

How to Fight Health ‘Cures’ Online | The New York Times

By Shira Ovide

July 15, 2020

Anne Borden King had already battled online health misinformation as a parent of a child with autism. Then, as a patient, she was barraged on Facebook by [bogus cancer “cure” advertisements](#) after posting about her diagnosis.

Borden, a co-founder of the [Campaign Against Phony Autism Cures](#), talked to me about what we and Facebook can do to stamp out the worst kinds of junk health information that preys on people’s fears. It requires us to have some uncomfortable conversations, and for Facebook to fundamentally change how it works.

Stories like Borden’s feel distressingly familiar. Internet grifters looking to make money have been responsible for spreading [false vaccine conspiracies](#) online or selling [illegal drugs](#). And because our health is a perennial anxiety, there’s a big market for false hope.

“You can’t get rid of the impetus for pseudoscience, but you can stop a lot of vulnerable people from being exploited,” Borden said.

First, let’s discuss what Facebook can do to stop this. “Only take as many ads as they have time for humans for review,” Borden said. “That’s the only ethical thing they can do.”

Source: [How to Fight Health ‘Cures’ Online – The New York Times](#)