

HER IMPACT INITIATIVE

Resource Guides for Women & Allies

Guides to inform, empower, and activate.

Inspired by a conversation with Parul Kamra, Communications Lead at Bala.

Your Body, Your Information — Vetting Health Content Online

The internet is full of health information. Some of it is excellent. Some of it is dangerous. Here's how to tell the difference.

Why This Matters

Many people — especially those in underserved communities or without access to healthcare — turn to social media and websites for information about their bodies. That access is genuinely powerful. But misinformation about menstrual health, reproductive health, and women's health broadly is widespread.

Sources Worth Trusting

- **Government health agencies:** CDC ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)), NHS ([nhs.uk](https://www.nhs.uk)), and national health ministries publish evidence-based information
- **WHO ([who.int](https://www.who.int)):** World Health Organization research is rigorously produced and freely available
- **UN agencies:** UNFPA, UNICEF, and UN Women publish reliable research on reproductive and menstrual health
- **Peer-reviewed journals:** PubMed (pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov) provides access to medical research
- **Established nonprofits:** Organizations like Planned Parenthood and Bedsider have medically reviewed content

"I heavily advocate for government research, research by the UN, research by WHO, because they spend time and energy putting out as unbiased data as possible."

Red Flags to Watch For

- Claims that sound too extreme or too simple
- No author name or no citation of sources

- Content that is selling something alongside "health information"
- Anecdotes presented as medical fact
- Information that contradicts your doctor's guidance without explanation

A Practical Vetting Process

- **Step 1:** Find the claim on a government or UN site. If it's not there, be skeptical.
- **Step 2:** Search the topic with "site:who.int" or "site:cdc.gov" to find authoritative sources
- **Step 3:** Check whether the content creator is a credentialed professional and what their credentials are
- **Step 4:** Ask yourself: is this person advocating, educating, or selling?
- **Step 5:** When in doubt, bring the information to a healthcare provider and ask about it directly

Important note: Access to healthcare providers is itself unequal. These tips are a starting point, not a replacement for care.

Social Media Accounts Worth Following

- Look for OBGYNs, midwives, and nurses who create educational content with credentials clearly listed
- Organizations like Bala, PERIOD, and the Global Menstrual Collective share vetted information
- Be cautious of influencer health content that is monetized or product-tied

Resources

- WHO Reproductive Health — who.int/health-topics/reproductive-health
- UNFPA Menstrual Health — unfpa.org
- Bedsider — bedsider.org — reproductive health in plain language
- PubMed — pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov — searchable medical research database

This resource guide was developed by the Her Impact Initiative. For more information or to share your story, contact us.