Research Red Flags

Being a Careful Reader of Coronavirus Information

Claiming a Cure for Coronavirus

While there is no single cure for the coronavirus, several vaccines have been developed which are approved by the FDA for use in the United States. Some of the vaccines require two doses, while others require only one to be fully vaccinated. Check with trusted sources about the evolving science and effective treatments to make sure you are getting the best information.

Promoting Unsafe Practices or Non Evidence-Based Practices

If the authors are promoting practices that are not based in scientific evidence, like alternative practices and medicine, you should be careful when reading the article. The practices might not be effective or could even be unsafe. Visit the recommended sources below for information about preventing and treating the coronavirus.

The Information is Only Available in Social Media/Blogs

If you cannot find other sources for a blog post or post on Twitter, Facebook, or other social media, the research is probably not good. It could be someone's personal opinion and hasn't been reviewed by other researchers.

Studies are not Peer-Reviewed

While the coronavirus is a new phenomenon and information is updating rapidly, it is still important that studies that are published in journals be reviewed by researchers other than the authors who wrote the initial study or article. This helps to make sure what is published is good quality and the results are valid or true.

The Company Publicizing the Information is For Profit

If a company is making money selling products related to the information they are providing, you should be cautious when reading their research. There are many other organizations that are not making a profit that publish research that you can read. Most websites that end in ".org" are non-profit organizations. Websites that end in ".gov" or ".edu" are not used by for profit companies. Stick with information with organizations that have strong knowledge about health and science.

The Information is Causing You Stress or Upsetting You

Only you can determine this. If reading news or other information about the coronavirus is causing you extra stress or to be upset, perhaps it's time to take a break from social media and the internet and focus on other pastimes. It is good to stay informed and to know how to keep you and your family safe, but it is as important to make sure it is not taking a toll on your emotional and mental wellbeing.

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**