

Checklist: What Is the Quality of the Information You Are Seeing?

1. Who is providing the information?

- Is an individual or an organization disseminating the information?
- How is that individual or organization funded or sponsored?
- Is the source of content and funding easy to find or identify?
- What qualifies them to deliver the message?

2. Why are they sharing the information?

- Who is the intended audience?
- Is the message framed to inform or persuade?
- What is the tone of the message?
- Are pros and cons presented?
- Is it one-sided?

3. What is the source of the information?

- Is the study based on a personal experience or a scientific study?
- If a personal experience:
 - Is the story supported by facts?
 - Did the author experience it or are they sharing something they heard elsewhere?
- If a scientific study:
 - Does the story provide enough information to accurately assess the study findings?
 - If a scientific study [continued]:
 - Does it provide details about how the study was conducted or give enough information for you to find the study and examine its methods?
 - How was the study conducted (double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled)?
 - Are there other studies that found the same thing, or is this a new finding that has yet to be substantiated?

4. Do other sources have similar messages?

- Are different sources providing similar information on the topic?
- What were the differences between multiple stories?
- Are the differences substantive or superficial?
- Is the information substantiated by a larger body of evidence?

5. How well is the information presented?

- Is it well-written or well-produced?
- Is the story grammatically correct?
- Is the content presented in a professional manner that is clear and appropriate for intended users?
- Are the arguments sound or do they employ logical fallacies?
- Is the content reviewed and updated regularly? By whom? Can you tell?
- When was the content published?