

10 WAYS TO SEPARATE VACCINE FACT FROM FICTION



Not sure what information you can trust? This checklist can help.


Routine vaccines prevent many harmful diseases, like measles, flu, and cancers from HPV. These diseases can have serious, and sometimes permanent health effects. But, by following the routine vaccine schedule, you can give your child the best possible protection. You can protect them before they are

exposed to a disease and when their immune system will work best with the vaccine. Most parents agree that vaccines are important, but not all children have all the vaccines they need. Ask your child's doctor or nurse if your child is up to date.

1. Check the source.

Examples of trustworthy sources are the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, and your local health department. The "about us" page on a website or the "about" section of a social media profile are ways to check the source.

2. Confirm if a social media account is real.

One way to know is by looking for a blue check  next to the account name. The blue check means that the social media company has verified that an account is authentic. A social media account may be fake if it is missing information or contains a long series of numbers.

3. See if the author or person quoted is an expert on the subject.

Search for their name on-line to learn their background.

4. Look at the purpose of the information.

Is the author trying to inform or educate you? Are they selling or promoting something? Are they trying to get you to agree with them? If the purpose of the information seems suspicious, look for another source.

5. Consider how the information makes you feel.

Does it make you angry? Frightened? Surprised? Like you want to share it right away? Some sources that are not trustworthy try to make you feel this way. It's smart to question information like this.

6. Check the date to be sure the information is current.

Information that's old may not be correct.

7. See if the information cites other trustworthy sources.

Information that includes links to or quotes from other trustworthy sources is more likely to be correct as long as the quotes are not taken out of context.

8. Look for warning labels on social media posts.

Companies like Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter put warning labels on posts that may have false information.

9. Double-check the information.

The first results in an on-line search aren't always the most reliable. And "news" shared on social media may not be true. See if you can find the same information from a trustworthy source like CDC or your local public health department.

10. Still not sure?

When in doubt, ask your child's doctor or nurse. They are experts you can trust. For information from a credible vaccine source, visit Vaccines Protect You | HHS.gov.*

* <https://www.hhs.gov/immunization/basics/work/prevention/index.html>

