

The Informed Health Consumer: Making Sense of Evidence

How do you understand whether health evidence is likely to be reliable or not? Find out in this free online course.



FREE online course

Duration: 4 weeks

3 hours pw

Certificates available

Join now - starts 7 Sep

ABOUT THE COURSE

Every day we read or hear about new health research that looks at what might help or harm, limit or extend our lives. Health research is big business and over a million papers are now published annually on health-related topics. So how do we find the evidence we need and, much more important, how do we judge how good that evidence is?

Over four weeks, this free online course will:

- look at the factors that affect the reliability of evidence;
- provide practical help on how to find the best evidence;
- improve your understanding of the terminology of health research;
- and give you some simple tools to help judge whether you can believe it.

The issues raised in the course are examined in a series of weekly case studies which provide a framework to discuss wider issues with health research. Topics include the Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR) vaccine, severe hyperemesis gravidarum (pregnancy-related vomiting) and the impact of dehydration on our ability to function.

As part of the course, we want to develop a freely - available resource bank that points people to sources of good evidence throughout the world. As a learner, you will be asked to get involved in this, by identifying the best evidence-based health resources in your country and acting as a quality checker.

The team of educators on the course come from a range of disciplines, including health, social sciences and journalism, and teach courses at all levels on how to understand research and use it effectively.

REQUIREMENTS

This course could be helpful to a wide range of people:

- you may have a general interest in the topic and want to improve your knowledge;
- you, a member of your family or a friend may have a medical condition, so you want to get a clear picture of the evidence for various treatment or management options;
- you are considering studying a health-related subject at university;
- or you may be asked to be involved as a lay (non-expert) member of a research committee or advisory panel.

However, the only requirement is having an interest in the topic. So if you want to understand why not all evidence is good evidence, and to learn how to tell the difference between good and bad, this course is for you.

Get a personalised, printed certificate

You can buy a **Statement of Participation** for this course - a personalised, printed certificate to show that you've taken part.

Join the conversation on social media

Use the hashtag **#FLinformedhealth** to join and contribute to social media conversations about this course.