

TOPICAL WEBINAR FOR APA MEMBERS

An Educational Resource From TherapySites

AI Search: What It Means for Mental Health Professionals

October 7, 2026

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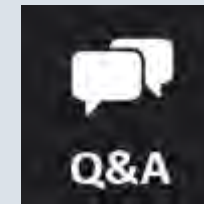
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- A recording of this presentation will be emailed to everyone in 2 weeks' time.
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HAVE A QUESTION?

- You are on mute. Communicate using the **Q&A box** in the webinar screen. Attendees can view and upvote on submitted questions in the Q&A box to help presenters identify popular topics.
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MARIO RIOS

PRESENTER

Mario Rios

Digital Marketing Expert, TherapySites

With a decade of experience, Mario Rios has dedicated his career to empowering mental health professionals to reach their goals in their private practices. Mario's expertise lies in streamlining administrative tasks, crafting digital marketing strategies, and taking therapy practices to the next level.



Section 1

Traditional vs. AI Search

Section 2

A Closer Look

Section 3

AI Recommendations

Conclusion

Key Takeaways

Section 1: How Patients Use Traditional vs. AI Search

- The current search landscape
- How traditional search works
- How AI search works

The Current Search Landscape

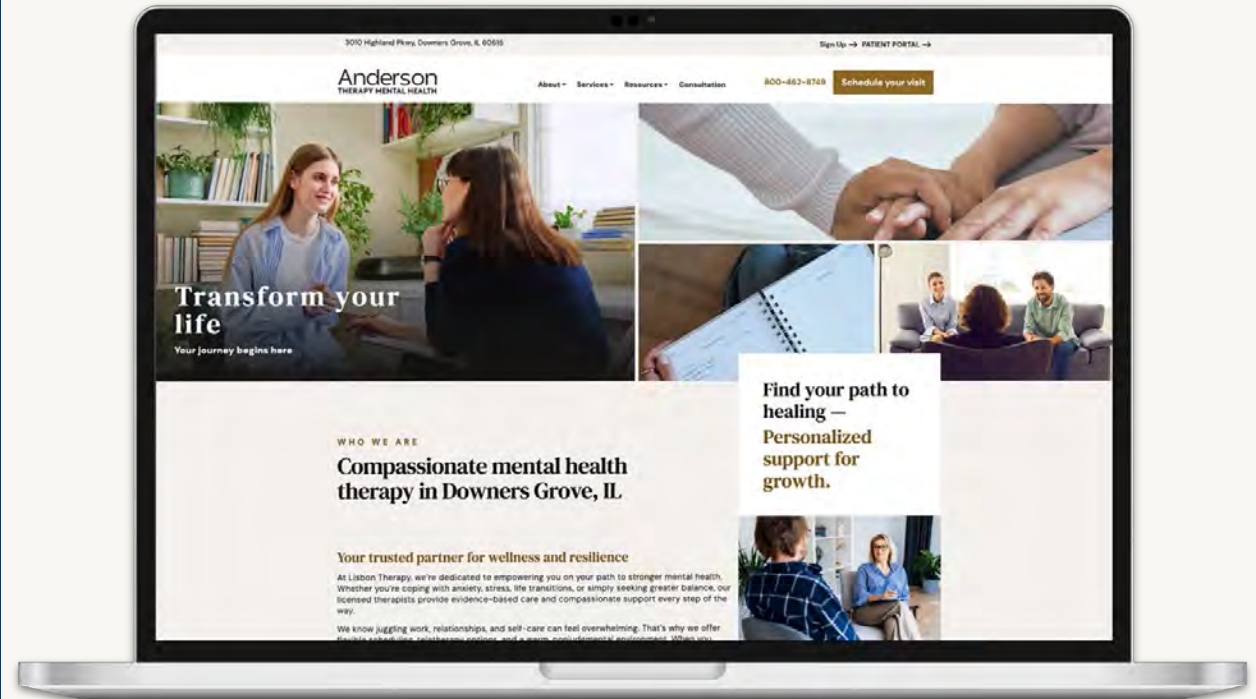
Google has traditionally been the top way patients found local mental health professionals. But AI-powered tools like ChatGPT are now changing how patients search.

