

Teacher to Teacher

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Health Literacy Awareness

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Health literacy is the ability to read, understand, and act on health care information and includes reading consent forms, medicine labels, and other written information; understanding written and oral information from health care providers; and acting on procedures and instructions, such as medication and appointment schedules. The Journal of American Medical Association reports that 46% of American adults are functionally illiterate in dealing with the health care system.

According to a study reported in The Journal of American Medical Association, out of 2,659 low-income outpatients:

- 26% did not understand when their next appointment was scheduled
- 42% did not understand the instructions to “take their medication on an empty stomach”
- 49% could not determine whether they were eligible for free care from reading a hospital financial aid form
- 60% of patients could not understand a standard consent form
- 33% of English-speaking patients couldn’t read and understand a standard consent form

The **LINCS Health and Literacy Special Collection** (<http://www.healthliteracy.worlded.org>) is part of a comprehensive electronic gateway of health-specific information for teachers, students, and health educators to use in teaching health to people with limited literacy skills. From the teacher/tutor resources link you can find:

- ♦ Lesson plans and ready-to-go activities
- ♦ Easy-to-read information about a variety of health topics
- ♦ Dictionaries and glossaries about health, disease, or medicine
- ♦ Information on health literacy, teaching health in literacy classrooms, creating collaborations, and more
- ♦ Resources to provide basic health information in simple language or languages other than English
- ♦ Student-written accounts of health problems and projects that can easily be built into teaching activities

Check Out These Resources!

Health and Literacy Compendium <http://www.worlded.org/us/health/docs/comp/compendium.pdf>

An annotated bibliography of print and Web-based health materials for use with adults with limited literacy.

Family Health and Literacy <http://www.worlded.org/us/health/docs/family/fhl.pdf>

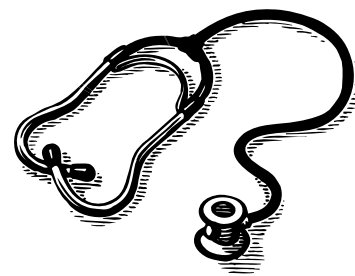
A guide to easy-to-read health education materials and web sites for families.

Culture, Health and Literacy <http://www.worlded.org/us/health/docs/culture/index.html>

A guide to health education materials for adults with limited English literacy skills.

Eureka! Lesson Plans <http://literacy.kent.edu/eureka>

Here you will find a wide variety of resources to use in your classroom. Search by the keywords of either reading, writing, or math to find standards-based lesson plans. Additional health literacy lessons coming soon!



Ohio Literacy Resource Center

Enhancing Adult Literacy

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