

[The Winter 2014 issue of ACM XRDS is here!](#) This issue is on health informatics, which has received considerable attention both in research and general public in recent years. You can read about the opportunities of social media in health and well-being, #engaging health initiatives and challenges in personal health tracking, among others.

My department contributed the column about [the anatomy of a human disease network](#) . In the column, we explore the human disease network and demonstrate how network-based tools can help us understand relations between diseases at a higher level of organismal organization without considering any prior biomedical knowledge.

Tools of network analysis have recently been applied to many complex systems, to both simplify and highlight their underlying structure and the relationships that they represent. The results obtained from network-based approaches provide not only insight into interactions between online users, but also new clues about how to improve our understanding of biological systems. Network medicine in particular, a network-based approach to studying human disease, has proven effective in studying interdependence between molecular components in cells, and in identifying disease modules and biological pathways.