

COVID-19 Content Policy

Globally, COVID-19 is presenting major challenges for readers who are relying on accurate and up-to-date information related to health and news. The purpose of this policy is to present important information regarding Medium’s approach to delivering information in this time of crisis and our efforts to mitigate elevated risk to users of open platforms.

Medium is an open platform which hosts user-generated content. As an open platform, Medium does not fact-check user-generated content published by third-party contributors, and we encourage readers to always fact-check content posted, and seek the most up-to-date information from official sources, such as the [Center for Disease Control](#) or [World Health Organization](#).

[Medium’s Rules](#) set guidelines for acceptable content and behavior on the platform. Each participant in our community is responsible for maintaining these standards, whether they are a professional journalist, amateur commentator, or an expert in a related field. We rely on and investigate all reports of potential content violations. When Medium’s Trust & Safety team becomes aware of potentially problematic content, we analyze the reported content under those Rules, and where necessary apply other secondary frameworks to come to an enforcement decision.

Risk Analysis

One such secondary framework is a system of [triage based on risk analysis](#) for potentially controversial, suspect, or extreme content. This includes, at minimum, asking and answering the following questions:

1. What are the foreseeable negative consequences of the information being propagated by our network, and shared on other social media networks?
2. How severe might the potential impact be?
3. What is the likelihood of the negative consequence occurring?
4. Who will likely be affected as a result?
5. Is there information from nationally and internationally recognized institutions, (such as the [CDC](#), [WHO](#), and other official bodies) to help us determine if content presents an elevated risk and potentially violates our rules?

In particular, this means that broadly we may take action on content which includes:

- Health claims or advice which, if acted on, are likely to have detrimental health effects on persons or public safety.

Due to current heightened global public health concerns, we’re giving careful scrutiny to coronavirus-related content on Medium to help stem misinformation that could be detrimental to public safety. We will remove content which is determined in our analysis to be likely to increase the risk of potential harm to persons or public health. In the interest of transparency, this includes, but is not limited to, the following prohibited claims.

Prohibited Health claims

- Denial of effectiveness of social distancing or quarantine for COVID-19, or calls encouraging people to suspend these practices.
- Calls to avoid seeking professional medical care for COVID-19 in favor of unproven alternative treatments alone.*
- Calls to apply, ingest, or otherwise utilize illicit or potentially harmful substances as preventive or curative treatments.
- Calls to self-administer potentially harmful medications without proper medical supervision as preventive or curative treatments.
- Arguments that COVID-19 primarily affects or excludes an ethnic group/groups.
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims that COVID-19 can be contracted by anything other than human-to-human transmission.
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims regarding face masks (e.g., masks don’t help prevent the spread of COVID-19, masks can cause illness in the wearer, masks can cause difficulty breathing in otherwise healthy individuals, etc.).
- Content intended to directly or indirectly discourage others from receiving the COVID-19 vaccine, or advocating third-party content intended to do so.
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims to contract COVID-19, or expose others to the virus, in order to “build immunity” as an alternative to getting vaccinated
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims that COVID-19 vaccines were not approved or do not exist.
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims that something other than a COVID-19 vaccine can vaccinate someone against COVID-19.
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims regarding the safety or efficacy of COVID-19 vaccines and their potential side effects, including false, unfounded, exaggerated, or disproven claims that COVID-19 vaccines kill or seriously harm people.
- False, unfounded, or disproven claims regarding the development of the COVID-19 vaccine or misleading/false claims regarding its ingredients.

(*Note: Some alternative or supplemental health claims that do not discourage official or conventional prevention or treatment may be allowed, depending on nature and context; e.g. “how to boost your immune system”).

Prohibited Conspiracy claims

- COVID-19 as hoax, fake, or false hysteria
- COVID-19 or any related Covid vaccine as part of far-reaching conspiracy or cover-up
- COVID-19 as engineered in a lab as a “bioweapon”
- COVID-19 as being caused or propagated by 5G networks

As the situation continues to evolve, this list will be updated.

How to report a violation

If you find a post or account on Medium that violates these rules, please [flag it](#). You can use [this form](#) to provide more detail or to report other conduct you believe violates our rules. Additionally, you can send us an email to trust@medium.com.

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Was this article helpful?

Yes

No