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Health Websites Routinely Share your Activity with 57 Third-Parties

B9 Systems conducted research into the use of cookies by health websites and discovered that all the major players share your private information with, on average, 57 other websites. These include advertising & marketing websites, social media outlets and resellers. For many with a health problem, the first port of call is a quick online search in hope of self-diagnosis. “It’s law for EU-based websites to list the third-parties they work with in their cookies policy and should automatically opt you out by default. Unfortunately, this does not extend to websites outside of the EU, meaning there’s a lot of guesswork as to where and with whom our most intimate searches are being shared,” said Stuart Spice, director of B9 Systems. Further research indicated that in a survey of 100 internet users, 89% had used a medical website to help self-diagnose an ailment at some point, yet only 42% understood that the activity they conducted was then shared with other third-party companies. This means 58% of the users surveyed had no idea that their information was being passed onto companies after they had clicked ‘Accept’ on the site’s cookies policy.