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### YouTube as a source of dermatology residency information

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## Correspondence

### YouTube as a source of dermatology residency information

Dear Editor,

Dermatology has been historically one of the most competitive residencies in medicine.<sup>1</sup> Medical students may use YouTube—a platform commonly used to browse videos for entertainment and education—as a source of information to learn how to better prepare for the application process, especially if they do not have access to mentors or a home dermatology program. Therefore, it may be useful to examine the advice students are learning online to determine areas for improved education. The purpose of this study was to analyze the content of popular dermatology residency recommendations on YouTube.

The authors searched YouTube for popular videos on dermatology residency advice on July 18, 2021. We screened the most popular 100 videos for inclusion, and 48 videos met the inclusion criteria. Videos that were non-English, unrelated to American dermatology residency applications, and duplicates were excluded. Video popularity measures—including the number of likes and comments—and content were collected.

Overall, the 48 videos on dermatology residency advice had a total of 1,204,251 views, 36,690 likes, and 3,461 comments. Stratified by speaker background, 42 videos (87.5%) were

created by dermatologists, four videos (8.3%) were created by non-dermatologist physicians, and two videos (4.1%) were created by others. Table 1 provides an overview of the dermatology residency advice popularity stratified by speaker background and professional experience.

Overall, research experience was the most discussed topic with 31 videos (64.6%). In addition, 22 videos (45.8%) discussed the importance of dermatology mentors. Interestingly, only 15 videos (31.2%) and 15 videos (31.2%) discussed the importance of USMLE Step 1 scores and letters of recommendation, respectively, despite a survey from the National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) that found that 100% of dermatology program directors cited using these items as factors in selecting applicants to interview.<sup>2</sup> Our analysis also revealed that only five videos (10.4%) discussed the USMLE Step 1 Exam becoming pass/fail, and only 13 videos (27.1%) discussed a holistic approach to residency admissions. These are extremely important items to discuss in residency advice videos, especially given the shift towards a holistic review in graduate medical education admissions during recent years.<sup>3</sup> Table 2 provides an overview of commonly discussed dermatology residency advice on YouTube.

Limitations include a limited generalizability to different time periods due to our cross-sectional study design and the growing

**Table 1** Overview of dermatology residency advice popularity on YouTube

	Number of videos (n = 48)	Mean number of views	Mean number of comments	Mean number of likes
<b>Speaker background</b>				
Dermatologist	42	20,339	53	594
Non-Dermatologist Physician	4	57,131	252	2,265
Other	2	60,736	119	1,350
<b>Education level</b>				
Attending at Academic Institution	9	3,070	28	138
Resident	23	5,272	57	3,977
<b>Race</b>				
African American	15	9,494	40	425
Asian	19	45,312	120	1,235
Caucasian	12	6,621	29	347
Other	2	60,736	119	1,350
<b>Gender</b>				
Female	27	26,656	60	701
Male	21	23,073	87	847
<b>Experience</b>				
Admissions Committee	1	276	6	8
General Residency Advice Organization	5	60,787	234	2,221
Personal Anecdote	42	21,430	54	609


## 2 Correspondence

**Table 2** Commonly discussed dermatologic residency advice topics on YouTube

Topic	Videos n = 48 (%)
Research Experiences	31 (64.6%)
Work Experiences	23 (47.9%)
Dermatology Mentors	22 (45.8%)
Dermatology Fellowship	20 (41.7%)
Research Years	19 (39.6%)
USMLE Step 1 Score	15 (31.3%)
Letters of Recommendation	15 (31.3%)
Away Rotations	14 (29.1%)
Shift to Holistic Approach	13 (27.1%)
USMLE Step 2 Score	13 (27.1%)
Importance of Interviews	13 (27.1%)
Volunteer Experiences	11 (22.9%)
Research Items (Publications, Posters, etc.)	11 (22.9%)
Choosing a Residency Program	7 (14.6%)
Addressed USMLE Step 1 Becoming Pass/Fail	5 (10.4%)
Clerkship Grades	4 (8.3%)
Alpha Omega Alpha (AOA) Status	4 (8.3%)
Personal Statement	4 (8.3%)
National Resident Matching Program (NRMP) Reference	2 (4.2%)
Gold Humanism Honor Society	0 (0%)

number of videos on YouTube. Despite these limitations, this study provides valuable insight into the popular advice that medical students are receiving on YouTube. Given the discrepancies between advice online and the NRMP dermatology program director survey, dermatologists should consider uploading content that discusses the different components of residency applications and the weight attached to each component. Dermatologists should also consider uploading videos that discuss

the USMLE Step 1 exam becoming pass/fail and the shift towards a more holistic review. This may equip medical students, especially those without home dermatology programs, with the knowledge needed to maximize their chances of obtaining dermatology residency positions.

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