



# I'm On Twitter Now What Do I Use It For?



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Twitter isn't just a pleasant diversion, though it can become one if you don't manage your time well. Twitter is also a place to keep up with industry news, learn what industry leaders are doing and thinking about, make new client contacts, and meet and build online relationships with colleagues.

I am a freelance medical copyeditor of medical textbooks and medical journals, so I need to know something about what's going on in many of the life sciences. I don't have the budget to subscribe to multiple medical or science journals or the time to read through lots of them, so I skim several journals' tweets Monday through Friday, including those listed here, and follow some of the links to news stories, articles, and blog posts that they provide:

- @bmj\_latest: *British Medical Journal*
- @CircRes: *Circulation Research*
- @Clin\_Chem\_AACC: *Clinical Chemistry Journal*
- @JAMA\_current: *JAMA*
- @JClinPsychiatry: *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*
- @MayoProceedings: *Mayo Clinic Proceedings*
- @NatureNews: *Nature*
- @sciam: *Scientific American*
- @Wiley\_Nursing: Wiley nursing journals

For industry news, which for me is news about medical publishing and reporting, I follow and sometimes communicate with the following people and organizations on Twitter:

- @BELS\_editors: the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences, [www.bels.org](http://www.bels.org)
- @CScienceEditors: the Council of Science Editors, [www.councilscienceeditors.org](http://www.councilscienceeditors.org)
- @lippincott: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins
- @medwriterdg: medical writer Debra Gordon, who blogs at <http://debragordon.blogspot.com>
- @NAPress: National Academies Press
- @SciCareerEditor: Jim Austin, editor of *Science Careers*, <http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org>

- @ivanoransky: Ivan Oransky, MD, executive editor of Reuters Health and author of the blog Embargo Watch, at <http://embargowatch.wordpress.com>, which reports on and discusses conflicts between members of the press and those who embargo medical, health, and science news: medical journals, pharmaceutical companies, science journals, and government agencies (*Read more about Dr Oransky in "Exploring Diversity and Common Ground in Medical Communication," which begins on page 62.*)
- @lisagualtieri: Lisa Neal Gualtieri, who teaches online consumer health and Web strategies for health communication at Tufts University School of Medicine and leads workshops on social media for health

How do you find specific people or organizations to follow?

1. Go to <http://twitter.com> if you don't have a Twitter account. Follow the simple directions there to sign up for one. You will be given a link to your own Twitter page.
2. On your Twitter page, click the "Find People" link at the top right side of the page.
3. In the search box that appears, type in the name of the person or organization you're interested in (eg, Katharine O'Moore-Klopf), and then click the "Search" button.
4. You will be taken to a page (or more) of results. Click on the link connected with the person or organization most likely to be the one you're looking for.
5. Read some of the tweets made by the person or organization. If you like them enough to see more, click the "Follow" button on the person or organization's Twitter page, and their tweets will begin showing up on your Twitter page—and in your Twitter feed reader (eg, TweetDeck, [www.tweetdeck.com](http://www.tweetdeck.com); Seesmic, [www.seesmic.com](http://www.seesmic.com)) if you use one.

How do you find people or organizations in a particular field to follow?

1. On your Twitter page, click the “Home” link at the top right side of the page.
2. In the sidebar on the right side of the view you are taken to, there is a search box. In that box, type the name of the topic that you are interested in, and then click the search icon (a magnifying glass).
3. Click on the links to any of the Twitter accounts listed in the results, and decide which ones you want to follow.

Once you begin to see all that you can learn by being active on Twitter, you’ll wonder how you ever got by without it.

*Katharine tweets under @KOKEdit for her editing business, [www.kokedit.com](http://www.kokedit.com); under @BELS\_editors for the Board of Editors in the Life Sciences, [www.bels.org](http://www.bels.org); and under @CScienceEditors for the Council of Science Editors, [www.councilscienceeditors.org](http://www.councilscienceeditors.org).*



Review the 2010 AMWA Annual [Conference program \(www.amwa.org\)](http://www.amwa.org) to learn more about the open session “Using the Power of Social Networks to Build Professional Communities” and the breakfast roundtable “Twitter, Twitter, Tweet, Tweet: Is this Online Tool for You?”

## Blogging for

MEDICAL COMMUNICATION PROFESSIONALS By Debra Gordon, MS, Williamsburg, VA

Depending on the source, there are upwards of 100 million blogs (which may or may not count the nearly 100 million Chinese blogs). Feeling overwhelmed? Don't. Each issue, we'll provide you with a handful of blogs worth adding to your RSS or Google Reader feed for following. Have suggestions for more? Send them to me at [debra@debragordon.com](mailto:debra@debragordon.com).

**A Medical Writer's Musings on Healthcare and Other Issues:** <http://debragordon.blogspot.com>.

OK, the title isn't that catchy and it's a bit of self promotion, but since I'm writing this column I figured I can get away with it. This is my blog, heavy on health care issues with an occasional freelance writing issue thrown in.

→ **Best for:** Those following health policy/reform issues, freelance writers/editors

**On Biostatistics and Clinical Trials:** <http://onbiostatistics.blogspot.com>

This Web site from *Congressional Quarterly* offers updates on regulations, offshore trials (think China), and posts guaranteed to get your blood flowing like the recently posted: “When to Finalize the Statistical Analysis Plan?”

→ **Best for:** Regulatory writers

**Pharmalot:** [www.pharmalot.com](http://www.pharmalot.com)

Anyone doing anything with pharmaceuticals should check into Pharmalot on a regular basis for updates on pharmaceutical-related news and information from around the world.

→ **Best for:** Anyone doing anything with or for the pharmaceutical industry

**Adventures in Ethics and Science:** <http://scienceblogs.com/ethicsandscience/about.php>

You have to love a post that asks the question: “Ethically, which field of science is the worst?” This blog is the brainchild of Janet D. Stemwedel, aka Dr Free-Ride, an associate professor of philosophy at San Jose State University who also has a PhD in physical chemistry. She blogs about the “responsible conduct of scientific research, communication between scientists and non-scientists about the issues that matter to both, and teaching science and ethics.”

→ **Best for:** All of us.

