

SCROLLING FOR ANSWERS? SPOTTING HEALTH MISINFORMATION



ROSA LEGENO-BELL

**Engagement Manager at the
Patient Information Forum (PIF)**

PIF: who are we?

- **A membership organisation for health information creators.**
We work with charities, the NHS, health companies and individuals who create health information for the public.
- **We run the PIF TICK**, the quality mark for health information in the UK. If an organisation or person is PIF TICK-certified, it shows that their health information is based on evidence and is easy to understand.
- **Crohn's & Colitis UK have been PIF TICK-certified since 2022**



PIF: what are we working towards?

Our vision is that **everyone** can easily find health information they can **trust** and **understand** to **help them make decisions** about their health and care

In this session

- Why some people are using new ways to search for health information, and where they are looking
- What misinformation is and how it is affecting people
- What the PIF TICK is and how you can use it to help you know which information you can trust online
- How to see past scary headlines in the news
- How to judge which online health information you can trust through case studies on health influencers and AI summaries and chatbots
- A toolkit for recognising and judging online misinformation
- Hearing from Holly '@stomababe' Fleet

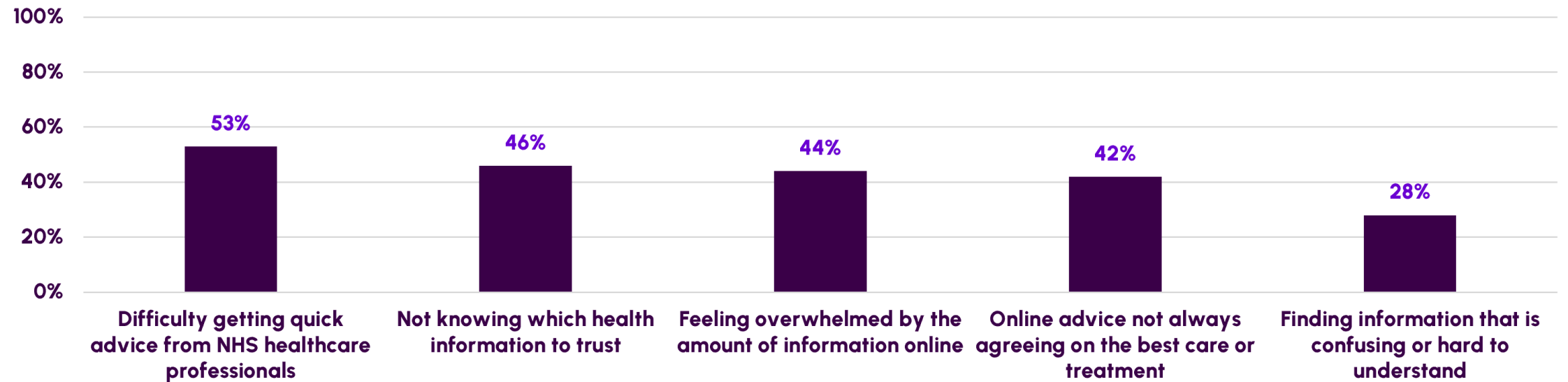
Note: this webinar is a supportive, non-judgmental, open platform for people to learn and share their experiences

Useful definitions

- **Misinformation:** health information that is wrong or misleading, but created or shared by someone who **believes it is true**
- **Disinformation:** health information that is wrong or misleading, and created or shared **on purpose to mislead people**
- **Trusted health information:** health information that is based on recent evidence and is easy to understand. It should be checked by qualified health professionals and reviewed regularly.
- **Influencer:** a person who has a large following on social media. They are often seen as experts or trusted figures in a specific area, and this can give them a lot of power to shape their audience's opinions and purchasing decisions.

Your experience

WHAT ARE YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES WHEN IT COMES TO FINDING TRUSTED HEALTH INFORMATION?



What happens when people cannot easily find the information they need?



Not all health information is created equal

Not all health information is created with the same level of **evidence**, **review** or **safety checks**.



What is the problem?

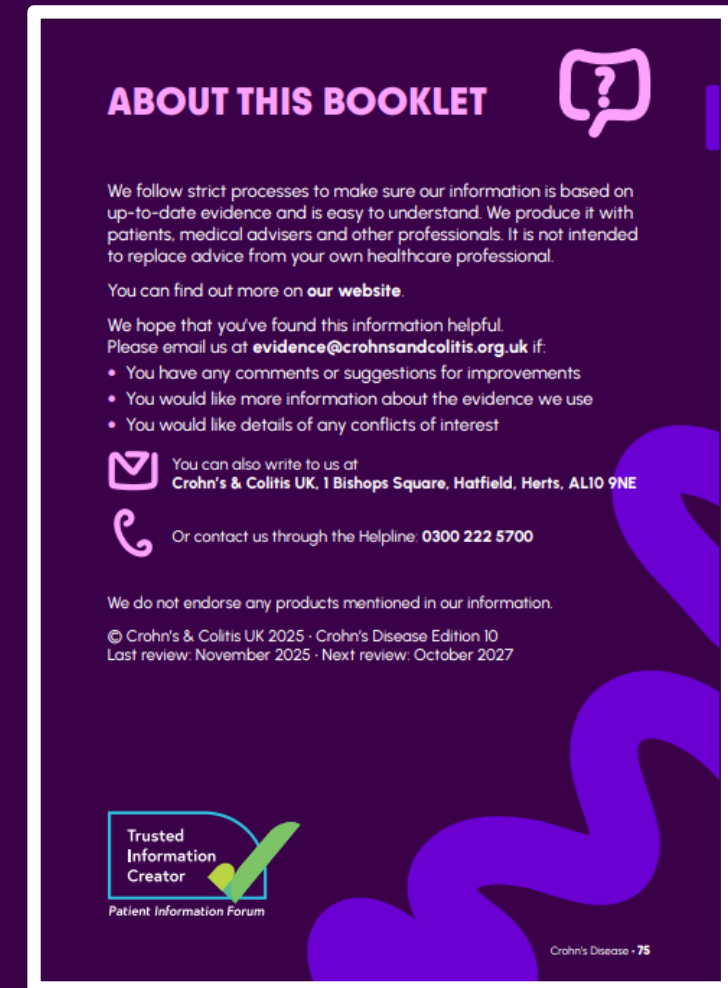


1 in 10 people have been harmed by health misinformation. This increases to **1 in 5 people from ethnic minorities.**

piftick.org.uk/film

The PIF TICK: the trust mark for health information

- Shows the health information you are looking at has been checked and is **trustworthy**
- To gain the PIF TICK, creators must show their information production process meet **10 key steps**
- It helps people who create health information make sure all their information is **based on recent evidence** and is **easy for people to understand**
- More than 160 organisations and individuals across the UK have the PIF TICK, including charities like Crohn's & Colitis UK, NHS organisations and health companies

