

Talking to friends, family about misinformation

Misinformation can be dangerous. If people have the wrong idea about medicines or vaccines that are there to protect them, they may skip them. That could put both their health and the health of their families in danger. Fortunately, you can help them by sharing information based on science. Here are some tips.



Photo above by Kali9, below by Elenaleonova, courtesy iStockphoto

Quick facts on communication:

1 People often don't mean to share false information. They may have heard things wrong. Or maybe they are passing along something someone else mixed up. They may want to know what science really says.



2 Be caring and listen to their concerns. They may be afraid or have questions they need clear answers to.

3 Don't interrupt or correct them as they talk about what they think is true, even if you know it is wrong. People like to feel like they are being heard and understood.

4 If they are open, share the science

with them. Tell them why you believe in those facts. Make sure the health information you share is from trusted sources. Those can include local health agencies or your doctor.

5 If someone doesn't want to learn about what is true, don't argue with them. It is OK to change the subject. Let them know you care about them and move on.



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