As of July 2026:

- Google: 105.9 billion monthly users¹
- ChatGPT: 6.1 billion monthly users²

1. <https://www.semrush.com/website/google.com/overview/>
2. <https://www.semrush.com/website/chatgpt.com/overview/>

why am I anxious all the time?



How Traditional Search Works

Patients use a keyword:

1. Patient types "**Psychologist Dallas**" into Google.
1. Google produces a list of websites.
1. Patient clicks through the websites to find a psychologist who meets their needs.

How AI Search Works

Patients have a conversation:

1. Patient asks a full question: **"Who's the best psychologist in Dallas for anxiety who offers same-day appointments?"**
1. AI produces a short list with a few therapists, summarizing their:
 - a. *Credentials (Do they have board certifications? How many years have they been practicing?)*
 - b. *Real-time availability (Can I get in today?)*
 - c. *Synthesized patient reviews (What is the consensus on this provider?)*
1. Patient chooses a provider from the list without doing further research.



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Section 2: A Closer Look at AI Search

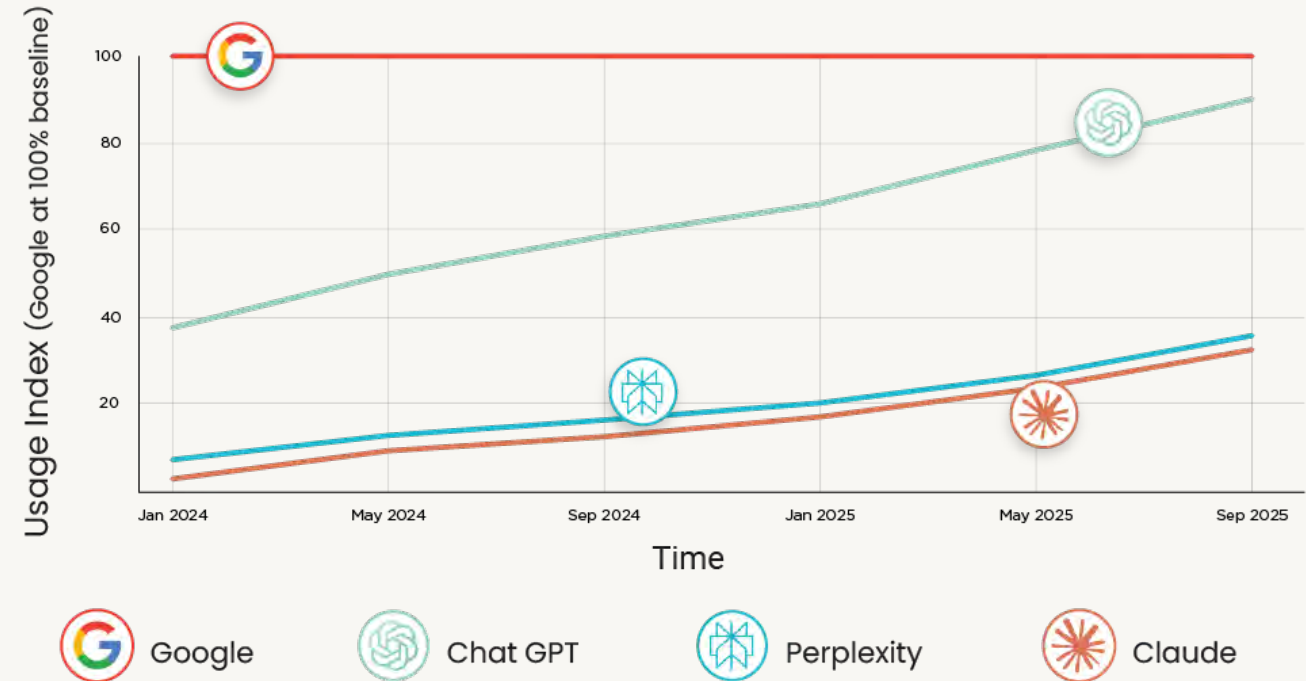
- Why AI search matters
- Popular AI search platforms

Why AI Search Matters

More and more patients are using AI:

- OpenAI reports that 40 million people turn to ChatGPT daily for healthcare questions.¹
- 47% of patients report using AI to research healthcare providers.²
- 89% of all healthcare searches now trigger an AI Overview.³

You need to show up where these patients are searching so that they can find you.