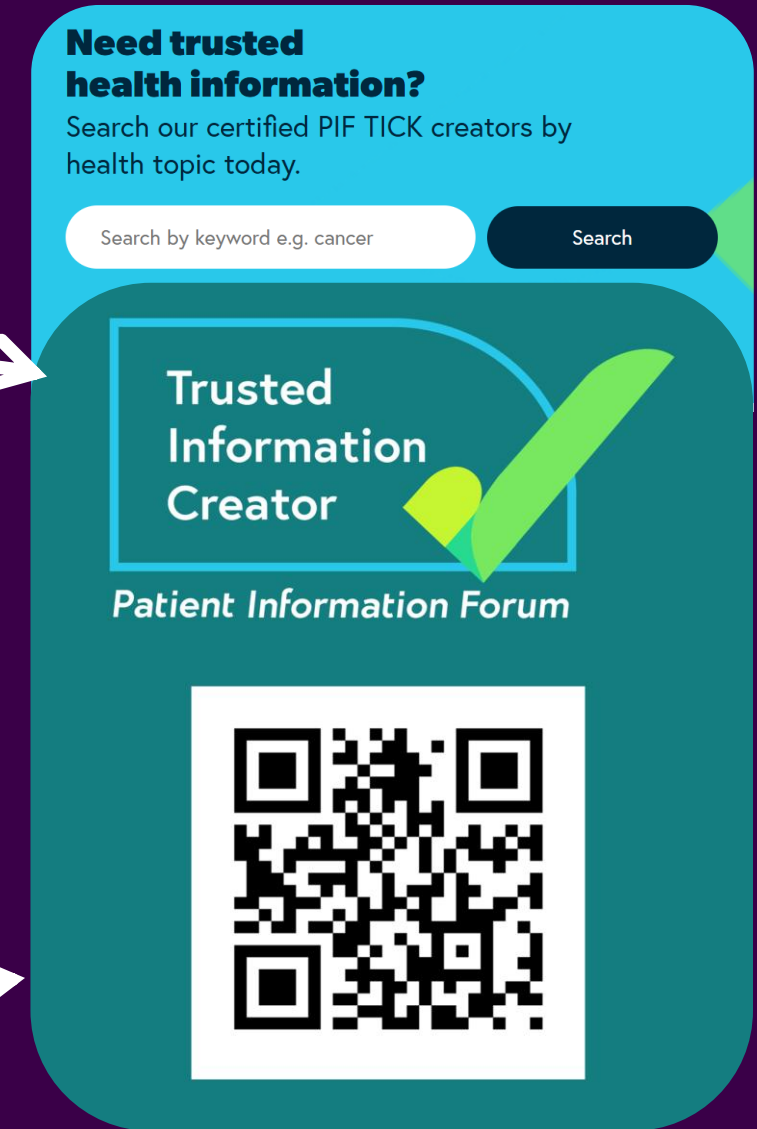


The PIF TICK: the trust mark for health information

When you see this symbol on a website, leaflet, app, or video, it means the health information has been **independently assessed** and proven to be **accurate, evidence-based**, and **easy to understand**

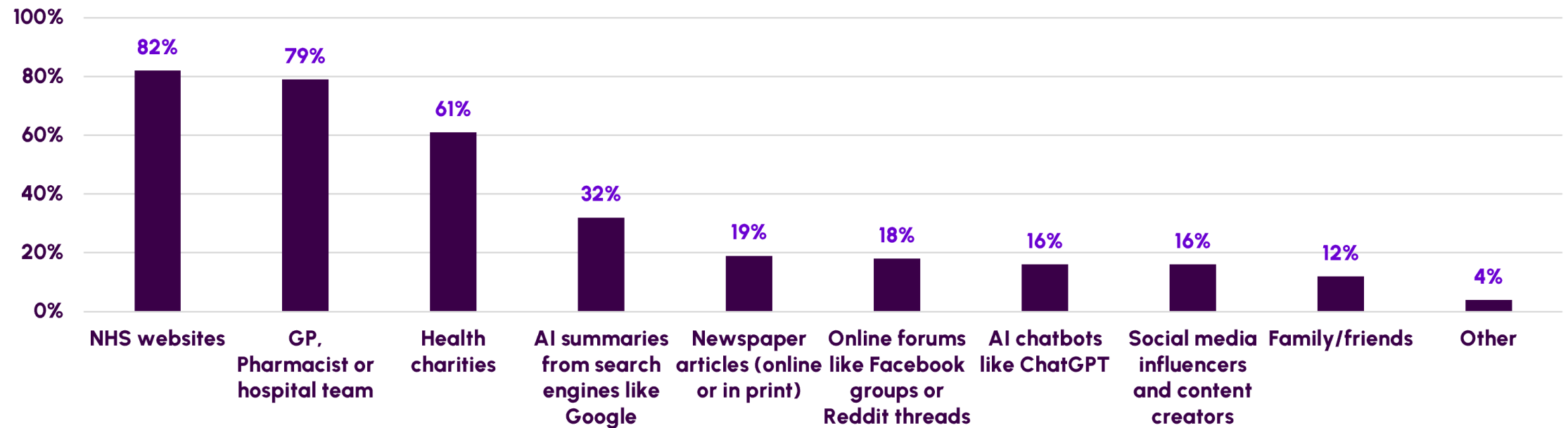
Scan the QR code to visit the PIF TICK website

You can search trusted health information and explore health collections on a range of topics



Your experience

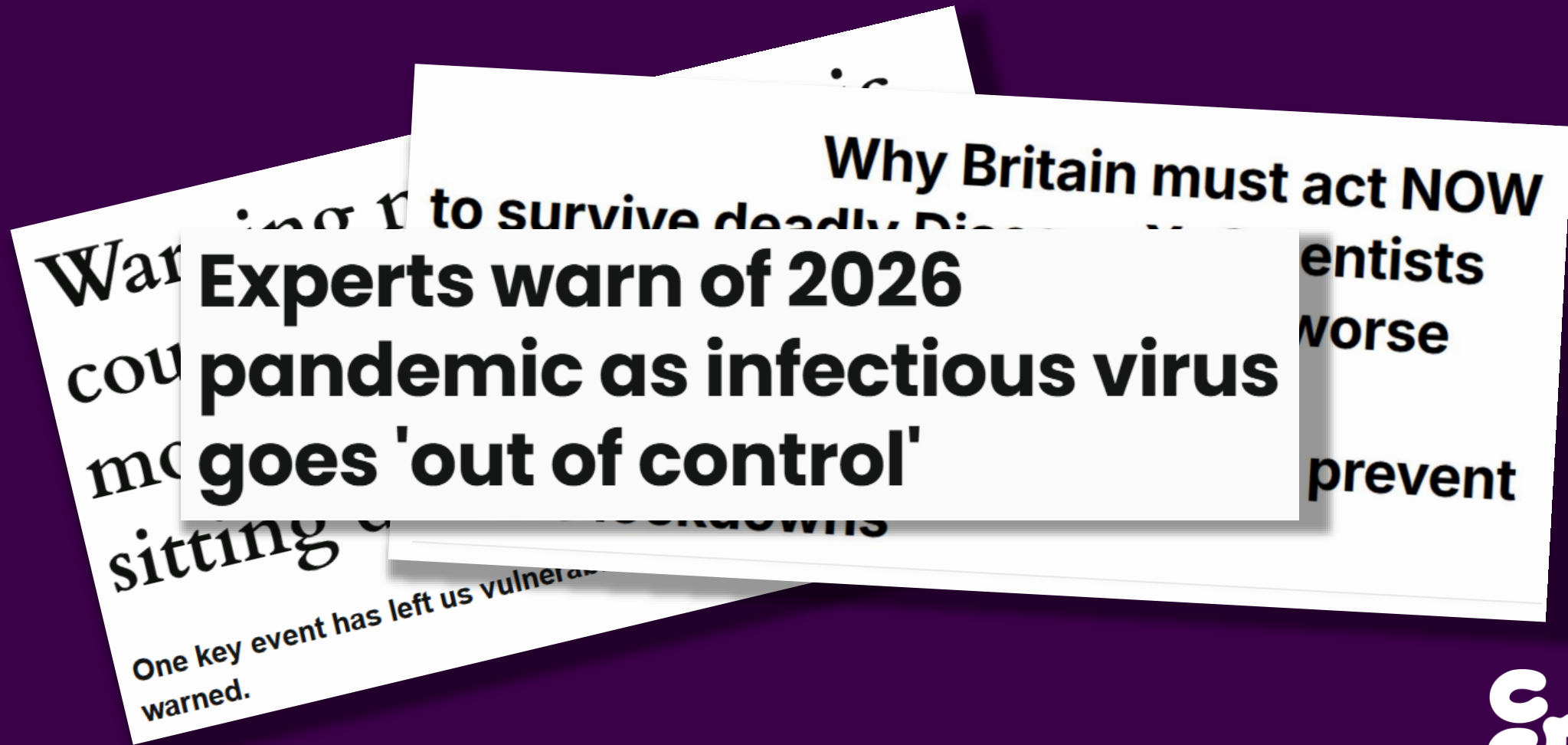
WHERE DO YOU USUALLY GET YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION?



