

Debunking

Debunking is a strategy designed to refute and correct false or misleading information that has already spread through various networks, such as social media. Strong evidence¹ indicates that debunking can change **beliefs and attitudes** based on misinformation.

Further, debunking impacts beliefs and attitudes more than *prebunking* (trying to stop false or misleading information before it spreads widely) or *misinformation warnings* (applying a tag or warning label).

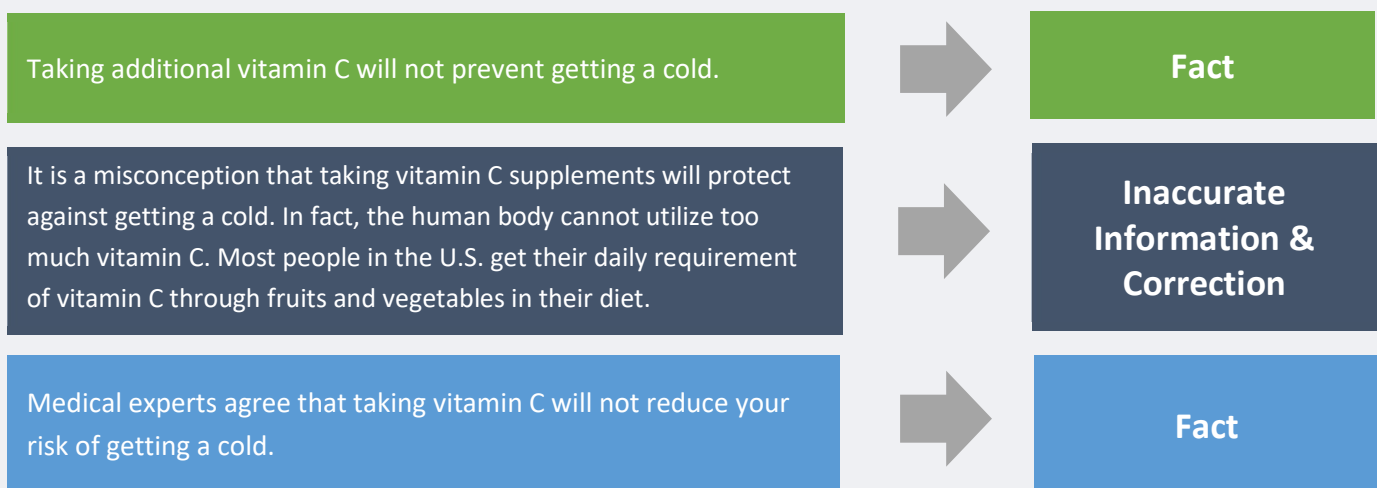
How to Debunk

- **Don't pick and choose what to refute. Refute the entire statement, not just parts of it.** Avoid repeating details that support the misinformation.
- **Introduce supporting information** as part of the debunking message: Simply labeling something as “myth” and contrasting it with “facts” does not work as well.
- **Supporting information includes details** that provide counterarguments against the misinformation. But keep the language clear and simple.
- **Timeliness is key;** debunking works best when initiated swiftly.

The "Truth Sandwich"

One popular and effective debunking format is the “truth sandwich.” This is when a message begins and ends with true statements, with a correction of false information in the middle.

Truth Sandwich in Action



¹ This evidence comes from six meta-analyses and 35 primary studies with more than 180,000 total participants.