Popular AI Search Platforms

Here are the AI platforms patients are using to search for mental health professionals:

- **ChatGPT:** This is the most popular platform, handling over 2.5 billion queries per day.¹
- **Gemini / AI Overviews:** AI Overviews provide AI-based summaries at the top of traditional Google search results. Gemini is the AI behind AI Overviews, though you can also go to the tool directly.
- **Rising challengers:** Perplexity, Claude, and Grok are becoming more common for informational queries.

1. https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w34255/w34255.pdf



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Section 3: How AI Decides Who To Recommend

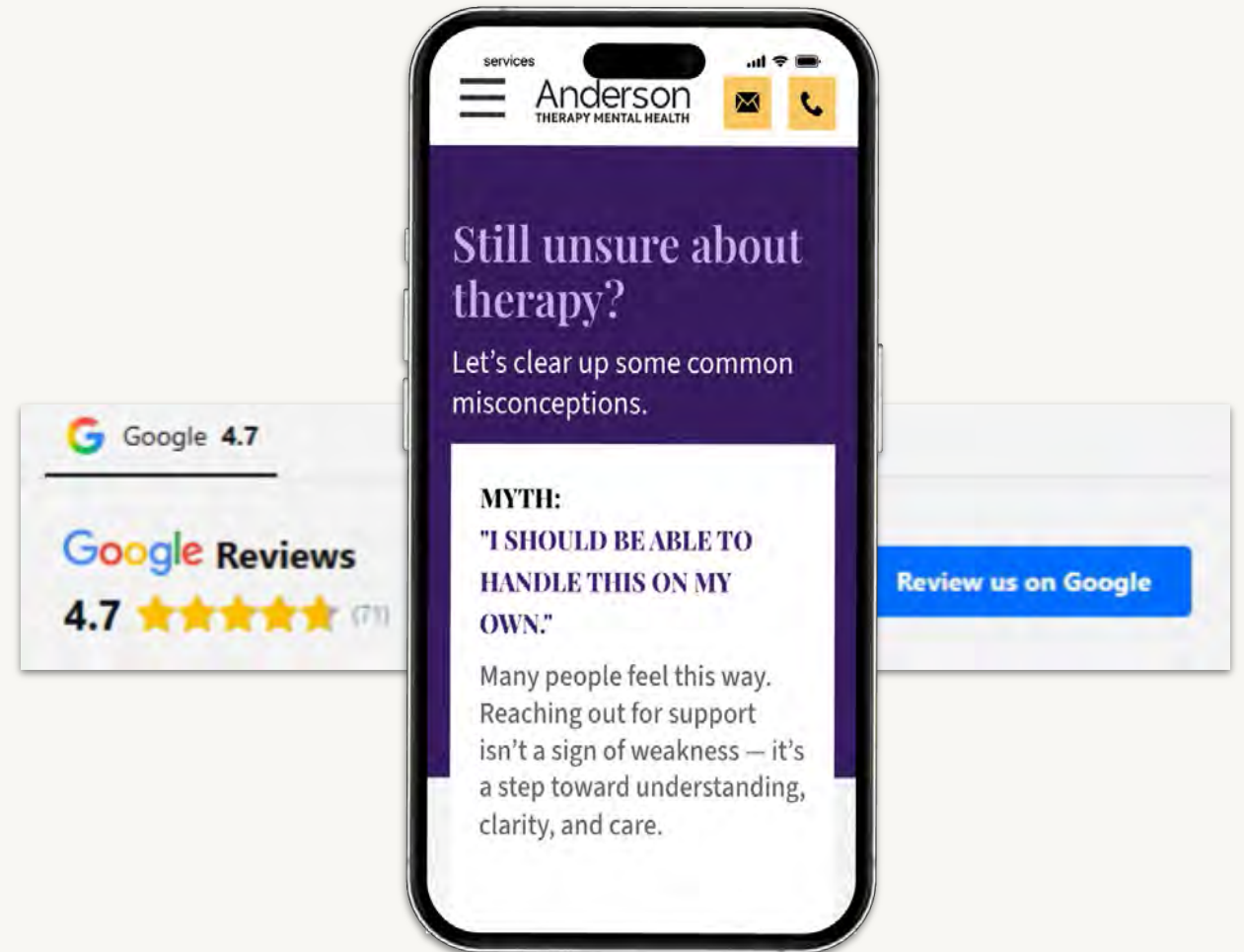
- Factors that affect AI search recommendations
- Monitoring Your Online Reputation
- How to optimize your practice website