How to beat the bots, interrogate the influencers and spot the scams



Mainstream news and health stories: looking beyond scary headlines





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13 May 2026

Trusted Voices: From research to headlines – understanding 'next pandemic' claims

Headlines about a “next pandemic” are common. But what people take from them is far less clear.





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9 April 2026

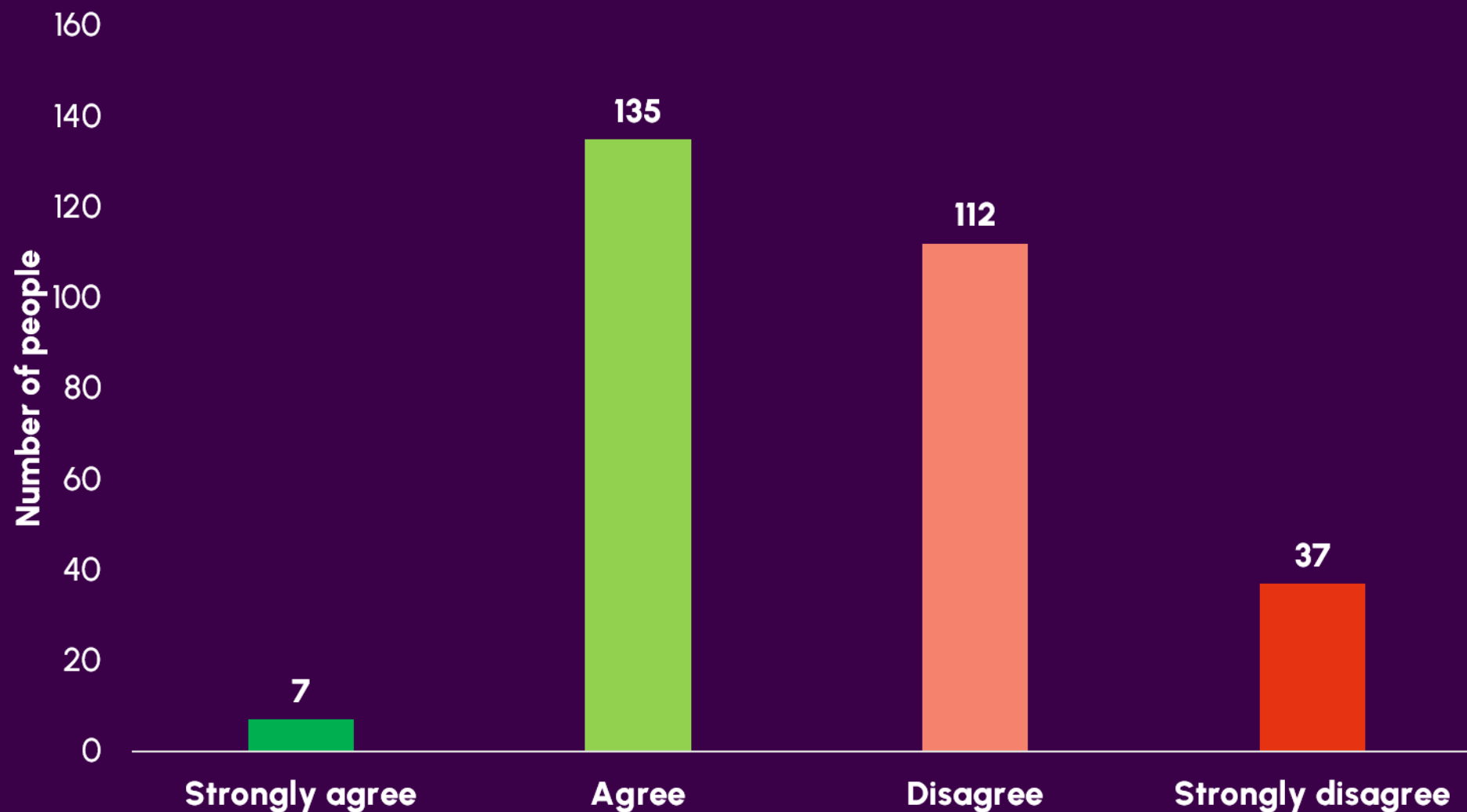
Trusted Voices: How bowel cancer risk in younger adults is being reported

Recent headlines have highlighted rising bowel cancer diagnoses in younger adults. But how risk is reported can shape how people understand their own health and when they seek help.



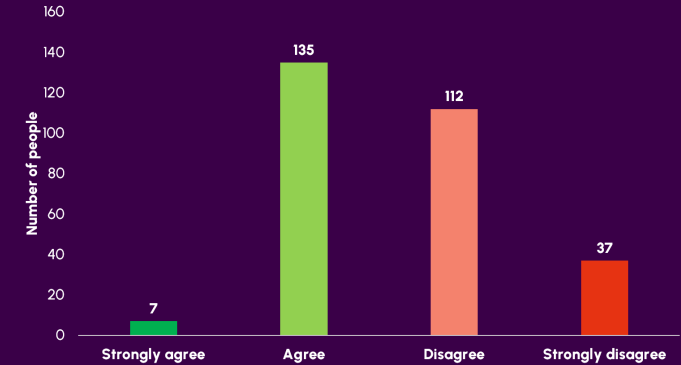
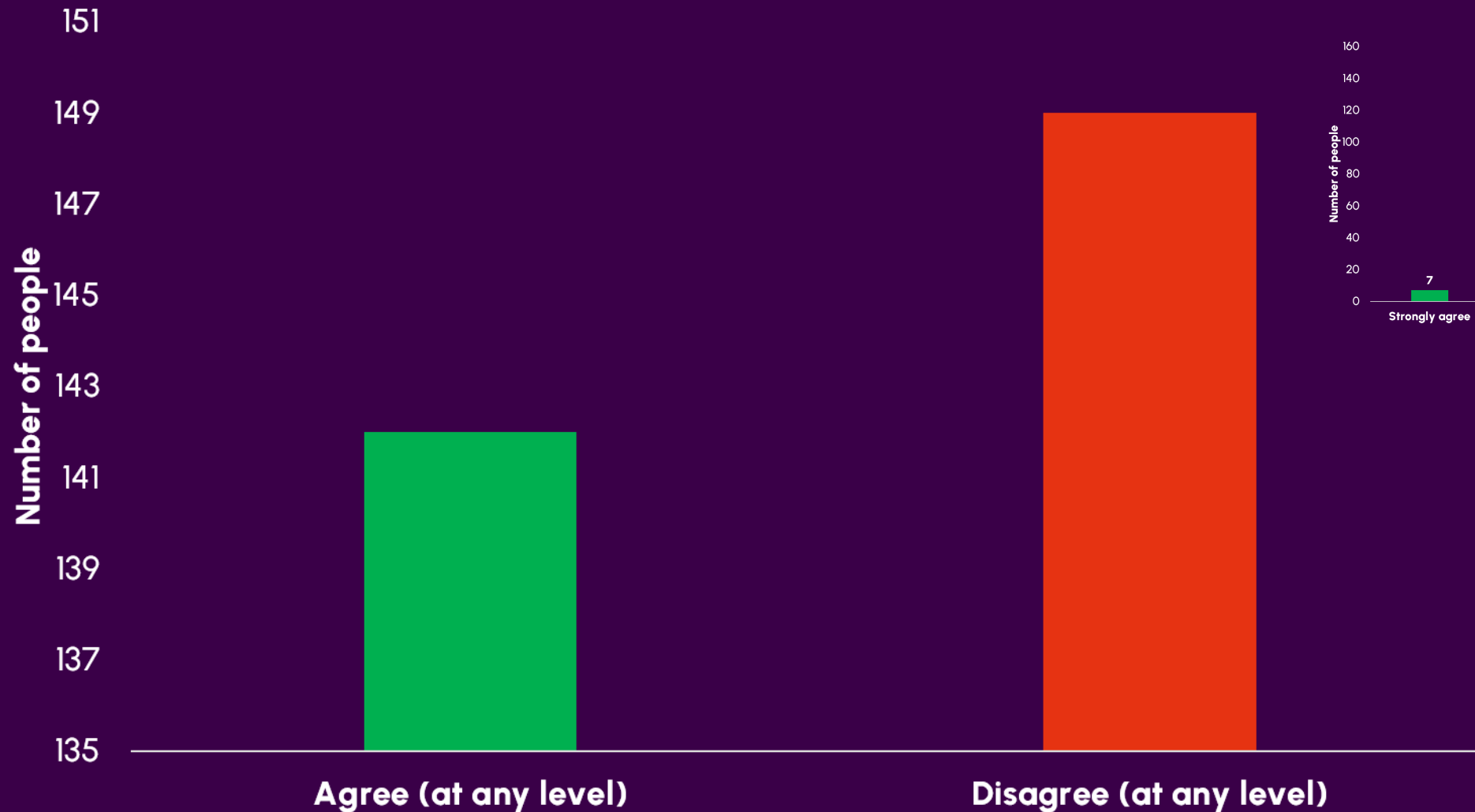
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How much do you agree with the sentence "I feel I have a good understanding of the relationship between IBD and fatigue"?

