

Facebook to remove COVID-19 vaccine-related misinformation

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This March 29, 2018 file photo shows the Facebook logo on screens at the Nasdaq MarketSite, in New York's Times Square. Facebook said Thursday Dec. 3, 2020, it will start removing false claims about COVID-19 vaccines, in its latest move to counter a tide of coronavirus-related online misinformation. (AP Photo/Richard Drew, File)

Facebook said Thursday it will start removing false claims about COVID-19 vaccines, in its latest move to counter a tide of coronavirus-related online misinformation.

In the coming weeks, the social network will begin taking down any Facebook or Instagram posts with [false information](#) about the vaccines that have been debunked by [public health experts](#).

The U.S. tech giant is taking action as the first COVID-19 vaccines are set to be rolled out. Britain this week became the first country to give emergency authorization for a vaccine developed by American drugmaker Pfizer and Germany's BioNTech, and inoculations could start within days. Regulators in the U.S., the European Union and Canada are also vetting vaccines.

Facebook said it's applying a policy to remove virus misinformation that could lead to "imminent physical harm."

Posts that fall afoul of the policy could include phony claims about vaccine safety, efficacy, ingredients or side effects.

"For example, we will remove false claims that COVID-19 vaccines contain microchips, or anything else that isn't on the official vaccine ingredient list," the company said in a deleted posts include one by President Donald Trump with a link to a Fox News video of him saying children are "virtually immune" to the virus.

In October, the company banned ads discouraging vaccinations, though it made an exception for advocacy ads about government vaccine policies. The company has also promoted articles debunking COVID-19 misinformation on an information center.

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