



Becoming a Savvy News Consumer

Living in a world of 24/7 news and social media may make it more difficult to determine the actual facts about an event. Fast-moving crisis situations are particularly prone to generating misinformation, such as rumors, inaccuracies, and theories or speculation.

When you first learn about a news event, keep these points in mind:

- **Consider the source.** Is the information coming from a reputable news outlet or verifiable source? If you are watching an interview or speech, has the person provided supporting facts to back their assertions?
- **Acknowledge your biases.** Your personal political and social preferences may influence how you react to a news story. Before responding with outrage, learn as many facts as you can.
- **Check the date.** If you are reading an older news story or post, search for follow-up stories to learn whether or how the situation has been resolved.
- **Read past the headline.** Often, headlines are written to attract attention or focus on the worst-case scenario. Read the story in full to learn the actual facts.
- **Confirm using multiple sources.** It's a good idea to visit at least two or three different outlets to verify facts and compare details.
- **Research the issues.** Complex world events are difficult to understand from soundbites and social media posts. Commit to learning about the subject in more detail.
- **Beware of parodies.** Parody news and social media accounts are sometimes mistaken for legitimate sources. Watch out for "deepfakes" (digitally manipulated media) as well.
- **Set limits.** Too much time on news or social media sites can be stressful. If you are feeling overwhelmed, step away and engage in a relaxing activity for a while.



A constant diet of bad news may leave you feeling stressed or anxious. LifeMatters can help you cope with your feelings and set healthy boundaries.

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