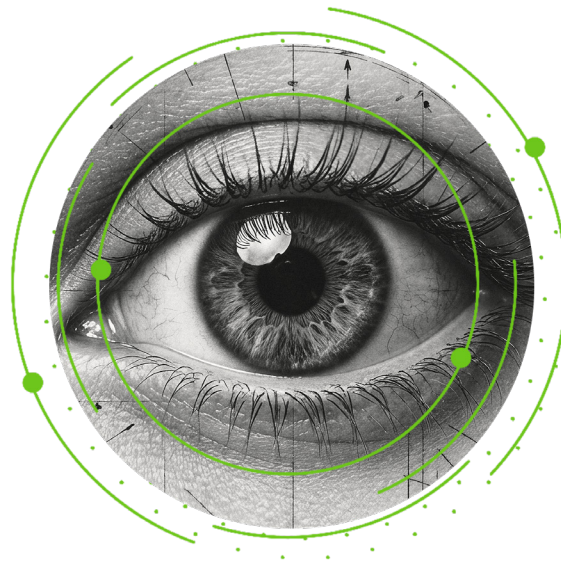
1,000 US adults

Sample included AI users and non-users, with a broad mix of generations, US regions, income levels, insurance coverage, and health statuses.

Responses are weighted by national statistics for age and gender. Results about AI for health are based on respondents who reported ever using AI for health-related questions (n=697). Throughout the report, percentages show weighted values whereas base sizes are unweighted.

This research intends to understand how consumers are using AI for health information and how it may be influencing healthcare decisions.

Focus areas include AI adoption and use frequency, health information sources and trust, care-seeking and self-management behaviors, medication and treatment decision-making, comfort with provider-side AI use.





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