

Social Media Monitoring by Merck & Co., Inc.

Privacy Statement

Merck & Co., Inc., 2000 Galloping Hills Road, Kenilworth, New Jersey, USA, operating outside of Canada and the US as Merck Sharp & Dohme (“Merck”), takes into account the needs of the general public in our communications and actions in order to provide better products and services which fit with user’s needs & expectations. To reach this objective, we need to access publicly available information to understand how social media users discuss health issues in general, our products and other topics relevant to Merck. To this end, we analyze social media activity related to our goal of prioritizing the patient and monitor the use of our own social media channels in order to help shape Merck’s strategy.

Data Protection legal framework applicable to Merck

All personal data will be processed in line with applicable data protection legislation.

Who is responsible for the processing of personal data?

Merck is the controller for the processing of personal data collected by it. We use one or more external providers to process and analyze public social media data on our behalf and according to our instructions. Such providers are carefully selected and required to comply to local data protection regulations and Merck’s privacy policies as relevant.

Legal basis for the processing of personal data

We collect and process personal data in the legitimate interest of performing Merck’s corporate goal of prioritizing the patient and responding to their issues and concerns. We ensure that adequate and specific safeguards are implemented for the processing of personal data, in line with the applicable data protection legislation of the European Union, the United States and other applicable countries.

Origin and type of the data processed

Each external provider collects and analyzes data from public posts by social media users on different social media channels, and tracks different online sources including forums, blogs, online news websites and conference feeds. Each external provider may process, solely upon our instructions, the following types of personal data on our behalf:

- Identification data (name, username, user identification and geographical area)
- Personal characteristics (age, gender and family status)
- Professional and educational background
- Pictures and videos
- Any other information published on a website that is analyzed or on a third-party platform.

While an external provider collects the personal data listed above, we apply data minimization principle and only analyze some of the data depending on the objective. We mostly use aggregated data for the analysis of trends and key topics. However, in limited cases, individual quotes may be captured as examples and used to describe the general attitude towards a topic of interest to Merck in social media.

These quotes will be limited to those of individuals who publish posts about Merck or topics of interest to Merck in their professional capacity or those of influencers.

We have set up strict limitations on the topics we monitor and have ensured that our employees, when accessing and using the data collected by the external providers are bound by clear instructions and confidentiality obligations.

Who will receive personal data?

Only a limited number of authorized Merck employees having a business need to know will be recipients of the data in identified form.

How long will Merck keep personal data?

Report containing personal data will be stored for a maximum of five years and will then be destroyed/deleted unless retention is required by legal obligation. Upon the instructions of Merck, each external provider who downloads and retains data from platforms will delete the results of searches after a period of three months, calculated as from the last use and processing of the data. Automatic backups will also be deleted from the external provider's servers after three months.

Your rights

You have the right to access and rectify your personal data, to restrict the processing of your data and, under certain conditions, to ask for your data to be deleted. Since we do not directly interact with social media users whose data is being processed and, in principle, do not have access to their contact details, it is impossible or would involve a disproportionate effort to inform those users individually. We therefore inform social media users in this privacy notice.

Exercising your rights

You can exercise your rights by e-mailing merck_privacy_office@merck.com to know if we have data about you in identified form and then request access, update or deletion as required by data protection laws. Be aware that the personal data we collected from a social media site may still be on the original site and it is your responsibility to request the modification or deletion of the original data from the social media site.

Further information

For further information and points of contact related to the processing of personal data can be found at <https://www.msdprivacy.com/us/en/transparency-and-privacy.html>.

If you have further questions, you can also e-mail Merck's Data Protection Officer at merck_privacy_office@merck.com.

