- Social networking

HOW TO COMBAT ONLINE ANXIETY

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If spending time on social media is making you feel anxious about your health, here are some tips that could help...

LIMIT YOUR EXPOSURE “Social media is designed to grab your attention and make you consume and watch more and more content, so I would recommend trying to limit the amount of exposure you have to health-related content online,” recommends Dr Hicks.

“If you’re continuously being shown adverts for supplements or content that is making you worry about your health and feel overwhelmed, you probably need to step away from it.”

BE SCEPTICAL ONLINE

“Try and think about who is providing this information,” says Dr Hicks. “Are they a doctor? What are their qualifications? What evidence are they providing? If they are selling a product or a service, be a little bit more sceptical.”

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

“If something sounds too good to be true, then it probably is,” says Dr Hicks.

“If something is a groundbreaking cure/product to fix a health problem, it would probably be on the news and there would be lots of evidence and research to back it up.”

FACT-CHECK INFORMATION “If you want to find out more about a specific condition or symptom, I recommend looking at recognised reputable health websites such as the
NHS or Bupa UK,” advises Dr Hicks.

“Official health organisations are far more stringent with the evidence and information that they put online.”

SEEK ADVICE FROM A GP “If you are really worried about a specific health concern, then it’s probably worth speaking to a professional like a GP,” suggests Dr Hicks.