Help Stop the Spread of Health Misinformation

Misinformation is information that is **false**, **inaccurate**, **or misleading** according to the best available evidence at the time.

It can cause confusion and misunderstandings. It can lead people to make decisions with harmful consequences.

We can **protect ourselves and our family and friends** from health misinformation.

Spot health misinformation and avoid sharing it

Use the Surgeon General's **Health Misinformation Checklist** every time you come across health-related content you're not sure about.



Did you **check with the CDC or local public health department** to see whether there is any information about the claim being made?



Did you **ask a credible health care professional** such as your doctor or nurse if they have any additional information?



Did you **type the claim into a search engine** to see if it has been verified by a credible source?



Did you **look at the "About Us" page** on the website to see if you can trust the source?



If you're not sure about the content, don't share!



Talk to your family, friends, and community about health misinformation

Giving "fact-checks" to people who share false claims doesn't always work. Try these tips instead:

- **Listen** Try to understand their fears and beliefs.
- **Empathize** Ask questions to understand where they're coming from. Talk about how difficult it is to find trustworthy health information.
- Point to credible sources Show them sources like MedlinePlus or the CDC website.
- **Don't publicly shame** Try to have conversations one on one. Be gentle and understanding.
- **Use inclusive language** Show that you identify with them. Try phrases like "I've been confused too" or "I understand."



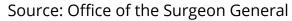
• Suggest they **ask their doctor or nurse** about their health concerns.



Spread the word in your community

- Get **your family, friends, and community groups** to take positive action to stop health misinformation.
- Share with them the **Surgeon General's Community Toolkit** at SurgeonGeneral.gov/HealthMisinformation.

We can stop the spread of health misinformation and build a healthier world!



Last updated: 2023