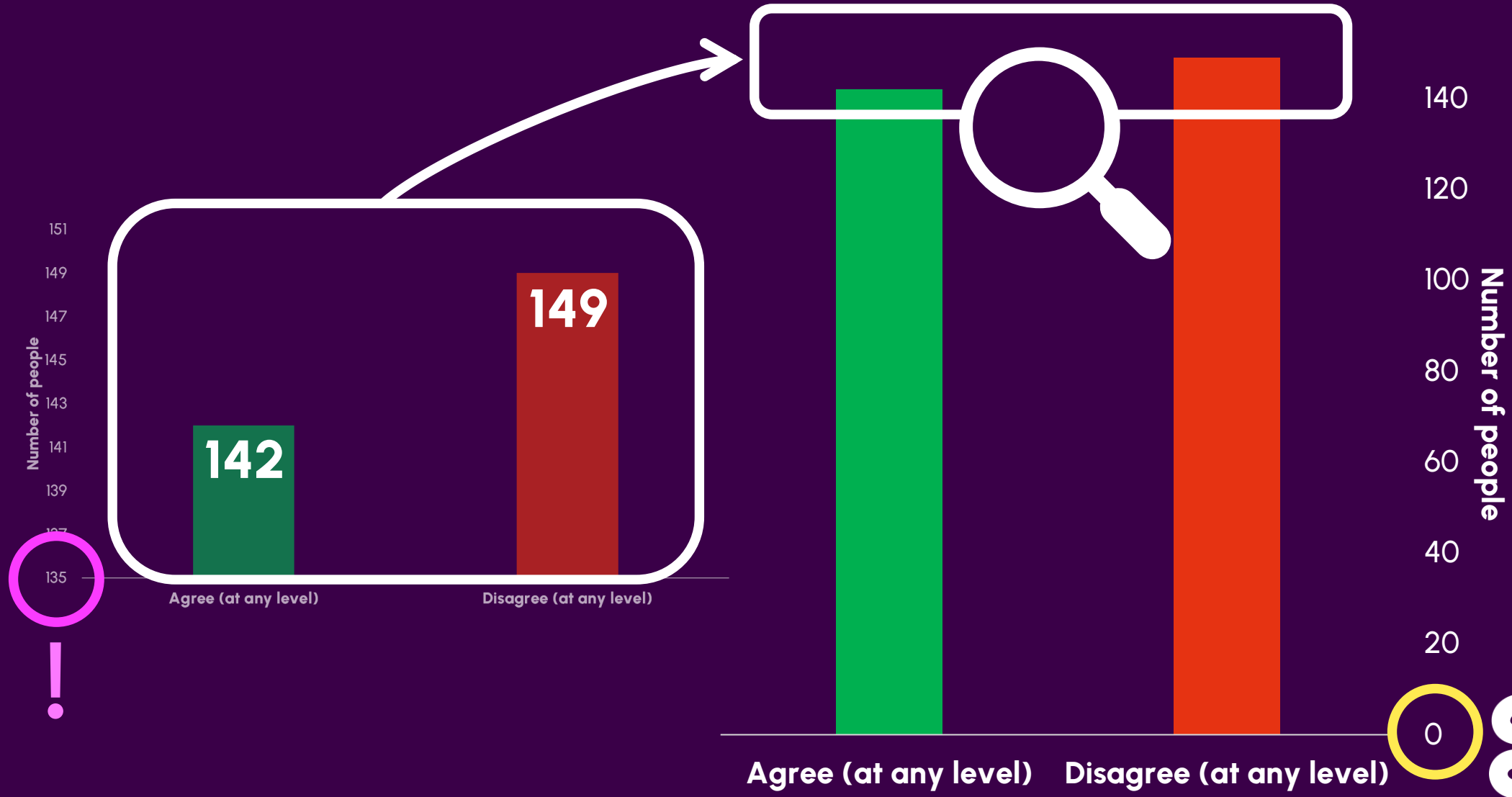


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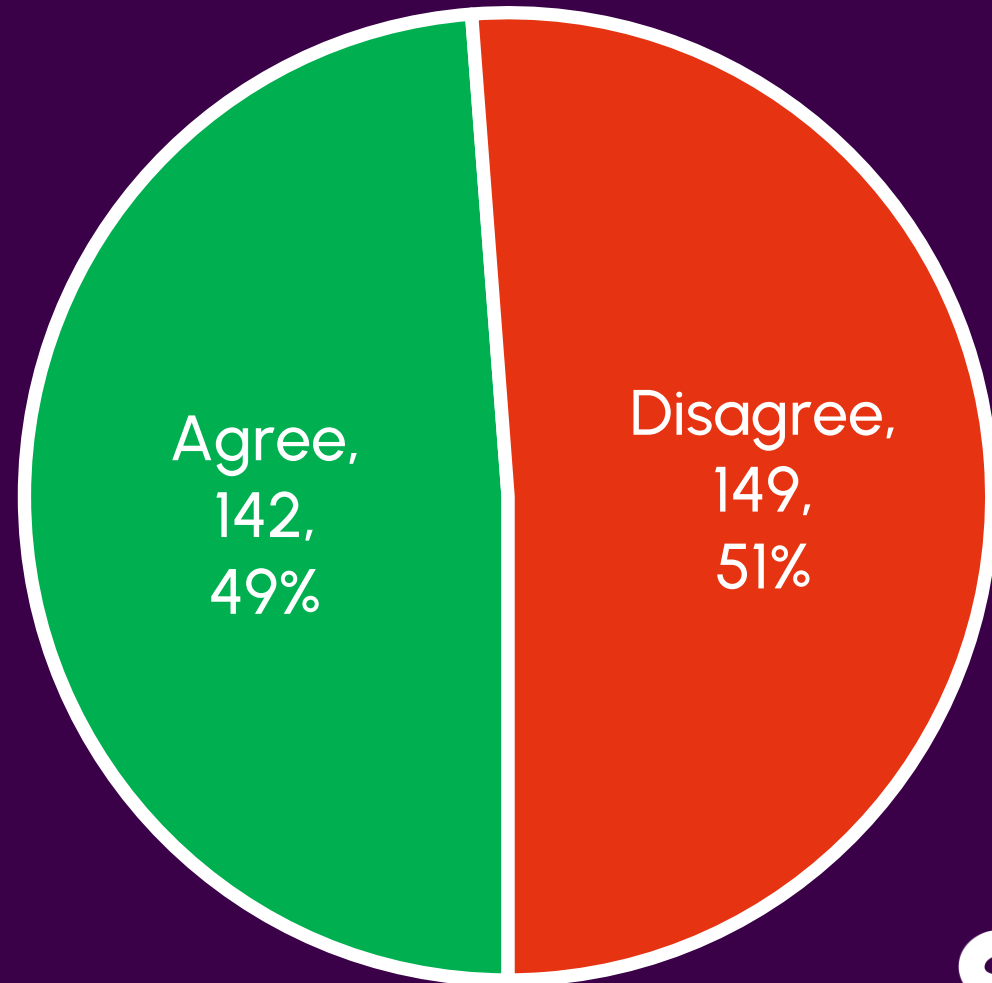
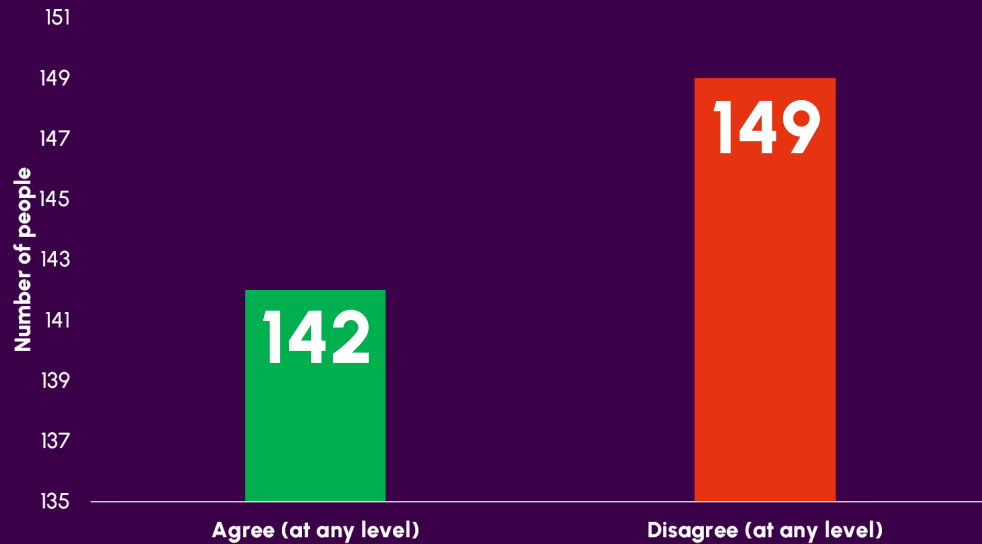


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How much do you agree with the sentence "I feel I have a good understanding of the relationship between IBD and fatigue"?



Health influencers: how to question, check and trust online advice



YouTube

GB

Search

Sign in

Dr. Ben Harding

FIGS

0:32 / 9:47

CC

What they won't tell you about statins

Dr Ben Harding

271K subscribers

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77

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149K views · 3 weeks ago

Statins are one of the most commonly prescribed medications in the world. But the full story isn't as simple as you've been told. In this video, Sports Medicine Physician Dr Ben... ..more

THE TRUTH ABOUT CHOLESTEROL

9:15

The truth about cholesterol

Dr Ben Harding

188K views · 1 month ago

STATINS: FRIEND OR FOE?

8:47

