A dose of curiosity

A look at the trends we're watching

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Edition 2 | 2026

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10 rising health topics

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1 Rising health **topics**

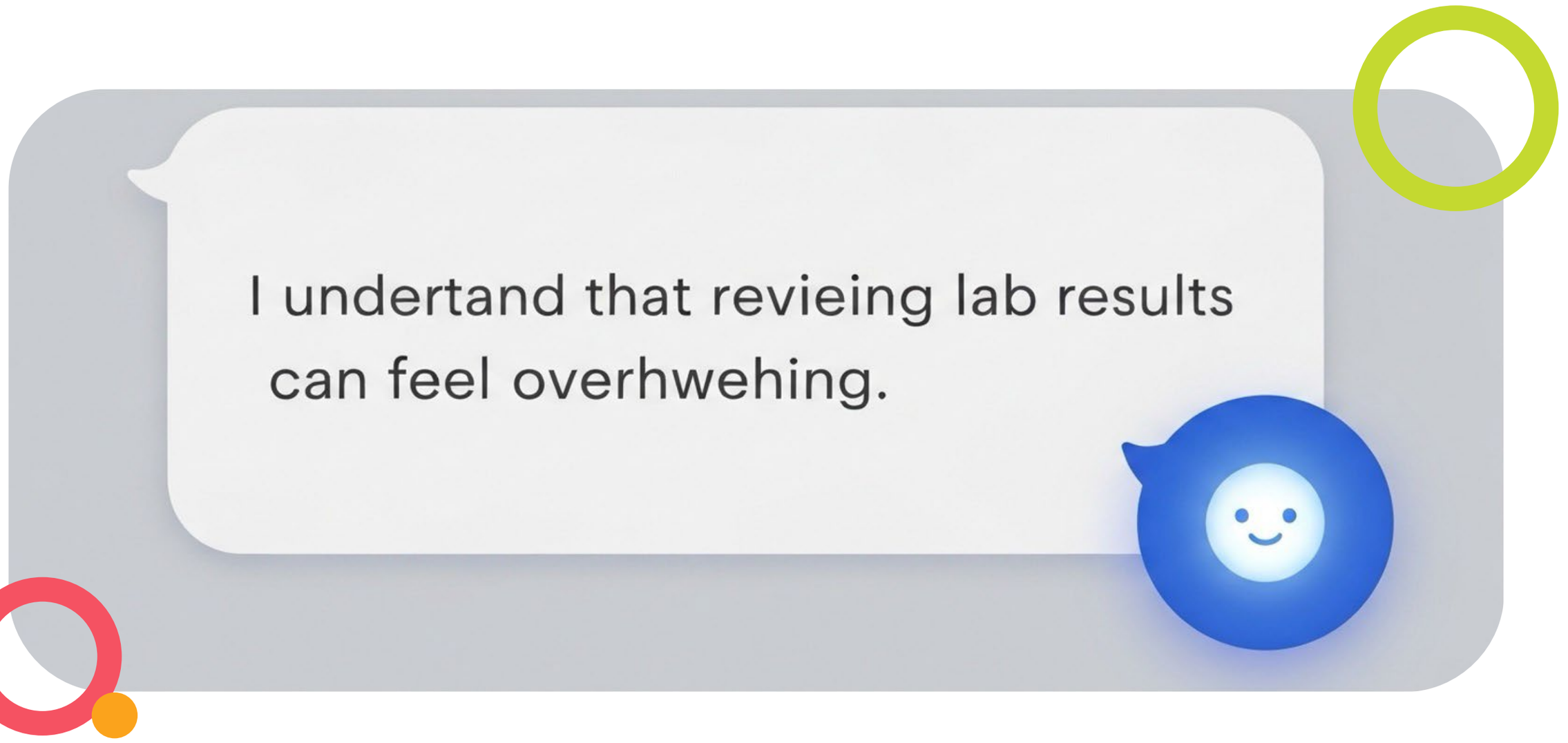
Open AI launches ChatGPT Health

ChatGPT is becoming a personalized health companion to help users understand information, prepare for appointments, and navigate healthcare decisions.

