



How to spot fake nutrition information online

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In a world flooded with information, distinguishing fact from fiction is crucial, especially when it comes to health. It's easy to stumble upon articles that claim to be backed by science but actually twist the facts. They may make extravagant promises or single out specific foods, leaving us puzzled about what to believe. This infographic will help you spot fake nutrition information when you're browsing through the internet or other media outlets, teaching you how to spot credible sources, recognise qualified authors, and avoid falling for too-good-to-be-true claims.

HOW TO SPOT FAKE NUTRITION INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET



Tips for identifying reliable information online

Where did you read the information?

Most credible



PEER-REVIEWED ACADEMIC JOURNALS



WEBSITES OF ESTABLISHED INSTITUTIONS (E.G. WHO, FDA, NATIONAL MINISTRIES, ETC.)

Credibility can vary



NEWSPAPER/MAGAZINE



BLOG/FORUM



SOCIAL MEDIA

By choosing a credible source, we can minimise our risk of falling for fake news!

Is the author qualified?



1

WHO IS THE AUTHOR?

Check out the author's credentials. Is there a link to the author's profile? If not, or if a link is there, it's often reasonable to be suspicious.

2

WHAT QUALIFICATIONS DO THEY HAVE?

Do they have a degree or professional experience relevant to the topic? People claiming to be nutrition therapists, health coaches or diet experts may often be unqualified.

If a claim sounds too good to be true, it probably is!



Eating chocolate halves the risk of heart disease

RELATIVE RISK vs. ABSOLUTE RISK

Preventing risks as relative rather than absolute can make effects seem bigger than they actually are.



I lost 10 kg in two weeks (thanks to a low-carb diet!)

ANECDOTES ARE NOT EVIDENCE

A single person's experience doesn't provide an objective picture. We are all very different, what worked for one individual won't work for everyone.

Does the article or post single out a specific food?



A Broccoli a day can reduce the risk of breast cancer



Avocados: How to reduce your risk of cancer? Eat more avocados

Remember, there are no miracle foods! Different foods provide different nutrients, and a balanced and varied diet is key.

Is there a link to peer-reviewed research to support any claims?



Link



A link to the scientific study can help us judge the quality of the science behind the headlines. If an article doesn't cite any scientific studies, it can be hard to tell if claims are backed up by evidence.

Is the author trying to sell a product?

Keep an eye out for ads or sponsored content.



Someone who is trying to sell you something may present biased or exaggerated information. Check their claims against credible, unbiased sources to make an informed decision.

Does the article or post suggest supplements to replace foods?



Supplements should not replace a healthy, balanced diet, but they can be useful for people who cannot or are not getting specific nutrients from their food.



A Registered Dietitian/Nutritionist or your family doctor will be able to give you individualised and safe advice.

Are recommendations based on a single study?



A single study can generate clickable headlines but the data is usually not enough to make credible diet recommendations.



The best quality evidence comes from systematic reviews and meta-analyses that summarise the best available evidence from all available research.