Statins: friend or foe?

Dr Ben Harding

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WHAT YOUR DOCTOR MIGHT NOT TELL YOU ABOUT HEART DISEASE

10:02

What your doctor might not tell you about heart disease

Dr Ben Harding

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5 SUPPLEMENTS THAT ARE ACTUALLY WORTH TAKING

7:59

5 supplements that are actually worth taking

Dr Ben Harding

172K views · 1 month ago

5 SIGNS YOUR HEART MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE

7:21

5 signs your heart might be in trouble

Dr Ben Harding

156K views · 2 weeks ago

THE TRUTH ABOUT ASPIRIN

6:36

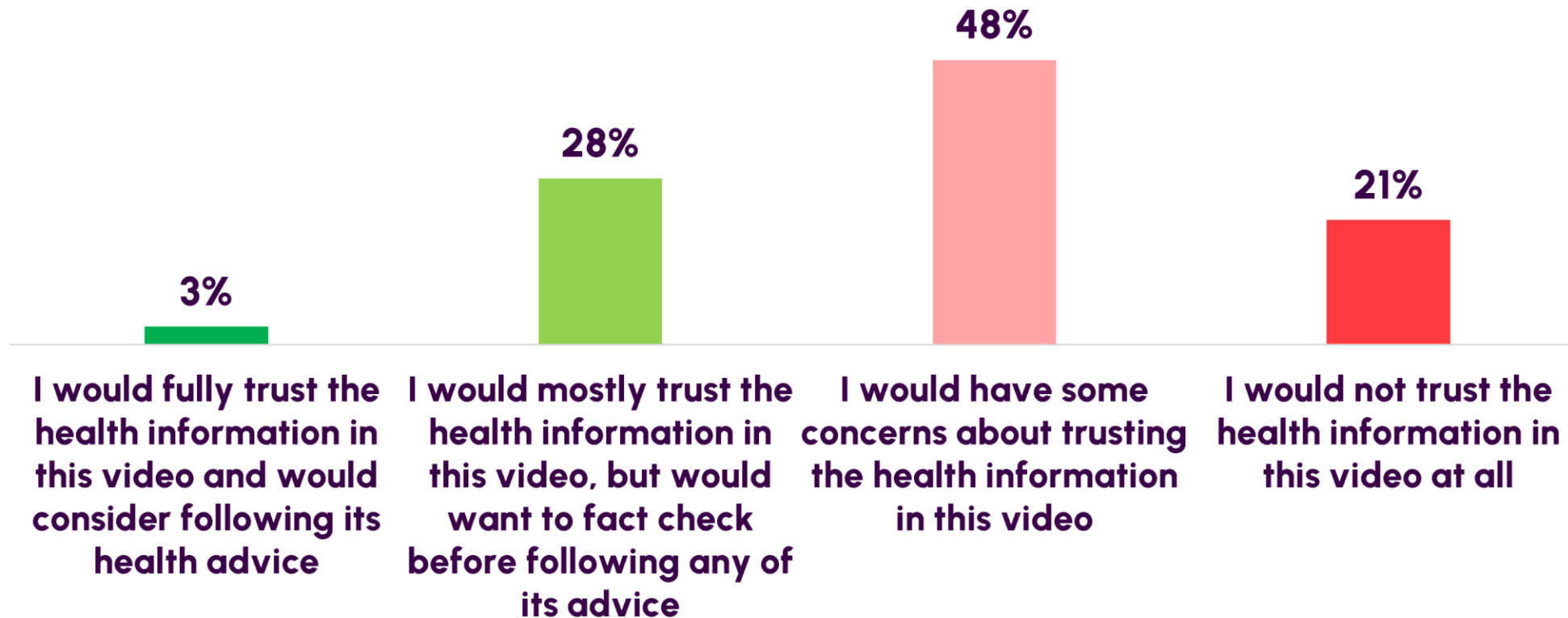
The truth about aspirin

Dr Ben Harding

95K views · 1 month ago

Patient Information Forum

**BASED ON THIS SCREENSHOT FROM DR BEN HARDING'S
YOUTUBE VIDEO, HOW TRUSTWORTHY DO YOU THINK THE
HEALTH INFORMATION HE'S SHARING IS?**



Information about Dr Ben Harding from his YouTube page

Do these things make you trust the content more, make you question the content more, or a bit of both?