The ~300 million weekly **users can now connect data from Apple Health, Epic, Oracle Health, One Medical, and other health sources to add personal context to conversations**.

OpenAI made it clear that this **health data will not be used for ad-targeting or training the models**, emphasizing their use of physician-led evaluation and testing for this model.

As AI begins incorporating personal health data into patient conversations, information quality will be key. **Pharma brands that provide credible, contextual content may be more likely to surface in AI-driven health discussions and help shape how patients understand treatment options.**



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What influences AI citations for pharma companies

The Category, and how it shapes consumer behavior, matters more than revenue

There's a reason Lilly and Novo Nordisk are frequently cited in AI, while Merck falls short despite having the world's best-selling drug: consumers are researching GLP-1s *before* they enter the doctor's office. For oncology products, consumers aren't doing as much brand-level self-research.

The Ecosystem, and how far it expands beyond TV and video.

LLMs are picking up information from sources surrounding the ecosystem: news coverage, physician commentary, Reddit discussions, and influencer content, along with pharmacy and healthcare websites. This also contributed to Lilly and Novo Nordisk's AI citation success: GLP-1s became part of the global cultural conversation, earning a broad-reaching ecosystem.

In self-researched categories, AI visibility is strengthened when real-world evidence is validated by trusted, authoritative third parties (eg, KOLs, patient advocacy groups, reputable health media, and peer-reviewed sources).

When thinking about AI citations, ask: "What corner of the internet does this create," and consider creating content for 2 audiences: human and AI

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1 Rising health **topics**

Cannes 2026 creative impact: From consistency to coherence

Four signals from Cannes Lions 2026 point to a shift in how brands earn attention, trust, and visibility.

Coherence ≠ Consistency

- Winning brands no longer chase repetition across every touchpoint. Instead, they build one coherent narrative flexible enough to apply anywhere.

The Two-Audience Problem

- Because there's near-zero correlation between how humans and AI judge the same work, brands must satisfy both story-craving humans and logic-craving LLMs.

Brand Visibility in AI is earned, not bought

- Long-term brand equity and reputation are increasingly shaping how often brands appear in AI-generated answers.

Creators as the infrastructure

- Creators are shifting from media tactic to growth infrastructure, making them vehicles for long-term memory and trust, not just short-term reach.

For pharma brands, winning in the AI era means building trust beyond the ad. Strong brand equity, credible voices, and a consistent story will matter as much as media investment in driving visibility and influence.

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2 top trends and behaviors

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2 Top **trends** and **behaviors**

The *New York Times* found **hundreds of AI-generated doctors and wellness influencers promoting supplements with misleading health claims.**

These synthetic influencers promise dramatic health benefits that would violate traditional advertising standards, cashing in on sales at the risk of consumer health.

Platforms are removing misleading content but struggle to keep pace with the volume of low-cost AI-generated ads.

Scientific credibility is pharma's advantage. Brands that pair transparent, expert-backed information with broad reach will be better positioned as trust becomes a key differentiator.

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AI-generated wellness influencers spread health misinformation

Data shows **that AI-powered bots now generate about 57% of global web traffic,** driven by AI agents gathering information on behalf of users.

The trend has renewed interest in **the Dead Internet Theory: the idea that machines are responsible for a growing share of online activity and influence.**

While humans still use the web, AI agents are increasingly acting as intermediaries between people and content.

As AI becomes a common intermediary, brands will need to adapt to a new information journey where AI, not search, is often the first point of engagement.

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2 Top **trends** and **behaviors**

Reddit is unlocking how women navigate health information

Women are building their own health systems, after years of traversing a medical system that wasn't built for them. To fill the gap, they're putting trust in their personal networks online and in real life.

They crave real stories and experiences, but what do they want clinical data to tell them?

