



THE NEW HEALTH ECOSYSTEM: DECODING THE MODERN WOMEN'S HEALTH CONTENT DISCOVERY JOURNEY

The Health System Wasn't Built For Them, So Women Are Building Their Own

Reddit prohibits the positive and negative targeting of subreddits and users based on sensitive categories, which include health status or condition, physical or mental health, and sex life or sexual orientation. The subreddits featured in this report are included to highlight the authentic and inclusive nature of Reddit's many communities and users. For more information, see Reddit's Targeting Guidelines or reach out to your Sales representative.

Across industries, the content discovery journey has changed. Consumers are no longer relying on search; they are actively cross-referencing information across a complex web of experts, peer communities, comment sections, and artificial intelligence. Healthcare, and especially women's health, is no different.

A historical lack of investment in women's health has created a systemic knowledge gap, forcing women to navigate a medical system designed without their specific needs in mind. This neglect has created a profound experiential gap—the void between clinical guidance and lived reality. To fill this void, women are building their own support systems through community, a behavioral shift amplified by the fact that a lack of literature has led to systemic training deficits and the dismissal of symptoms.

In a review of NIH priority projects for women's chronic health from 2018-2020, only 11% were dedicated to female-specific conditions.¹ Further, PMOS, Polyendocrine Metabolic Ovarian Syndrome (previously PCOS, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome), wasn't even added to the NIH's tracking system until 2022.

r/PCOS



I spent years thinking my symptoms weren't PCOS enough for docs. It's PMOS.



Comment



We surveyed 886 adult women (18+) and partners of adult women in the United States to analyze their information-seeking behaviors, focusing on Reddit and broader social media use.²

The core finding is clear

This change in the content discovery journey has caused women to lean on their networks. Online communities offer unfiltered candor and anonymity that traditional networks often cannot provide.

When it comes to sensitive health topics, women are now more comfortable discussing their bodies on Reddit (81%), an anonymous forum, than with their own friends and family (72%).²

¹ Temkin SM, Noursi S, Regensteiner JG, Stratton P, Clayton JA. Perspectives From Advancing National Institutes of Health Research to Inform and Improve the Health of Women: A Conference Summary. *Obstet Gynecol.* 2022;140(1):10-19. doi:10.1097/AOG.0000000000004821

² Reddit Custom Survey, US Data, "Women's Reproductive Health," Attest Sample, N=886, A18+, April 2026.

The Experiential Gap

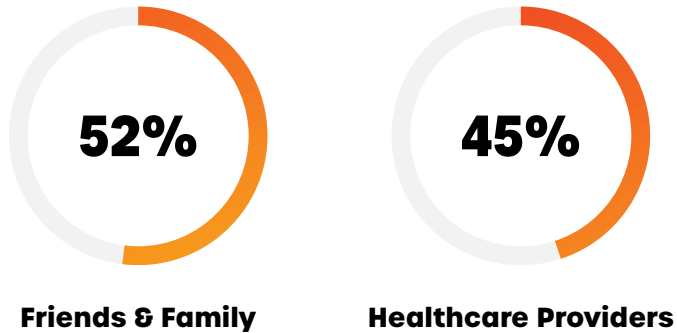
TL;DR: Women are searching for safe spaces to ask questions without judgment and receive honest answers from those who have walked the path before them.

Even when women successfully navigate a fragmented healthcare system and receive a diagnosis or treatment plan, they are frequently met with a stark reality: **clinical facts do not equate to their lived experience.**

Refusing to accept this gap, women place high trust in their personal networks, both online and in real life, to contextualize their health journeys.¹ By exchanging symptoms and stories, they can better decipher what is typical, what to expect, and crucially, when to advocate for follow-up care from a healthcare provider (HCP).

Yet a profound gap remains: women feel heavily underprepared for the physical and emotional realities of their health journeys.²

WHEN SEEKING HEALTH INFORMATION AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT, THEIR TOP SOURCES ARE¹



Women want clinical data translated into lived reality, reporting that they wish they had more or better information around:¹

61%

"WHAT SYMPTOMS WOULD ACTUALLY FEEL LIKE"

58%

"HOW IT WOULD AFFECT MY EMOTIONS"

55%

"WHAT IS NORMAL VERSUS CONCERNING"

¹ Reddit Custom Survey, US Data, "Women's Reproductive Health," Attest Sample, N=886, A18+, April 2026.

² Drake D, Torkelson C, Woods N, Kelsey B, Kendig S. Older women's health coalition: A call to action. Women's Healthcare. September 4, 2024. Accessed May 26, 2026. <https://nwpwomenshealthcare.com/older-womens-health-coalition-a-call-to-action/>.

The Rise of the Empowered Health Advocate

Reddit has quietly become an epicenter for women's health. The platform fosters a level of unprecedented candor that helps close the gap between clinical advice and real-world experience.