1

MEDICAL DEGREE WITH HONOURS



He is a qualified medical doctor and graduated with honours

2

SPORTS MEDICINE PHYSICIAN



He is a specialist sports medicine physician

3

FOUNDER OF 'THE LOW-CARB METHOD'



He founded a company called 'The Low-Carb Method'

4

DONATION REQUESTS



He asks viewers to support his work by donating to his Patreon

5

PROFESSIONAL-LOOKING VIDEOS



His videos are well-produced with clear sound and good visuals

6

MENTIONS SCIENTIFIC LITERATURE



He often talks about and refers to scientific studies

7

NOT A CARDIOLOGIST



He is not a cardiologist or specialist in cardiovascular medicine and heart disease

8

USES STRONG LANGUAGE



He often uses phrases like "the truth about" and "they don't want you to know..."

9

LARGE FOLLOWING ON YOUTUBE



He has 271k subscribers and his videos get tens of thousands of likes

10

SHARES PATIENT SUCCESS STORIES



He shares stories from people who say his approach has helped them

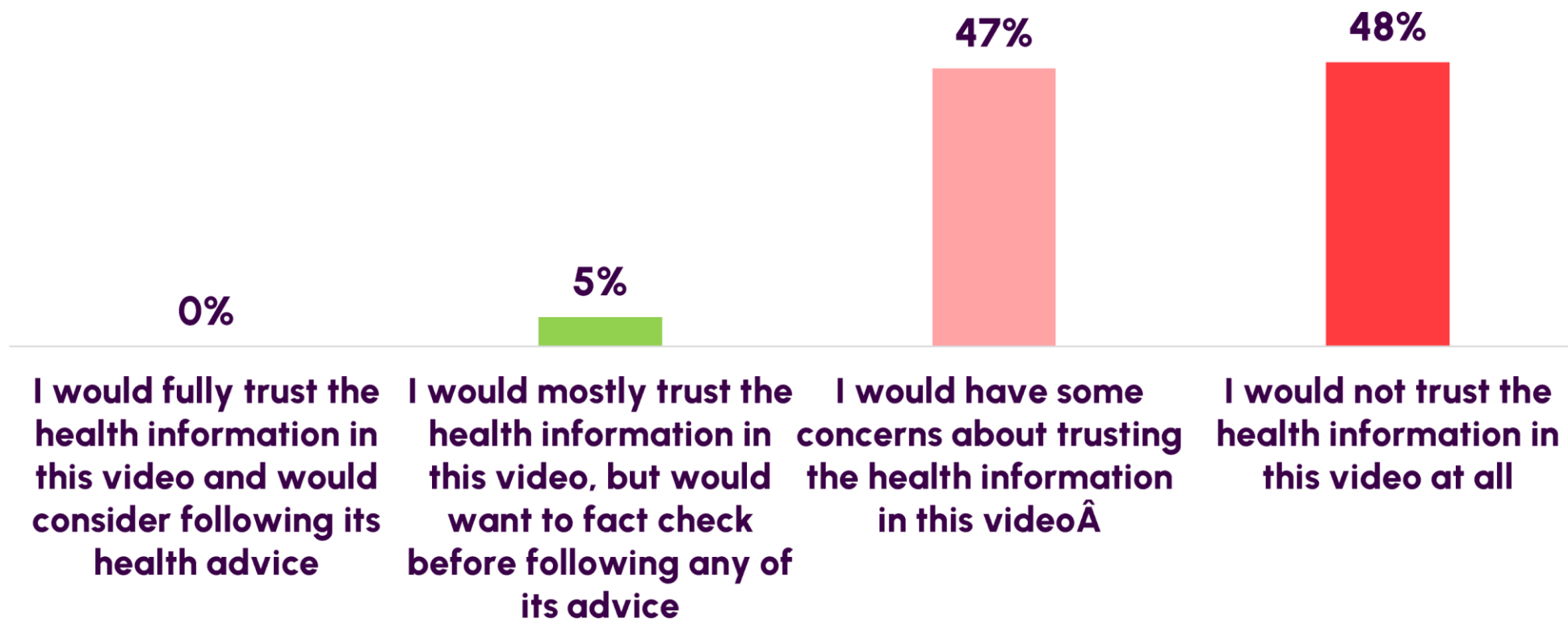
11

NO DIRECT CITATIONS SHOWN ON SCREEN



He doesn't usually show the full studies or provide links

HAVING SEEN THE EXTRA INFORMATION ON THE PREVIOUS SLIDE, HOW TRUSTWORTHY DO YOU NOW THINK THE HEALTH INFORMATION HE'S SHARING IS?