61%

"WHAT SYMPTOMS WOULD ACTUALLY FEEL LIKE"

58%

"HOW IT WOULD AFFECT MY EMOTIONS"

55%

"WHAT IS NORMAL VS. CONCERNING"

"These forums are a way for me to ask the awkward questions and find specific experiences that match my own. I don't have the embarrassment of asking my doctor, and I get a sense of community support and advice."

Enter **Reddit, where women feel more comfortable talking about their bodies than with their friends and family (81% vs. 72%).**

It's become a safe space for women to hear from others about how they are navigating their health, from perimenopause to specific health impacts, like osteoporosis. It's a rejection of "suffering in silence" through community crowdsourcing.

Brands must close the experiential gap by helping women understand not only the science behind their health, but what it means for their daily lives, emotions, and healthcare decisions.

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3 top platform trends

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3 Top platform **trends**

TikTok launches branded microdramas

Serialized microdramas have been a big hit with TikTok's audience. TikTok wants to tap into this popularity by offering companies the opportunity to promote their own microseries content.

TikTok has been working to build on that potential, **with a dedicated Minis section in the app, as well as a separate microdrama app, called PineDrama, which launched in the US and Brazil early in 2026.**

This could be another way for brands to tap into TikTok, via a more formulaic video approach built on familiar storytelling principles that can also incorporate brand promotion.

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3 Top platform **trends**

Instagram Reels and Carousels are reshaping social strategies

A new report by Metricool, a global social media management platform, finds **Instagram Reels and Carousels are emerging as the formats most aligned with how Instagram now distributes and rewards content**, per new algorithm updates.

Key findings include:

- **Single-image posts are losing ground**, with reach down 21.96%, interactions down 25.41% and engagement down 45.98% YoY.
- **Hashtags are becoming less effective on Instagram**, with posts using at least one hashtag seeing 31.70% fewer views and fewer interactions than the platform average, making natural-language captions and Instagram SEO more important.
- **Community prompts are driving stronger engagement**, with posts that include a question or comment-focused CTAs generating 202.78% more comments.
- **Stories remain a valuable connection tool**, with replies increasing 88% YoY.

Consider using Reels to reach new audiences, Carousels for save-worthy content, and Stories for direct audience connection.

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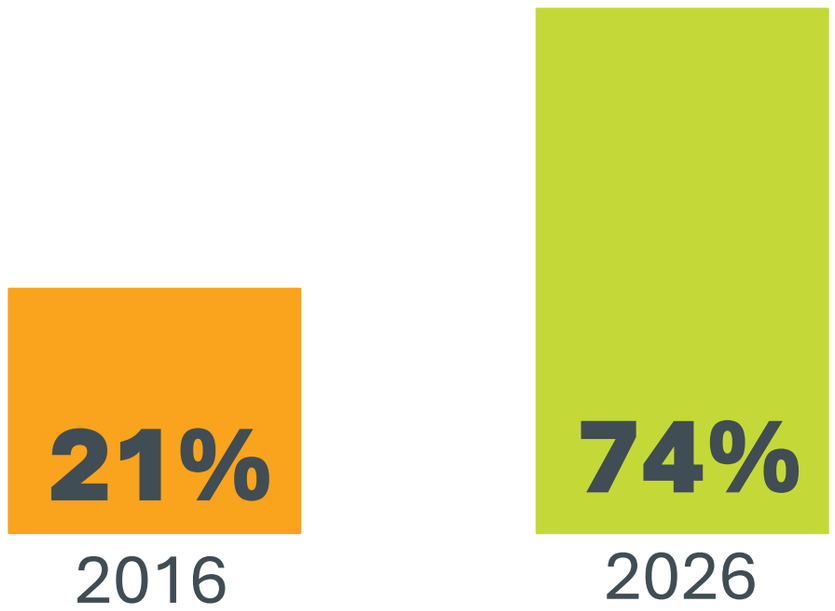
3 Top platform **trends**

Podcast investment interest and usage has soared

Nine out of ten marketers and media agencies say they have discussed podcast advertising for potential investment, with podcast spending intention jumping to 74%; a twelve-year record and **5X increase since the first IAB podcast upfront in 2015.** However, while a large number of advertisers say are using podcasting, podcast budgets are microscopic.