The data reveals a distinct persona. Women who turn to Reddit are highly proactive, empowered health advocates. They do not take one source at face value; instead, they correlate information from friends and family, HCPs, and digital communities.¹

Women are more comfortable talking about their bodies on Reddit than with their own friends and families (81% vs. 72%).¹

Adding the word "Reddit" to a Google search query is currently the **eighth most popular search behavior.**²

Those who use Reddit for health information are **3X as likely** to cross-reference that data using large language models (LLMs) compared to social media users who do not use Reddit.¹

Artificial intelligence (AI)-driven search on Reddit grew by **15X between Q1 and Q4 2025.**³

Visits to Reddit from AI chatbots **grew by nearly 2X between Q1 and Q4 2025.**⁴

Better Prepared to Advocate for Themselves

It serves as a safe space that drives proactive healthcare engagement. In fact, after using Reddit, 7 in 10 women report feeling more prepared for their healthcare conversations.¹

WHEN COMPARED TO NON-REDDITORS, PLATFORM USERS ARE MORE LIKELY TO TRANSLATE ONLINE SUPPORT INTO REAL-WORLD ACTION:¹

47%

BETTER UNDERSTAND WHAT IS NORMAL VERSUS CONCERNING (VS. 20% OF NON-REDDITORS)

39%

FEEL MORE PREPARED TO DESCRIBE THEIR EXPERIENCES (VS. 17% OF NON-REDDITORS)

39%

FEEL MORE CONFIDENT GOING INTO A DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENT (VS. 16% OF NON-REDDITORS)

¹ Reddit Custom Survey, US Data, "Women's Reproductive Health," Attest Sample, N=886, A18+, April 2026.

² Google Trends, US, Q1 2026.

³ Reddit Internal Data, Global, Jan 1st 2025 - June 30th 2025.

⁴ Similarweb, referral traffic to Reddit, Global, Q1 2025 vs. Q4 2025.

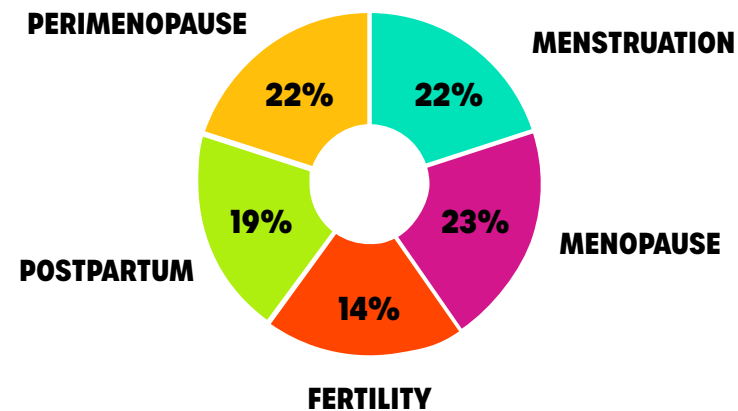
Navigating Health Across Communities

Passing the Baton Between Generations

Millennials and Gen X are sharing the earliest signs of perimenopause and how to navigate new issues as others enter this life stage.¹

Feeling blindsided by middle age, Gen X is offering radical transparency on social media, community-driven "crowdsourcing" of medical evidence, and a rejection of the "suffer in silence" mandate followed by previous generations.

SPECIFIC TO REDDIT, OUR SURVEY CAPTURED A HIGHLY ENGAGED AUDIENCE DIVIDED EVENLY ACROSS LIFE STAGES, BASED ON SELF-REPORTING:¹



THIS BEHAVIORAL SHIFT IS EVIDENT IN THE YEAR-OVER-YEAR GROWTH OF FEMALE-FOCUSED SUBREDDITS ON REDDIT:²

The Aging Journey:

r/askwomenover60 ↑ 1924%

r/askwomenover40 ↑ 496%

Menopause and Perimenopause:

r/perimenopause ↑ 387%

r/menopause ↑ 53%

Specific Health Impacts:

r/infertilitysucks ↑ 1197%

r/osteoporosis ↑ 256%

r/femalehairloss ↑ 179%

r/badwomensanatomy ↑ 1142%

r/InfertilitySucks

My late night rambling.. why infertility kind of feels like waiting in line at the supermarket



Comment



r/endometriosis

they found it– thank you to this group



Comment



Partners are also proactively turning to digital communities – Reddit and beyond – to better understand duration of symptoms and build empathy. They consistently outpace women patients surveyed in utilizing digital platforms.¹

They are also more likely to use AI tools like ChatGPT (**62% vs. 40%**) and Gemini (**50% vs. 32%**).¹ Partners are more than twice as likely to use Reddit to decode the experiential aspects of a health issue.¹

Specifically, they turn to Reddit communities to understand:¹

63%

EMOTIONAL IMPACT

58%

DAY-TO-DAY CHALLENGES

57%

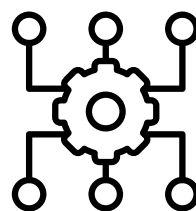
MOST HELPFUL SUPPORT

Taking Action



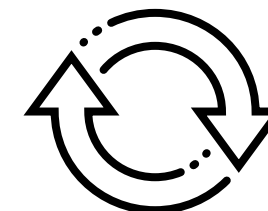
Address the Experiential Gap

Women are using community to bridge gaps in medical literature and training. Ensure you are part of their content discovery journey with earned, owned, and social content to help address the specific, qualitative questions they are asking in community forums and on LLMs.

1

Optimize for the Cross-Referencing Ecosystem

The modern health journey is not linear. With patients and partners relying on multiple mediums to cross-reference information, your brand must build robust, multichannel ecosystems. Ensure your content is highly discoverable, structured clearly so LLMs can pull and cite accurate information, and actively present across search, community forums, and social. Keep a pulse on the conversations on Reddit.

2

Lean Into Transparency Across Life Stages

Help de-stigmatize perimenopause, menopause, and postpartum challenges. Validate their experiences, demystify the symptoms they are going through, and equip them with the language and questions to best partner with their HCPs.

3