

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!**

VERY IMPORTANT

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.”



Encourage people to talk to their health care professional

- 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](https://www.surgeongeneral.gov/HealthMisinformation).

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