At the dawn of cable network advertising, legendary BBDO media chief **Arnie Semsky created the "5% solution," which stipulated that brands devote 5% of media budgets to the nascent cable medium**. Semsky reasoned 5% was enough of an allocation to generate meaningful impact.

Q: How likely are you to advertise in podcasts in the next six months?



Consider getting ahead and allocating a portion of digital budgets to podcasting. Perhaps, as Semsky would say, 5%?

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4 Spotlight

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4 Spotlight

When AI Enters the Waiting Room

A Biolumina POV on the intersection of AI, physician responsibility, and patient trust

The Convergence is Real, but Incomplete

Across clinical medicine, AI and physician judgment show 70-95% concordance. Yet this alignment masks a fundamental truth: they're solving the same problem using different forms of intelligence. AI operates through evidence weighting and encoded authority. Clinicians arrive at decisions through late judgment—blending formal evidence with experience, ethics, institutional pathways, and patient preference. One ranks options early; the other accumulates confidence gradually.

Where Influence Actually Lives

Only 3% of AI input comes from explicit patient-reported factors; 95% is data-grounded. By contrast, 62% of physician judgment is data-grounded, with 28% driven by personal experience and 10% by patient preference. This gap matters: physicians adopt AI recommendations without questioning the reasoning. Fewer than 10% routinely review why a recommendation was generated—introducing a new risk of overtrust without understanding.

The Real Impact: Execution, Not Cognition

AI's measurable clinical advantage isn't in better thinking—it's in frictionless execution. When AI-enabled testing was integrated directly into EHR workflows, testing rates increased 53% and implementation timelines accelerated ~78%. The right action, made easy, changes behavior faster than insight.

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4 Spotlight

When AI Enters the Waiting Room

A Biolumina POV on the intersection of AI, physician responsibility, and patient trust

The Growing Danger: Misapplication Drives Misinformation

General-purpose large language models, misused as clinical tools, miss guideline-concordant care in ~30% of cases. Rather than reducing error, they can amplify disinformation downstream—with greatest risk among clinicians without deep domain expertise and patients with low medical literacy.

What Physicians Actually Want

A global Sermo survey of 202 oncologists reveals the trust gap: roughly 25-40% use AI daily, yet trust lags far behind. Clinicians want AI to reduce cognitive drag—assisting documentation, summarization, and administration —not replace clinical judgment. Only ~10% report adequate institutional AI training.

Implications for Healthcare Marketers

- **Nudges outperform narratives**. AI amplifies well-timed signals at the moment of choice, not storytelling volume.
- **Influence has moved upstream.** The moment that matters is belief-building before confidence hardens, when thinking is still forming.
- **Trust must work for humans and machines.** Positioning must be intelligible to clinicians and discoverable by AI.
- **Coherence builds confidence.** Consistency of voice across tools, data, and language matters more than amplification.

The Bottom Line:
Influence moves upstream—from changing the decision to shaping the thinking before confidence hardens.

This POV is brought to you by our Chief Strategy Officer, Brenda Aske RPh

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5 micro dose

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Quick hits worth reading

If you're a button, you have one job

Remember to think accessibility first in digital designs— even casual interfaces eventually face heavy use, so UI buttons should buffer or speed up taps during animations rather than making users wait.

Is your content strategy accidentally recommending your competitors?

Self-promoting listicles can backfire in AI search as Google's AI Overviews may recommend a competitor— instead, start building connections that reinforce your brand.

What exactly is HDR?

HDR expands color range in video, so blacks look deeper, whites brighter, and colors pop more detail, making it all look more real than SDR— but you can only see this difference on HDR compatible monitors.

Is AI Killing User Experience?

UX has always been more than just the interface, and AI is changing how human interact. This in turn impacts how we will design future UX.

Digital ad spend overtakes linear TV

The channels gaining ground for HCP engagement are marketing research (+24%) and brand websites (+20%). Brands that connect personalization, creators, and orchestration will lead the next phase of growth.

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