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The Importance of Detecting and Combating Fake News About Diabetes.



The importance of detecting and combating fake news about diabetes

In recent times, our society is subjected, at all levels, to the dissemination of erroneous, misleading, and malicious information, also known as fake news or hoaxes, which circulate easily on social networks, forums, and websites of dubious origin. Although the political class is the one that is promoting them the most, this threatening information-

nal practice has spread across all levels, with particular significance in the field of health, where people's lives can even be in danger, as we can all remember during the COVID-19 pandemic or recently with the Valencia floods. Fake alerts, manipulated scientific studies, or the discrediting of science have been put at the service of hidden interests.

Diabetes is not immune to this informational reality. These falsehoods not only misinform, but can also risk the health and well-being of those with diabetes and their families who lack the training to distinguish false information from true.

The ability to detect and debunk these hoaxes is crucial in an environment where information flows rapidly and algorithms tend to prioritize sensational or viral content. In this article, we will address why it is vital to combat these fake news, explore some of the most common examples, and offer answers based on scientific evidence to dismantle myths that can have serious consequences.

VULNERABILITY TO HOAXES

Diabetes, like many other chronic conditions, is fertile ground for fake news for several reasons. First, a diabetes diagnosis can generate fear and anxiety, leading people to seek quick answers and miraculous solutions. It is a pathology based on information, data, and its management. This emotional need can be exploited by those who spread misinformation, whether for economic gain or simply out of ignorance.

Furthermore, the technical language and complexity of diabetes management make it difficult for patients and their families to fully understand the disease, making them more susceptible to believing in myths or unproven remedies.

Finally, the proliferation of social networks allows hoaxes to spread at an unprecedented speed, reaching millions of people in a matter of minutes. And it's curious, because the most bombastic diseases are the ones that move most quickly through the digital sphere, which leads me to think that responsibility is shared. That is, we should not only point to the creator of the false information, but also to those who share it and help spread it.

FREQUENT HOAXES ABOUT DIABETES AND HOWTO DEBUNK THEM

"Diabetes can be cured with a miracle diet or natural supplements"

This is one of the most widespread hoaxes, particularly on social media and pseudoscience sites. In fact, anything related to the cure for diabetes always goes viral, both the positive and the negative. This type of information mainly promotes extreme diets or "natural" supplements that supposedly regenerate the pancreas and cure diabetes.

Currently, there is no cure for diabetes, either type 1 or type 2. Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease that requires lifelong insulin treatment. In the case of type 2 diabetes, proper diet management, physical exercise, and, in many cases, medication, can help control blood glucose levels, but will not eliminate the disease. Unregulated supplements, in addition to being ineffective, can be dangerous. Some people have re-

ported serious side effects, such as kidney damage or interactions with antidiabetic medications. The only way to address diabetes safely is to follow a personalized plan indicated by health care professionals.

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La DGT no ha publicado un nuevo listado de enfermedades que impedirán renovar el carnet a partir de 2025.

Fuentes de la DGT señalan que es falso y que los criterios psicofísicos para tener ese permiso no han cambiado recientemente.



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Fuentes de la DGT señalan que el listado es falso y que los criterios psicofísicos se especifican en el Reglamento General de Conductores.

"The Spanish Traffic Authority (DGT) will prohibit celiacs and diabetics from driving"

This is undoubtedly the most current hoax. It is dated last September. Taking advantage of an update that the DGT made on access to a driver's license, a list of diseases was published that, as of 2025, would mean a driving ban if the person had any of those conditions.

Such was the stir on social networks and the denunciation of many groups that the DGT itself was forced to issue a statement in which it had to deny that the psychophysical criteria for obtaining a license would change.

"Wireless radiation alters glucose levels"

Some hoaxes claim a supposed specific consequence of wireless radiation and other magnetic fields: that they are clearly »

DIABETES, LIKE MANY OTHER CHRONIC CONDITIONS, IS FERTILE GROUND FOR FAKE NEWS FOR SEVERAL REASONS. FIRST, A DIABETES DIAGNOSIS CAN GENERATE FEAR AND ANXIETY, LEADING PEOPLE TO SEEK QUICK ANSWERS AND MIRACULOUS SOLUTIONS



 **_despertarmental_ • Seguir** ...

 **_despertarmental_ PROBLEMA DE SALUD POR LAS RADIOFRECUENCIAS.**

La Dra. Sharon Goldberg expone que las ondas electro magnéticas 5G, EMF, tienen un vínculo claro con la diabetes

La radiación inalámbrica tiene efectos biológicos. Esto ya no es un tema de debate cuando se busca en la biblioteca medica. PubMed y la literatura revisada por pares. Estos efectos se ven en todas las formas de vida: plantas, animales, insectos, microbios. En humanos ya hay evidencia clara de cáncer, daño en el ADN, cardiomiopatía, insuficiencia cardíaca congestiva y efectos

» associated with high blood sugar and diabetes and that “the closer you live to a cell phone tower, the higher your blood glucose level will be.”

