

How to Navigate the COVID-19 Infodemic

"We're not just fighting an epidemic; we're fighting an **infodemic**. Fake news spreads faster and more easily than this virus and is just as dangerous."

—Dr. Tedros, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO)

The term 'infodemic' describes the rapid spread of misinformation. A massive infodemic has surrounded the COVID-19 pandemic. False information about the virus, the vaccines, and the variants has spread quickly. This misinformation is affecting our ability to protect ourselves against COVID-19.

But What is Misinformation?

Misinformation is false or inaccurate information shared by people who don't intend to mislead others.

How to Spot Misinformation

Misinformation can be tricky to spot. Here are **six steps** you can follow to see if a news story or a piece of data is true and trustworthy.

Follow these six steps before you decide to text, tweet, or share a link about COVID-19 or the COVID-19 vaccines. **The infodemic stops with you.**



Step 1: Check the type of information.

Figure out the type of content that you're reading. Is it a news story, a scientific study, or an opinion column by a particular person?



Step 2: See if the story is based on facts.

If you're ever in doubt about a new piece of information, **use a fact checker** like FactCheck.org or Snopes.com. Or **go straight to a reliable source** for information about COVID-19 vaccines like the websites for:

- CDC
- FDA
- AmeriCares
- NIH
- WHO



Step 3: Explore the purpose of the website.

Determine if the webpage belongs to a neutral organization that is dedicated to informing the public. Go to the "About Us" section to see if it:

- Provides scientific information (good)
- Promotes a specific agenda (not so good)
- Or gives one-sided opinions (bad)



Step 4: Check the date of publication.

See when the content was first written. Some social media apps do not show the publication date of news stories that have been shared. This encourages the spread of outdated stories, which can go viral months or years after they were first published.

by Joan Washington
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Step 5: Make sure the information about COVID-19 vaccines is up to date.

Check to see when the webpage or article was last updated. You want to find something that has been updated in the last month or so.

Last updated: 4 days ago ✓

When you search for text in a different language, the information may not be as up to date as the original translation



Step 6: Investigate where the source gets their data.

Misinformation often begins with sources that substitute data and evidence with opinions, emotion, and tricky language. **Verify who is being quoted and check the credentials of that person or organization.** Most sites place their references at the bottom of the page.



Help build protection against COVID-19 and vaccine misinformation.



AmeriCares is a health-focused relief and development organization that responds to people affected by poverty or disaster with life-changing health programs, medicine, medical supplies and emergency aid.

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