



Research Red Flags



Being a Careful Reader of Coronavirus Information *(For Self-Advocates)*

There is a lot of research and articles about the coronavirus (also known as COVID-19 or novel coronavirus). This guide will help you know what is good information and what is bad information.



Claiming a Cure for Coronavirus



There is no cure for coronavirus, but there are a few vaccines available in the United States. Some vaccines have two doses and others only have one. Look for information from trusted sources to make sure you are getting the best information.



Telling You to Do Non-approved Practices



If the authors are telling you to do things that are not based in scientific evidence, be careful when reading the article. The best way to know what practices are based in scientific evidence is to read from trusted sources or to ask a doctor or nurse if you are not sure. The sources listed below can be trusted for information.



Telling You to Share your Personal Information



Do not give personal information to someone you don't know. Personal information includes: date of birth, social security number, credit card, or banking information.

Contact the agency or company directly if you have questions about a government program or need help with an application. You can also have family member, trusted adult, or support staff help you.



The Information is Only Available in Social Media/Blogs



If you read information in a blog or on social media check to see if you can find the same information other places. It could be someone's opinion and not fact if you can't find the same information on a trusted website.



Studies are not Reviewed and Approved by other Research Experts



Research about the coronavirus is new. The information is changing a lot. But studies still need to be reviewed by other research experts. This helps to make sure what is published is good quality and the results are true.



The Company Putting the Information Out is For Profit



If a company is making money selling things be careful when reading their research. If they are the only ones publishing and sharing the information, it may not be true. Their products should be tested and reviewed by other organizations



Find Trusted Websites



Look for organizations that are not focused on making money. These are called non-profit organizations. Most websites that end in ".org" are non-profit organizations. Websites that end in ".gov" or ".edu" are government or education websites and can usually be trusted.



The Information is Causing You Stress or Upsetting You



Only you can know this. If reading news or other information about the coronavirus is making you sad or upsetting you, take a break. Focus on other things you like to do! It is good to know how to keep safe. But it is also important to make sure you take care of yourself and your mental health.



Recommended Sources

Here is a list of sources that ASERT recommends for looking for information about the coronavirus:

ASERT Collaborative Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health and Safety Guide: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

AID in PA: <https://aidinpa.org/>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus>

Pennsylvania Department of Health: <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/coronavirus/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/health-topics/coronavirus>