



How to spot fake nutrition information online

Last Updated : 06 September 2023

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, EFSA,
NATIONAL NUTRITION, 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?



WHO IS THE AUTHOR?

Check out the author's credentials. Is there a link to the author's profile? If no author is listed, it's often reasonable to be suspicious.

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!



RELATIVE RISK vs. ABSOLUTE RISK

Presenting risk in relative rather than absolute can make effects seem bigger than they actually are.



ANECDOTES ARE NOT EVIDENCE

A single personal 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?



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 headline. If an article doesn't link 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?



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 convincing diet recommendations.



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