

# New to Social Media?

## Here's How to Join the Conversation

Physicians are increasingly engaging on social media to stay abreast of trends, news, and research in the medical profession. Some GI physicians are leading the way when it comes to sharing links to clinical resources and interesting news. For others, platforms like Twitter are a way to network with other physicians, establish collaborative relationships, and keep up with happenings at conferences such as the ACG Annual Scientific Meeting.

If you have been tentative about exploring social media, here are some practical tips to connect on the major social media channels: Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

### Who's Who in GI on Twitter?

Certain ACG members have an active presence on Twitter. As you follow more people in the GI space, you will see recommendations from Twitter for accounts you may be interested in following. You can also search ACG-affiliated hashtags to make connections, including the ACG meeting (**#ACG2019**) and Diversity in GI (**#DiversityInGI**) hashtags. Using these is a convenient way to aggregate social media posts from those in ACG's GI community.

### Harnessing the Hashtag in GI

A social media project for gastroenterology proposed a "hashtag ontology" to unify all hashtags and organize discussion on specific GI topics. In an article published in the Red Section of *The American Journal of Gastroenterology*, "Harnessing the Hashtag: A Standard Approach to GI Dialogue on Social Media," Dr. Austin Chiang, Dr. Bryan Vartabedian, and Dr. Brennan Spiegel looked at social media as a communications tool in health care and presented what aims to be a comprehensive list of social media hashtags relating to GI diseases and disorders. Read this article at [bit.ly/GISocialMedia](http://bit.ly/GISocialMedia).

### Monitor and Share Insights Using Hashtag #ACG2019

The hashtag for the meeting is #ACG2019. Follow the hashtag by searching #ACG2019 on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. Insert #ACG2019 into meeting-related posts on all social media platforms.

## GETTING STARTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA

### TWITTER

**Sign Up:** Sign up online at [twitter.com](http://twitter.com). On the site, you can set up a username and password and add a photo and brief description to your profile.

**Follow ACG:** Visit [twitter.com/AmCollegeGastro](http://twitter.com/AmCollegeGastro).

### FACEBOOK

**Sign Up:** Sign up online at [facebook.com](http://facebook.com). Once you have signed up, you can add a photo and background information that you feel comfortable sharing to your profile.

**Follow ACG:** Visit [facebook.com/AmCollegeGastro](http://facebook.com/AmCollegeGastro).

### INSTAGRAM

**Sign Up:** Download the [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com) app from your mobile phone's app store. Open the app, click "Sign Up," enter your information, and create a username and password.

**Follow ACG:** With the Instagram app open, click the **Q** icon at the bottom of the screen. In the search bar, type "[AmCollegeGastro](https://www.instagram.com/AmCollegeGastro)." You will see the ACG logo pop up. Tap that logo and click "Follow."

### LINKEDIN

**Sign Up:** Sign up online at [linkedin.com](http://linkedin.com). On the site, you can add a photo, your professional, educational, and volunteer experience, skills you possess, and more.

**Follow ACG:** Visit [bit.ly/ACG-Linked-In](http://bit.ly/ACG-Linked-In) and click "Follow."



## GETTING STARTED WITH TWITTER

Adapted from [support.twitter.com](http://support.twitter.com)

If you've signed up for Twitter and are wondering how to get started, this information is for you.

### What is Twitter anyway?

Twitter is an information network made up of 280-character messages called tweets. It's an easy way to discover the latest news related to subjects you care about.

### How is it useful?

Twitter contains information you will find valuable. Messages from users you choose to follow will show up on your homepage for you to read. It's like being delivered a newspaper whose headlines you'll always find interesting—you can discover news as it's happening, learn more about topics that are important to you, and get the inside scoop in real time.

### How to start using Twitter

#### 1. DISCOVER SOURCES: Find and follow others.

It's best to begin your journey by finding and following other interesting Twitter accounts. Look for businesses you love, public service accounts, people you know, celebrities, or news sources you read.

#### 2. CHECK YOUR TIMELINE: See what's happening.

Messages from those you follow will show up in a readable stream on your Twitter homepage, called your Timeline. Once you've followed accounts of interest, you'll have a new page of information to read each time you log in or refresh. Click hashtagged (#) keywords to view all tweets about that topic.

#### 3. TAKE IT WITH YOU: Connect your mobile.

Connect your account to your mobile phone or download the Twitter app to begin reading tweets on the go.

### How to start tweeting

Here are some good ways to start posting your own tweets. People who are interested in what you have to say may follow you and they'll see all tweets you share with them.

#### 1. BUILD A VOICE: Retweet, reply, react.

Use existing information (other people's tweets) on Twitter to find your own voice and show others what you care about. Retweet messages you've found and love, or @reply with your reaction to a tweet you find interesting. **Tip:** If you're a new user, others are more likely to find your messages if they are retweets or @replies.

#### 2. MENTION: Include others in your content.

Once you're ready to begin authoring your own messages, consider mentioning other users by their Twitter username (preceded by the @ sign) in your tweets. This can help you think of what to write, will draw more eyes to your message, and can even start a new conversation. **Tip:** Starting a tweet with an @mention will direct your tweet to that user and it will not show up in your Timeline. You can avoid this by using a period at the beginning of the tweet, as in ". @AmCollegeGastro"

#### 3. CAPTURE ATTENTION: Use images or short videos in your tweets.

People who follow many Twitter users receive a lot of content in their feed. You can make your tweets stand out by including photos or short videos as attachments in your tweet. Common examples in GI social media include photos of attendance at academic and professional meetings, group photos with other GI physicians, and photos or videos of interesting GI procedures.