✓ INCREASES TRUST

Makes me trust this information more

! DECREASES TRUST

Makes me question this information more

⇄ BOTH

Increases trust but also raises some questions

≡ NEUTRAL

Doesn't tell me anything about the trustworthiness

1

MEDICAL DEGREE WITH HONOURS



He is a qualified medical doctor and graduated with honours

✓ INCREASES TRUST

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SPORTS MEDICINE PHYSICIAN



He is a specialist sports medicine physician

⇄ BOTH

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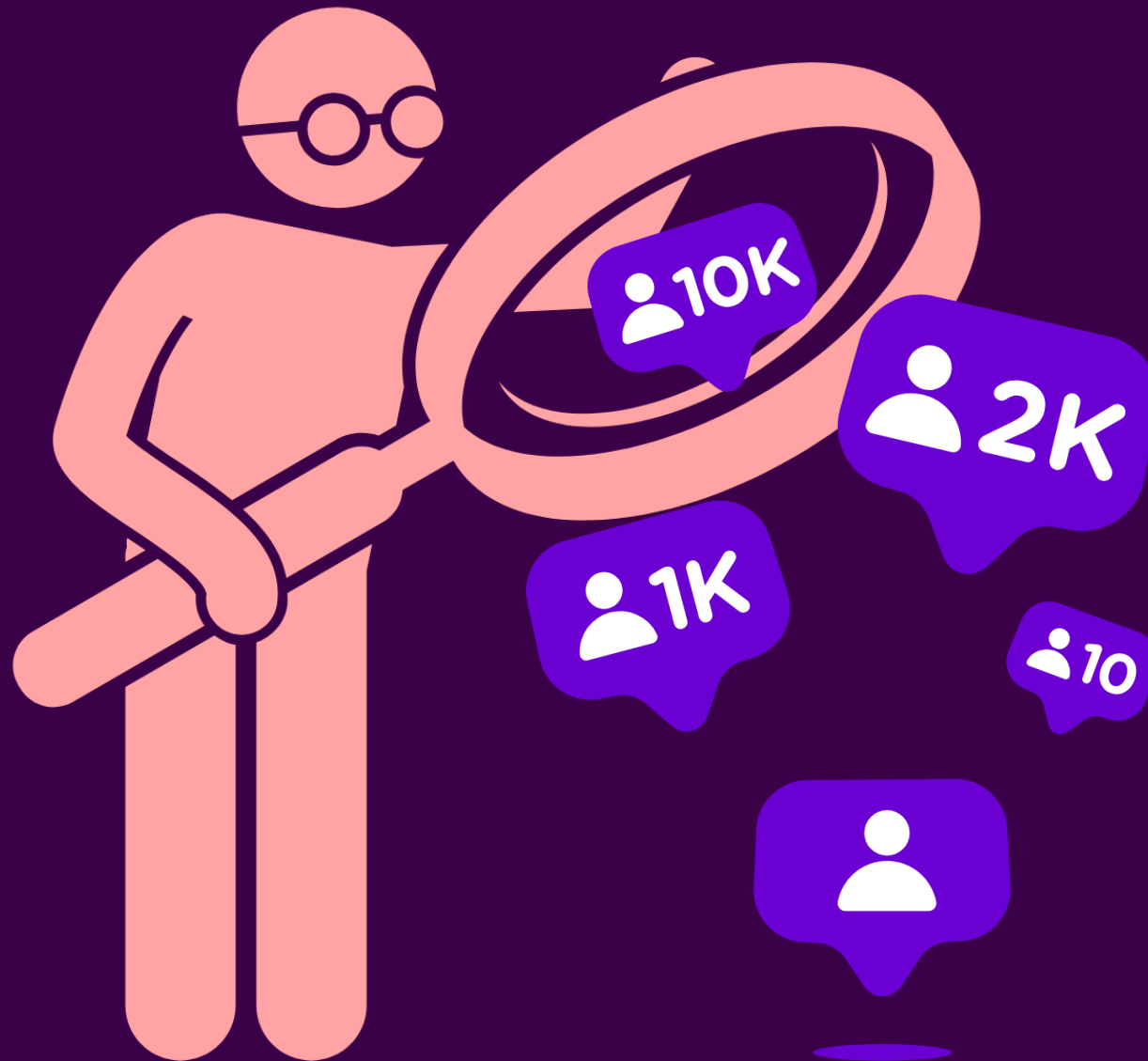
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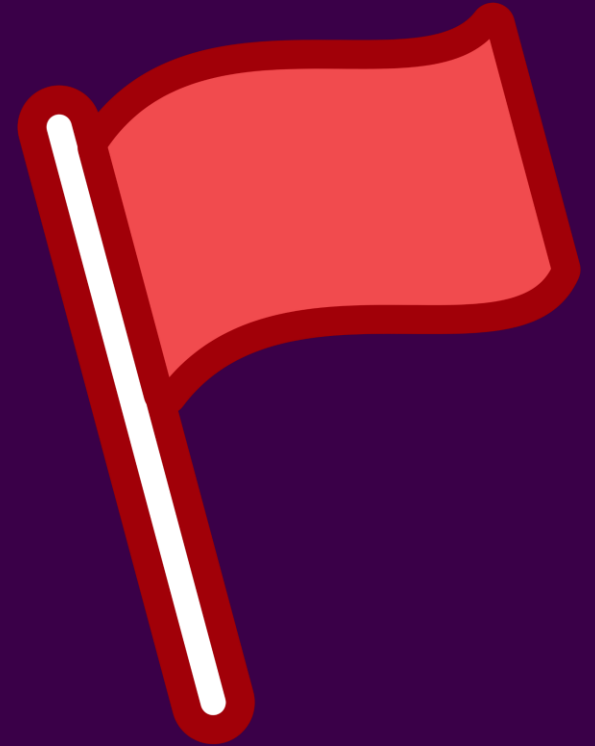
! DECREASES TRUST

Looking beyond follower counts and professional-looking content



Health information **RED FLAGS**

- Promises of quick fixes or miracle cures
- No evidence or sources
- Lots of selling or product promotion
- Hidden advertising or sponsorship
- Personal stories treated like medical facts
- No clear qualifications or expertise



Health information **GREEN FLAGS**

- Links to trusted organisations like the NHS or PIF
- Relevant experience or qualifications
- Knowledge of that health condition
- Evidence and trusted information
- Honest about risks and uncertainty
- Official healthcare registration





Doct

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For You



Doctor Azmain



Description

Fun & accessible health education | UK Doctor & Clinician Creator | 500K+ followers across social media @DoctorAzmain

💡 Hi, I'm Dr Azmain Chowdhury! I explain health simply, including news, tips, and quizzes. I'm passionate about global health and advocating for rare & chronic conditions.

🎓 EDUCATION: Medicine MBBS and BSc in Neuroscience with Medical Sciences from UCL | Medical Education MSc student

👤 COLLABS: NHS, WHO, UNICEF, UK Government, YouTube, TikTok, Meta, various health charities.

📺 AUTHOR: Mysteries of the Human Body

🏆 ACCREDITATION:

- YouTube Health shelf – "From a licensed doctor in the UK"
- TikTok Clinical Creator Council
- WHO Fides member
- PIF Tick accredited – "Trusted Information Creator"

📺 OTHER CHANNELS:

@DrAzmainTeaches – medical education for students and professionals.
@AzmainC – other interests, productivity & personal development.

🎵 HOBBIES: Music production, songwriting, chess, cryptic crosswords, anime, gaming

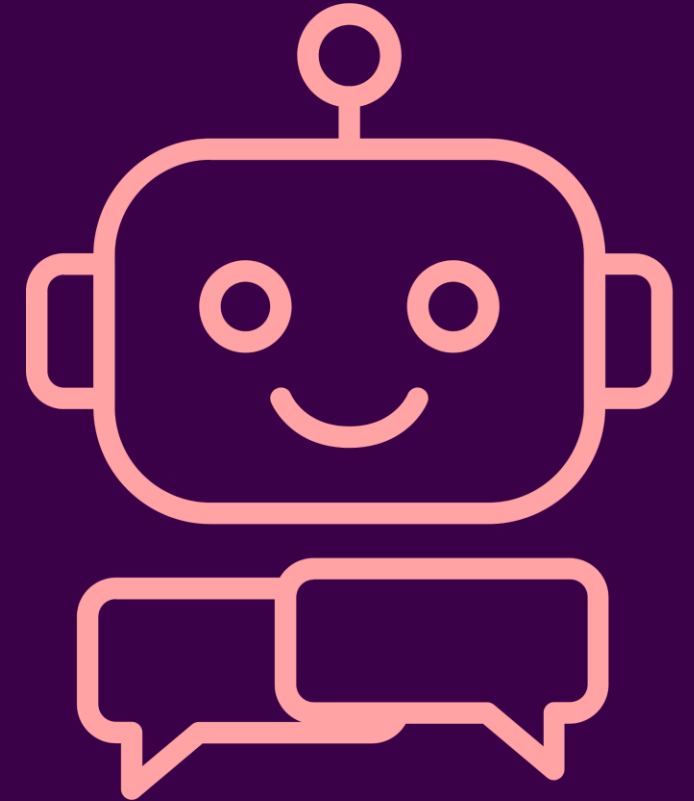
Stay groovy! 🥳



HOLLY FLEET

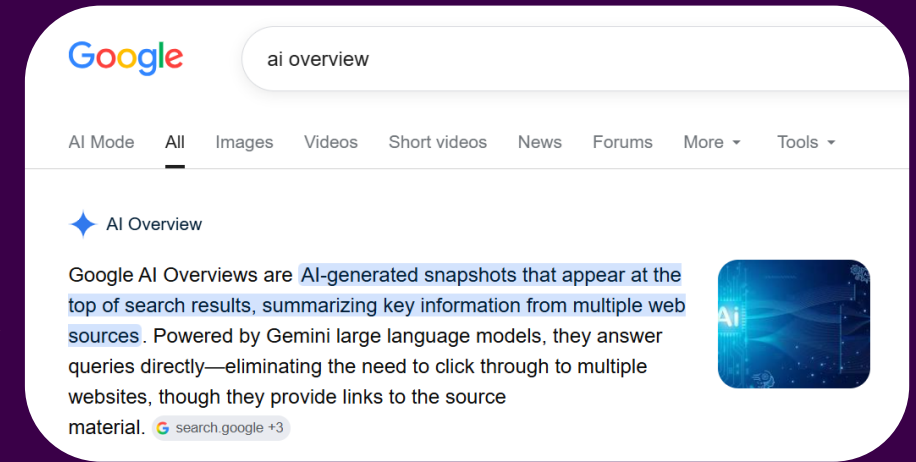
@STOMABABE

**Can I trust AI
overviews and AI
chatbots for online
health searches?**



What are AI overviews, and what is the situation in 2026?

