Can You Spot COVID-19 Misinformation?

We’re all seeking the latest information on the COVID-19 pandemic and what might be coming next. But how can we spot and avoid the false information that is also circulating, especially on social media? Here are some things to look out for.

Have you received a message from your friend that says her aunt/teacher/colleague knows someone who works in the ER and has the following information?

- **If so: Be cautious.**
  Lots of copy and paste rumors are spread this way.

- **Action:** try pasting the first line into a search on social networks. If you see lots of examples, it has likely travelled a long way before it got to you.

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Did you see a statement being shared on social networks that looks like it has come from the government or a health authority?

- **If so: Be a detective.**
  It may be ‘imposter content’, which is designed to look official, when it’s not.

- **Action:** find the official website of the organization quoted and check whether the information on their site is a match.

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Maybe someone sent you a list of top tips to avoid the virus, like eating certain foods or using home remedies?

- **If so: Be skeptical.**
  There’s no food or supplement that can stop you getting this virus, and there’s currently no treatment - you can only try to manage the symptoms.

- **Action:** consult the latest guidelines from the World Health Organisation and your country’s and state’s health authorities.

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Did you see that very dramatic video on social media showing the latest updates relating to COVID-19?

- **If so: Look closer.**
  Sometimes videos and pictures being shared on social media aren’t quite what they seem.

- **Action:** try reverse image searching pictures to see if they have been used before. And pay a regular visit to trusted news providers to stay up to date.