

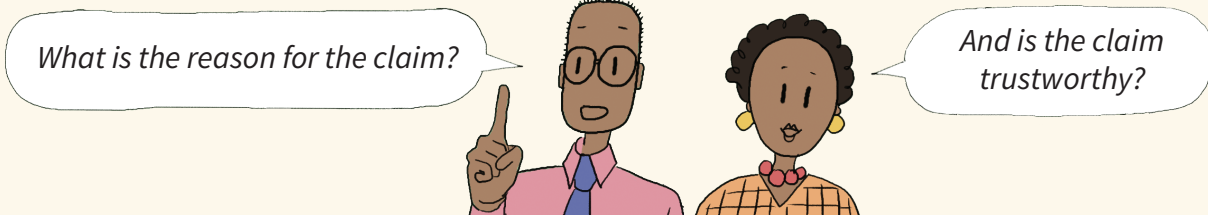
# Messages from the Health Choices Programme

By asking the right questions, you can make the right health choices for yourself and your family.

**1 Some claims about treatments are not trustworthy and can confuse you.**

**2 Most treatments have both good and bad effects.**

**3 When you hear a claim about the effects of a treatment, always ask:**



A **treatment** is something you do for your health.

An **effect** of a treatment is something that a treatment makes happen.

A **claim** is something that someone says that could be right or wrong.

**4 If the reason for the claim is one of these common bad reasons, the claim is not trustworthy:**

- Someone's personal experience using the treatment
- An association between using the treatment and something happening
- How long the treatment has been used or how many people have used it
- An expert says something about the treatment, but the expert's reason for saying it is bad.

**5 Findings from fair, scientific comparisons of treatments are the best reason for claims about the effects.**

A **fair comparison of treatments** is a comparison by health researchers where:

- One group of people gets a treatment and another group gets another treatment or no treatment.
- The groups are similar at the beginning of the comparison.
- The only important difference between the groups is the treatments.

**6 Health researchers should choose by chance who gets which treatment, as if flipping a coin.**

→ This way everyone has the same chance of going in either group and the groups become similar.

**Health researchers should make fair comparison with many enough people in the groups. And they must add up findings from all the fair comparisons of the same treatments.**

→ What they find in fair comparisons of the treatments with few people can be by chance.

*Words that are sometimes used instead of words used in the Health Choices Program:*

The **basis** for a claim is the reason for the claim.

A **reliable** claim is a trustworthy claim and an **unreliable** claim is one that is not trustworthy.

A **link** is an association or connection between two things.