

HEALTH LITERACY



Ability to obtain, process and understand basic health information and services

Ability to navigate the healthcare system

WHO IS AT RISK?

EVERYONE

BUT WHO IS AT INCREASED RISK?



1. Older adults
2. People with compromised health status
3. Racial/ethnic minorities
4. Non-native speakers of English
5. People with low income
6. People with less than a high school degree or GED certificate

WHY IS HEALTH LITERACY IMPORTANT?



Being able to make appropriate health care decisions



Taking care of our health is part of everyday life, not only when we visit a doctor or hospital



Nearly 9 out of 10 adults may lack the skills needed to manage their health and prevent disease

HOW CAN YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR HEALTH BETTER?

SEEK INFORMATION



join support groups



educate yourself



ask for information

BE OPEN AND HONEST



give all of your medical history



talk about your values and preferences



speak up if you are unhappy with your care

MAKE SURE YOU UNDERSTAND



prepare and ask questions



ask for things to be explained differently



request an interpreter

ASSESS YOURSELF!

Score 0: will not be able to read most low-literacy materials
Score 1-3: will need low-literacy materials
Score 4-6: will struggle with most patient education materials
Score 7: will be able to read most patient education materials

Read each word aloud. Skip if you don't recognize the word or takes you more than 5 seconds. Give yourself 1 point for every word you read.

Behavior
Exercise
Menopause
Rectal
Antibiotics
Anemia
Jaundice