Scientific reality states that there are no studies that demonstrate this supposed consequence of radiation exposure. Among the documents provided as supposed evidence is this article (<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28524704/>) published in 2017 in the journal *Electromagnetic Biology and Medicine*. However, that document refers to and draws conclusions from a single isolated case, the diagnosis of a single person, which cannot be extrapolated to the entire population.

“Insulin causes dependence or is dangerous in the long term”

Another classic hoax takes insulin hostage, forgetting its necessity for the survival of people with diabetes. This hoax or fake news can lead people with type 1 or type 2 diabetes to avoid using insulin, even when it is medically necessary, which undoubtedly endangers the lives of people with type 1 diabetes, and in some cases people with type 2 diabetes.

Scientific reality tells us that insulin is an essential treatment for people with type 1 diabetes and, in many cases, also for those who live with type 2 diabetes. It is not addictive or creates dependence in the negative sense of the word. Rather, it is a hormone that the body needs to regulate blood glucose levels. Not using insulin when needed can result in serious complications, such as diabetic ketoacidosis or irreversible damage to vital organs. Side effects associated with insulin use (such as hypoglycemia) can be properly managed with diabetes education and medical monitoring.

“Is it true that vaccines have components that cause obesity and diabetes?”

In this salad of fake and unscientific communications, the anti-vaccine movements, characterized by their production of fake news, could not be missing. One of the WhatsApp chains that circulates without consent through our devices claims that if children are vaccinated within the first 6 years of life, they receive a large number of substances that can be harmful to their health. The viral message consists of a list of these compounds, 25 in total (and other supposed “chemical residues”), preceded by the amounts in which »

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT TREATMENTS, DIETS, OR DRUGS, THE BEST THING TO DO IS TO SPEAK DIRECTLY WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR A DIABETES EDUCATOR, THEY WILL BE INFORMED AND RESOLVE OUR DOUBTS

» they are administered and followed by the possible repercussions such as diabetes that, in theory, they suppose for the vaccinated child.

Scientists assure that vaccines have not been shown to have any harmful effect on people's health, being considered by numerous international organizations as a safe element, and far from having any relationship with the development of diabetes.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM FAKE NEWS

The only way to deal with this incessant factory of false news is not to look for the messenger and sanction him, or to deny one by one. That is an impossible mission in my opinion. I believe that the basis is to educate and prepare our society on how to deal with news related to their health.

First, identify and consult reliable sources. It is essential to seek information on sites backed by health professionals, such as medical societies, universities, or scientific publications.

Secondly, I would recommend always using scientific evidence. Well-designed studies, published in specialized journals, are a reliable source of information. Distrust extraordinary claims without scientific backing.

Something that the media themselves have forgotten, but that we as citizens must avoid, is sensationalism. If a news story seems too good to be true, be wary. Miracle treatments often lack scientific basis.

Another saying of the old school of journalism is to consult and contrast information, in this case with health professionals. If you have any questions about treatments, diets, or medications, it is always best to speak directly with your doctor or a diabetes educator, they will be informed and resolve our doubts.

And finally, although it is very attractive to gain followers on our social accounts, let's act responsibly and not share information that we do not have absolute certainty that it is true. The idea that a reality does not spoil a good headline is outdated. **D**

CONCLUSION

The fight against fake news is not only the responsibility of digital platforms or governments; it also requires the commitment of health professionals, educational institutions, and society in general from each and every one of us.

Diabetes education programs should include specific modules on how to identify misinformation and empower patients to be critical consumers of content. In addition, social media campaigns, backed by official entities, can counteract the most common hoaxes and reach wide audiences.

Detecting and combating fake news about diabetes is essential to protect public health and ensure that people with diabetes can make informed decisions about their care. Hoaxes not only misinform, but also generate fear, stigma and, in some cases, serious health risks.

In a world where information spreads at great speed, critical thinking and access to reliable sources are our best tools to defend ourselves from misinformation. Education, scientific dissemination and collective commitment are key to stopping the spread of these myths and building a safer environment for those who live with this disease