

Your Practice Needs a Responsive Website. Here's Why.

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Once upon a time, having a good website was enough to keep the search engines happy. It was a simpler time. The internet was accessible only through desktops and laptops, and AOL and AskJeeves ruled the world. But now, Google and smart devices rule the digital world. Together, they've is-



gy is several years old, and it still works. Responsive designs, however, are a stronger option.

Responsive websites are natively coded for use on smart devices. They identify what sort of device is trying to access them, and adjust themselves automatically. It doesn't

matter whether the device is a tablet, a smartphone, a desktop, or a laptop, it will conform to fit perfectly, like water in a glass.

So—why should you care? Because Google cares. As we said before, Google ranks responsive sites higher than other sites by default, and they're very up-front as to why they do so.

1) Traditional mobile sites require 2 URLs, and responsive sites only require 1. Having a single URL makes it easier for patients to interact with, share, and link to your content.

2) Mobile sites require a redirection. This means longer loading times (almost twice as long), which ultimately makes for a worse experience. Responsive design does not require redirection, which makes them faster.

3) One URL is easier for Google to handle. With responsive design, each page only needs to be crawled once, which means Google can index your content more efficiently, and keep your information fresh.

For the full details, see <https://developers.google.com/webmasters/smartphone-sites/details>.

If you want to attract the most new patients, your website must be mobile-friendly.

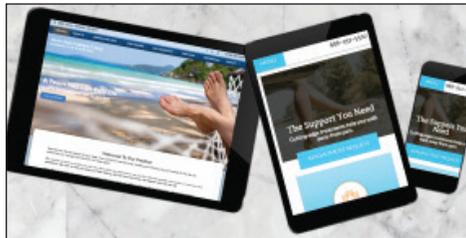
sued what might feel like an ultimatum. "Adapt with a mobile website, or your practice could disappear from search engine results forever."

This ultimatum first rose to prominence in 2015, when a Google algorithm change dubbed "Mobilegeddon," threatened to end the website as we knew it. The change rewards better Google rankings to websites designed for use on smartphones and tablets, and punishes sites that are not "mobile-friendly" with lower search rankings. Why did they make the change?

- Mobile searches now outnumber desktop searches
- 68% of American adults own smartphones
- 1 in 5 American adults have NO other access to high-speed internet at home
- Mobile usage accounts for over 60% of all time spent consuming digital media
- 62% of smartphone owners have used their phone to look up information about a health condition.

Naturally, lower search engine rankings lead to lower traffic on your website, which leads to fewer appointment requests. So, if you want to attract the most new patients, your website *must* be mobile-friendly. There are two ways to do this—traditional mobile sites, and responsive website design. **Online Podiatry Sites** *strongly* recommends responsive design as the best option.

A traditional mobile site is a second copy of your normal site built for phones. When a patient tries to access one of these sites from their phone or tablet, they're re-directed to the mobile version, where they will ultimately have a better experience. The technolo-



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