Factors That Affect AI Search Recommendations

AI search platforms look at two main factors when deciding which mental health professionals to recommend:

- Online reviews
- Practice websites

Monitoring each of these factors can demonstrate your trust, credibility, and expertise to search engines while increasing your chances of being recommended.



Monitoring Your Online Reputation

- **Create directory profiles:** Show AI that you're a trusted practitioner by expanding your digital footprint with profiles across Yelp, Google Business Profile, and healthcare-specific directories.
- **Add profiles to your website:** Include your directory profiles in the footer of your website in case patients want to view them.
- **Monitor online reviews:** Show AI that you value patient feedback by continuously refining your practice operations based on what patients say in reviews.

How To Optimize Your Practice Website

- **Build out your website:** Create individual service pages for your specialties, start a blog, and add other resources to show AI that you're credible.
- **Use skimmable formatting:** Use bullet points, FAQs, headings, and short paragraphs to break up your content into digestible pieces that are easy for AI to read.

Practice Website Continued...

- **Keep your content fresh:** Update your website regularly with new statistics and developments related to your specialty in the mental health space.
- **Optimize for technical SEO:** Make sure your website has fast-loading pages and clean architecture.
- **Track AI visibility:** Monitor which of your pages get cited in AI search responses and implement that content type and format throughout your website.



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Key Takeaways

Key Takeaways

- Patients find mental health professionals in two ways: traditional search and AI search.
- Patients are turning to AI search platforms more and more, especially ChatGPT and Gemini/AI Overviews.
- Maintaining accurate directory information, monitoring your practice's online presence, and keeping your website current improves your visibility to AI search platforms.

Feeling Overwhelmed? TherapySites Can Help!

Your patients should be your priority, not managing your practice's online presence.

Increase your online visibility with a:

***\$99 Website Design With Your First Month of
SEO and AIO Included***

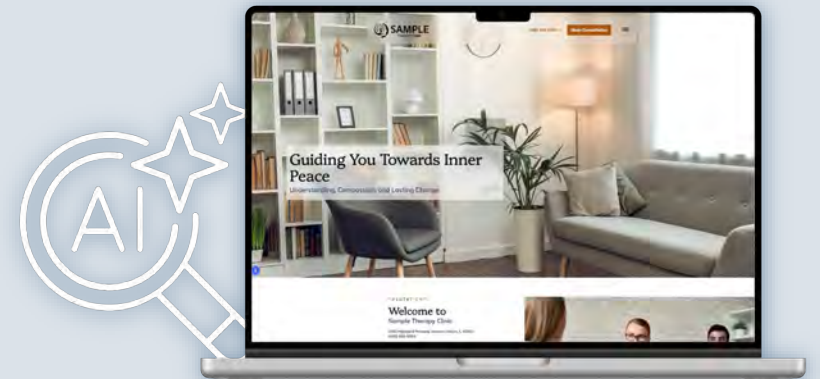


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AUDIENCE Q&A

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THANK YOU!

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