- People ask Google Search **more than a billion health questions every day**
- According to Ofcom, just over **5 in 10 adults say they use AI tools**, compared to 3 in 10 last year
- Almost 8 in 10 people read AI-generated search summaries at least sometimes
- **The number of ChatGPT users in the UK more than doubled in a year**, rising from 6.5 million in September 2024 to 16 million by September 2025



AI for health information: **benefits**

- 7 in 10 patients who use AI for health information say it **saves them time** – helping them find information, prepare for appointments or understand a diagnosis
- 6 in 10 patients using AI for health information say it **helps them feel more informed** about their health and ask their doctor better questions
- **4 in 10 UK patients say AI will help them take a more active role in their health**

AI for health information: **problems**

AI summaries and chatbots can sometimes:

- Give **misleading** or **inaccurate** answers
- Share advice from other countries that **does not match NHS guidance**
- **Discourage people from seeking professional medical advice**
- Use information from forums like Reddit in their health answers, **even when it may not be reliable**

What do the stats tell us?

- 5 in 10 people say AI has made it harder to know which health information to trust online
- 7 in 10 doctors and healthcare staff say they have had to correct false health information written by AI
- 9 in 10 doctors and healthcare staff warn that people must still be involved in healthcare and health information as AI grows

AI summaries & chatbots: benefits, risks & fact-checking



Extract from the article:

Anna Jewell, the director of support, research and influencing at Pancreatic Cancer UK, said advising patients to avoid high-fat foods was "completely incorrect". Doing so "could be really dangerous and jeopardise a person's chances of being well enough to have treatment", she added.

Google

This article is more than 4 months old

Google AI Overviews put people at risk of harm with misleading health advice

Exclusive: Inaccurate information presented in summaries, Guardian investigation finds

Andrew Gregory Health editor

Fri 2 Jan 2026 17:00 GMT

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Prefer the Guardian on Google



The Guardian uncovered several cases of inaccurate health information in Google's AI Overviews. Photograph: Caia Image/Alamy



ChatGPT missing gynaecological cancers when asked about ‘red-flag’ symptoms

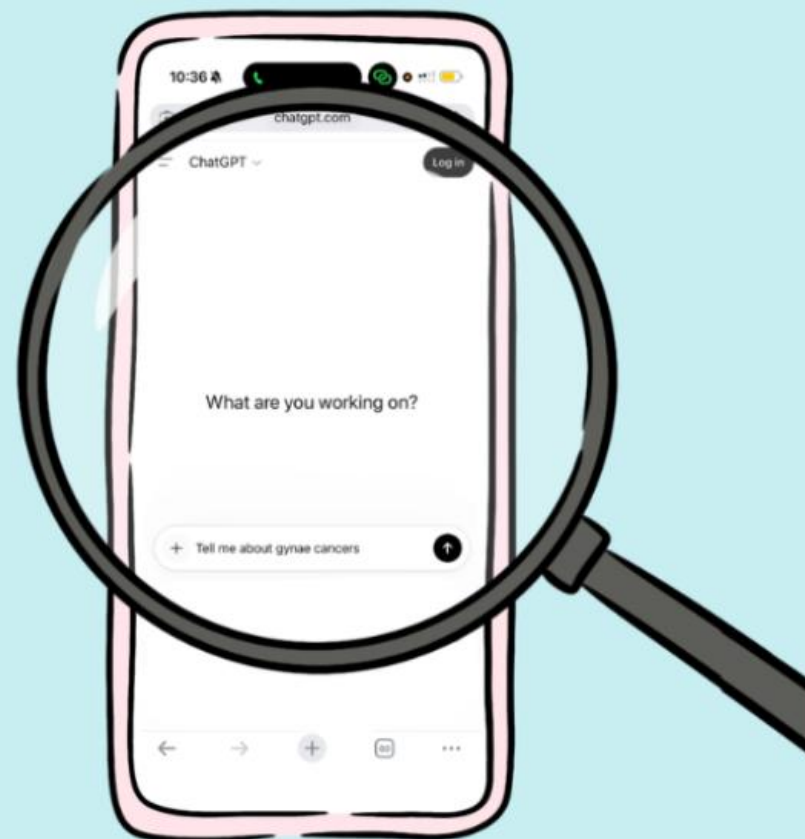
All through the month of May, we Get Lippy about gynaecological cancers, and this year we are raising awareness of mis and disinformation and sharing tips on how to spot it.



April 29, 2026

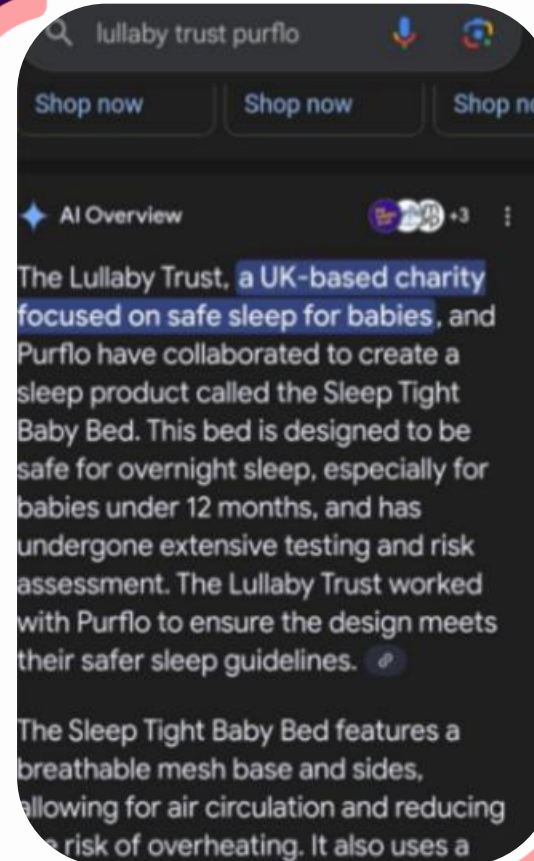


The Eve Appeal



AI hallucinations

the
lullaby
trust



Google AI Overviews put people at risk of harm with misleading health advice

Exclusive: Inaccurate information presented in summaries, Guardian investigation finds



📷 The Guardian uncovered several cases of inaccurate health information in Google's AI Overviews. Photograph: Caia Image/Alamy

People are being put at risk of harm by false and misleading health information in Google's artificial intelligence summaries, a Guardian investigation has found.

'Dangerous and alarming': Google removes some of its AI summaries after users' health put at risk

Exclusive: Guardian investigation finds AI Overviews provided inaccurate and false information when queried over blood tests



📷 Google has said AI Overviews, which use generative AI to provide snapshots of information on a topic or question, are 'helpful and reliable'. Photograph: Pekic/Getty Images

Google has removed some of its artificial intelligence health summaries after [a Guardian investigation](#) found people were being put at risk of harm by false and misleading information.

AI toolkit – top tips

- Keep questions short and simple
- Ask AI tools to search trusted sources
- Check answers against NHS and PIF TICK-certified organisations
- Remember AI can sound convincing even when wrong
- Scroll down to check the original sources
- Check when the information was last updated – AI tools may use outdated information
- Use AI as a starting point, not as medical advice
- Add “UK” or “-AI” to searches for better results

Our video with
Dr Sylvia Kama-
Kieghe talks about
how you can find
trusted health
information online:

Fake versus real
health information



Look for the PIF TICK

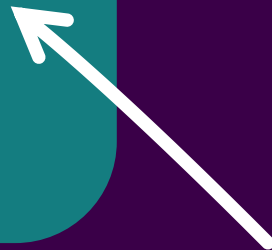
Trusted information on taking
care of your health and wellbeing



Trusted
Information
Creator



Patient Information Forum



Find trusted health information

Health misinformation toolkit

Trusted
Information
Creator



Patient Information Forum



Health misinformation toolkit

