Think Before You Click.

Be WISE Online

Finding Online Health Information You Can Trust

W — **Who** — Check who created or shared it.

I — **Individual Biases** — Reflect on your own beliefs and biases.

S — **Search** — Search for the information and verify it.

E — **Experts** — Consult trusted experts and reliable sources.

Dr. Milena Head
Professor of Information Systems
Wayne C. Fox Chair in Business Innovation
Director, McMaster Digital Transformation Research Centre
DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University
http://mdtrc.mcmaster.ca

Dr. Irina Ghilic
EMPOWrD Program Manager & Learning Architect, McMaster Digital Transformation Research Centre
DeGroote School of Business, McMaster University
Email: ghilicai@mcmaster.ca

W — Who

Ask yourself...

- Who created or shared this post/information?
- Are they credible?
- What other articles have they written?
- What is their motivation for this post? Financial gain / to influence / social or emotional reward / is it what they believe?

- Do they have a medical degree (MD) or an advanced science degree (PhD)?
- Are they affiliated with a reputable institution (university or hospital)?

I — Individual Biases

Ask yourself...

- Have I seen this before? Familiarity gives the illusion of truth.
- Are my beliefs or pre-existing views impacting my judgement?

- Am I biased because I'm hoping for a "miracle cure" or quick fix?
- Am I being persuaded by personal stories ("this worked for me") rather than evidence?

S — Search

Ask yourself...

- How much do I know about this topic?
- When was the article published?
- Where can I find reliable sources?
- Am I being a rabbit (fast, automatic, and intuitive) or a turtle (slow, deliberate and analytical) in my thinking? Be a turtle!

- If a study is cited, can I find the original source?
- Has it been peer-reviewed?

E — Experts

Ask yourself...

- Whom can I trust to help me verify this information? Healthcare professionals, librarians, domain experts, online fact-checkers.
  - Snopes: https://www.snopes.com
  - Truth or Fiction: https://www.truthorfiction.com/
  - Media Smarts: https://mediasmarts.ca/fact-checker

- Canadian-led initiative: https://scienceupfirst.com
- First Check: https://firstcheck.in
- MedlinePlus: https://medlineplus.gov