

Tips for Contacting Health Reporters for Magazines & Television

- Target health reporters (TV, radio, public media, newspapers, magazines).
- Keep in mind magazines have very long lead times – about 90 days.
- Magazines and newspapers now both have healthy online presence, so even if you don't fit their printed format nor deadlines, inquiry about an online feature.
- Identify a patient who is willing to tell his or her story about success with hand therapy and pitch that person as an on-air interview with the hand therapist.
- Include tips in a general press release tips -- tips for hand health, things to do after an injury – anything helpful to the reader.
- Follow up: Don't just send a press release and expect results. Follow up with emails and phone calls. You are not bothering the reporters or producers; you are trying to bubble up in hundreds of press releases they receive every week.
- You can do a 'media drop' – drop off some cookies from a local bakery or box of candy or anything – with the press release. In-person, unplanned visits are invaluable and memorable, and often result in you getting a few minutes of face-to-face time with a decision maker (editor, assignment editor, etc.).
- The key is to make it easy for the media to cover you. They are busy! So provide good content, be courteous, follow up and if they agree to cover your story, do what they say (e.g. arrive at the studio on time, etc.).
- When you send the press release, create in a Word doc, but then copy and paste the text INTO the body of an email. Many media outlets no longer accept emails with attachments.
- Include in the press release any helpful links (e.g. for your national org, etc.).
- Follow the health reporters on social media -- check out what stories they are covering already, and compliment them on their work when you do get their attention. Creating that relationship matters!

**Content courtesy of:
LAURA NEIDIG
Senior Communications Officer
Riley Children's Foundation
Indianapolis, IN**