FORCE
Facing Hereditary Cancer EMPOWERED

CAN YOU TELL WHICH HEALTH INFORMATION IS TRUSTWORTHY?

HOW TO DECIDE WHAT TO BELIEVE WHEN LOOKING FOR HEALTH INFORMATION ONLINE

Before you make decisions based on health information you see online or share that information with someone else, ask yourself some questions about:

the source   **the content**   **does this information apply to my situation?**

TIPS FOR CHECKING THE SOURCE

Websites ending in .gov ~~are~~ government agencies.

✔ Examples include the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (cdc.gov), the National Cancer Institute (cancer.gov) the Food and Drug Administration (FDA.gov) and others.

✔ These are highly reliable sources of information

Those ending in .edu are for universities and academic institutions.

✔ These are usually reliable sources of information, although you may want to look further into information from press releases and fundraising initiatives, which may have biased or overblown information about research from the institution.

Nonprofit or advocacy organizations' websites end in .org. Some hospitals may also have .org websites.

✔ Although nonprofits are often reliable, it's a good idea to look further at their mission, their advisors and board members to understand their goals and where they get the information they share with others.

.com, .net, .biz and others are usually commercial, for-profit companies. It's a good idea to explore more about their business.

✔ Determine if the company sells a product or service and if the information they're sharing encourages people to buy it.

✔ See if you can figure out who owns or governs the organization.

✔ Confirm claims with other, expert sources, if possible.
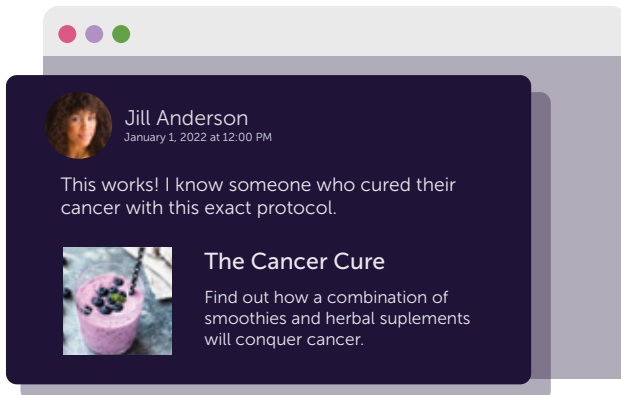
Dr. W

"Peer-reviewed" is a term used when research results are reviewed by a panel of experts who did not conduct the research to make sure that findings are credible.

✔ Peer-reviewed journals are considered reliable sources. But they can be technical and hard to read.

✔ Some peer-reviewed journals may have simple-to-understand summaries of the research.

Social media posts and personal blogs can be a source of misinformation, which can get shared quickly and spread widely with many people.

✔ Not everyone with a big online following has the expertise to back up their claims, especially when it comes to health information.

✔ Even posts with many likes, shares or followers may not be true.

TIPS FOR CHECKING CONTENT

Jill Anderson
January 1, 2022 at 12:00 PM

This works! I know someone who cured their cancer with this exact protocol.

The Cancer Cure

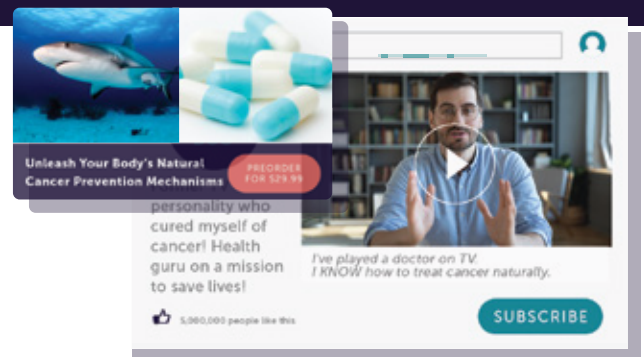Find out how a combination of smoothies and herbal suplements will conquer cancer.

- ✔ Make sure the information is based on scientific research rather than one person's experience or opinion.
- ✔ Be aware of exaggerated language. Words like "poison," "scandal," or "shocking" might be red flags that the content isn't balanced or accurate.
- ✔ Words like "cure," "sensational," or "miraculous" or content that seems too good to be true may be a red flag, too.
- ✔ Search to see if there's been similar research completed by other experts in the field.

TIPS FOR CHECKING RELEVANCE

Reading the full article may help you understand if the information applies to you.

- ✔ Was this research on cells in a test tube or on animals? These studies may not apply to humans yet.
- ✔ Findings from a small study or one that's the first of its kind might need to be repeated before they become part of medical care. **Check to see:**
  - *How many people were part of the study?*
  - *Has research been done on similar subjects in the past?*
  - *What did it find?*
- ✔ Search the name of the study online to see if any other experts commented on the research.
  - *Have the results been reviewed by other experts?*
  - *Were the results shared publicly in a peer-reviewed journal?*

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- ✔ Compare the people in the study to yourself. The more similar they are to you and your situation (age, gender, diagnosis, genetic factors, race, ethnicity, health history, etc.), the more likely the research findings may apply to you.

If the article is not about research, what is it about?

- ✔ Personal stories can be uplifting or compelling, but they may not be reliable sources of health information.
- ✔ Check articles about a new technology or business to see if the claims are based on research or instead on a press release or interview with company representatives.

Visit **FacingOurRisk.org/XRAY**
to find trustworthy information about cancer research.

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