

Live Well Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life

SORTING OUT CORONAVIRUS FACT FROM FICTION

Sorting Out Coronavirus Fact From Fiction

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, people were fighting misinformation about health conditions, vaccines and treatments online. With the pandemic constantly evolving, it may be hard to keep up and understand what's factual and what is fake—especially if your primary source for news is social media.



A Pew survey found that 23% of Americans reported sharing fake news at one point or another.

It's important to be up to date on COVID-19 guidance to understand your local regulations. Misinformation continues to spread about topics like at-home treatments, how you get infected, and what's safe or unsafe once you go out in public.

As the number of COVID-19 infections rises across the globe, it's important now more than ever to understand the facts and correct guidelines for protecting yourself.

Fighting the Infodemic

Public health officials say they are not only fighting a pandemic, but also an "infodemic." Defined as an overabundance of information—both accurate and not—the infodemic makes it hard for people to find reliable guidance online or on social media.

Consider asking yourself the following questions to sort out coronavirus fact from fiction:

1. **Who's saying it?** Check out not just who sent you the article or graphic, but also the author and whether it's posted by a well-known publication. When it comes to health care, peer-reviewed journals add another level of credibility to research.
2. **What proof do they have?** Consider the information more credible if there are additional links or evidence in the article.
3. **When was this published?** It's easy to share outdated information, especially on social media. Check the date, as the pandemic continues to quickly evolve day by day.
4. **Where else is it being reported?** Do a quick online search to see if trusted organizations (like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization or local public health officials) are also reporting it.
5. **Why are they saying it?** Try to understand the study's funding, which may impact its credibility. Certain organizations may have a motive or bias.

If you're still aren't sure, ask yourself whether you do believe the information. Trust your gut and rely on solid sources.



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Summer Sun Safety Tips

As the weather warms up, you'll likely want to be outside enjoying it. But did you know the sun's rays can damage your skin in as little as 15 minutes? Avoiding excessive sun exposure is ultimately the best way to protect your body from sun damage and skin cancer. Here are a few tips to protect yourself:

- Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., when the rays are the strongest.
- Wear clothes made of tightly woven fabrics and a hat that shields your face, neck and ears.
- Wear sunglasses to protect your eyes.
- Use sunscreen that is at least SPF 30, applying it all over your body and lips. Reapply at least every two hours—and after swimming or sweating.

Routinely inspect your skin for any spots or changes in color or appearance. If you have any concerns, see your doctor.



USDA regulations require sunscreen labels to follow certain guidelines. Here's what they mean.

Broad-spectrum protection works against both **UVA** (skin cancer and premature aging) and **UVB** (sunburn) rays.

The sun protection factor (**SPF**) is the level of protection against harmful **UVB** rays.

Double-check the expiration date. Sunscreens are usually good for two to three years.



Source: USDA

Probiotics and You

An estimated 3.9 million American adults use some form of probiotics or prebiotics. There's no denying that probiotics, whether found in yogurt or capsules, are a popular health trend—especially with probiotic sales expected to exceed \$6 billion in the United States this year.

Probiotics (aka good bacteria) are live microorganisms intended to have health benefits when consumed or applied to the body. However, a recent American Gastroenterological Association report explains that probiotics do not do much for gut health. Selecting an effective probiotic involves matching the probiotic strain to the disease that needs treatment. Most of the time, over-the-counter product labels will not be helpful when trying to figure that out.

The report's key takeaway is not all probiotics are created equal. Some strains are very effective for diseases and should not be overlooked due to research that lumps all probiotics together. Probiotics require a personal approach, so refer to your doctor to learn whether probiotics are right for you.

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Mango Berry Rotini Salad

Makes: 4 servings

Ingredients

- 1 cup whole-wheat rotini pasta, uncooked
- 1 ripe mango
- 1 cup raspberries
- 1 cup blueberries
- 2 cups fresh baby spinach
- ½ cup reduced-fat feta cheese

For the vinaigrette:

- 3 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. raspberry vinegar
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. poppy seeds
- ¼ tsp. salt

Preparations

- 1) In a small bowl, whisk vinaigrette ingredients. Set aside.
- 2) Boil water and cook rotini according to package instructions. Drain cooked rotini and rinse in cool water.
- 3) While rotini is cooking, cut mango into chunks, removing peel and pit.
- 4) Place salad ingredients in a large bowl. Drizzle with vinaigrette and toss gently.

Nutritional Information (per serving)

Total calories	430
Total fat	15 g
Protein	12 g
Carbohydrate	65 g
Dietary fiber	14 g
Saturated fat	3 g
Total sugars	18 g

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture
(USDA)