



Digital Circulation:

A Content Analysis of Peripheral Arterial Disease Information on TikTok

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Background

- TikTok, a growing social media platform, has over 150 million users in the United States.¹ Over 50% of Americans report that they regularly use TikTok to get the latest information. ²
- The DISCERN scale is a validated tool that is used to measure the reliability of healthcare information using a 16-item questionnaire.^{3,4}
- There is a paucity of literature available evaluating the reliability of information surrounding vascular disease on social media.
- As more people become reliant on social media as their primary source of information, this study aimed to assess the quality of peripheral arterial disease (PAD) content available on TikTok.

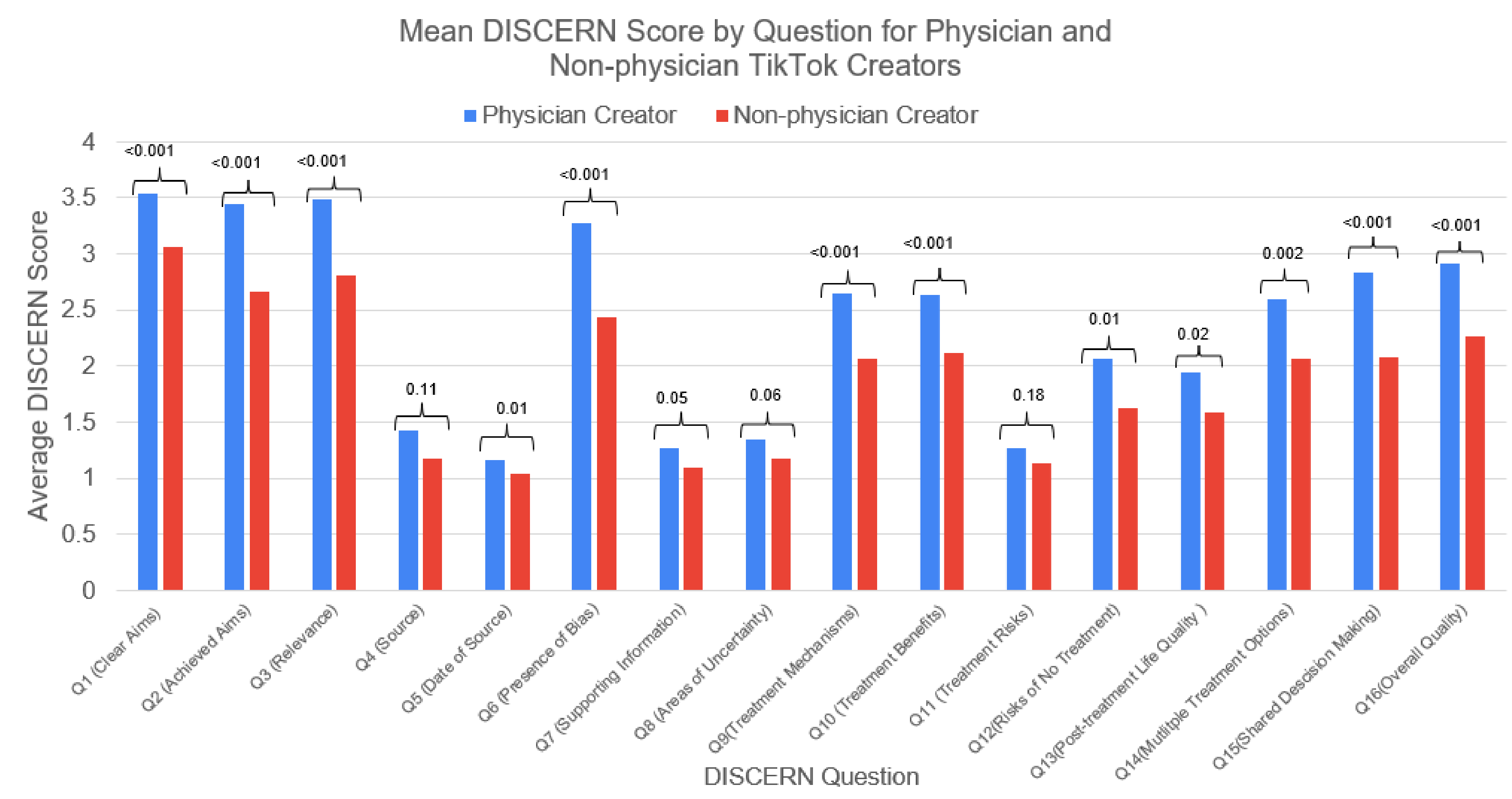
Methods

- Four key phrases were searched on TikTok (“Vascular PAD”, “Intermittent Claudication”, “Peripheral Artery Disease”, and “Acute Limb Ischemia”)
- The first 50 English language videos under each phrase were given a DISCERN score, using a scale of 1 (poor) – 5 (excellent) in 16 categories. Videos were grouped into categories 1-5, based on their total DISCERN score.
- Videos were analyzed for the type of creator, total likes, comments, shares, views, and run time.
- Statistical comparisons were undertaken using Fisher’s Exact* and ANOVA**

Results

- 200 TikTok videos were included in this study. 81 (4.1%) were created by physicians
- 157 (78.5%) of videos were rated poor or worse. 0 videos qualified as excellent based on DISCERN score.

	DISCERN 1 (Very Poor) N = 71	DISCERN 2 (Poor) N = 86	DISCERN 3 (Fair) N = 35	DISCERN 4 (Good) N = 8	p-value
Physician-creator	10 (14.0%)	41(47.7%)	24 (68.6%)	6(75.0%)	<0.001*
Views	140614 ± 334129	53334±143802	29383±103877	14841±34066	0.04**
Likes	3034 ± 15830	1121 ±3769	2192 ±6464	288.86 ± 540	0.66**
Comments	41. 7 ± 102.1	17.7 ± 47.2	55.7 ±107.5	28.1 ± 42.4	0.09**
Run time (minutes)	0.7 ± 1.3	1.0 ± 1.5	1.9 ± 1.8	2.3 ± 1.6	<0.001**



Conclusions

- PAD-related TikTok videos were generally of low quality, but those created by physicians were more reliable.
- Although short videos are a point of attraction for users, longer TikTok videos were generally scored as more reliable.
- Videos with lower reliability scores often receive more views, potentially leading to a wider spread of misinformation.
- Increasing physician-led content could make TikTok a more credible platform for the public to learn about PAD.

Limitations

- Only English language videos were included potentially excluding more diverse perspectives on the topic
- Although a validated tool for reliability, the DISCERN score is unable to evaluate content accuracy

References

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3) Charnock D, Shepperd S, Needham G, Gann R. DISCERN: an instrument for judging the quality of written consumer health information on treatment choices. J Epidemiol Community Health. 1999 Feb;53(2):105-11. doi: 10.1136/jech.53.2.105. PMID: 10396471; PMCID: PMC1756830.

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