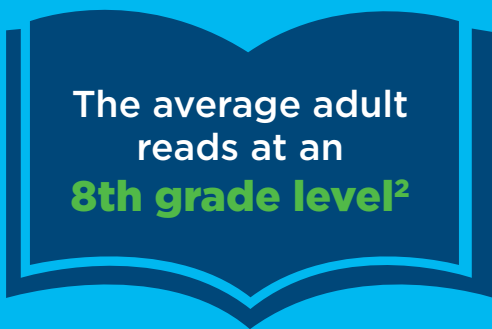


Breaking down barriers

Language and health literacy

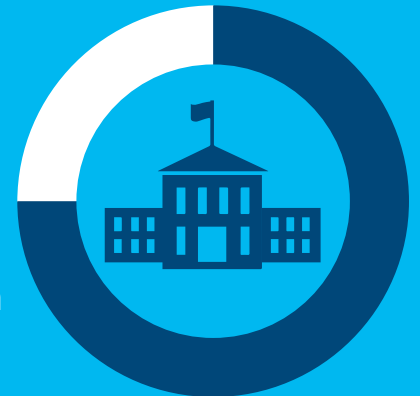
Health literacy is a person's ability to obtain, process and understand basic health information. Low health literacy, as well as language barriers, may impact a person's ability to take responsibility for their health, as well as the health of their family.¹

Did you know?



But more than **75%**

of patient materials are written at a high school or college reading level²



9 out of 10

adults struggle with health information when it's unfamiliar, complex or jargon-filled³

Individuals with limited health literacy had:

- Nearly **2x** more preventable ER visits⁴
- Over **50%** more days of poor behavioral or physical health⁵

Those with limited proficiency in the English language are **24%** more likely to have an unplanned ER revisit⁶



40-80% of medical information communicated during office visits is forgotten immediately, and nearly **50%** is retained incorrectly⁷



Five things you can do to help



Ask patients

Use the **teach-back method** to confirm you have explained things in a manner patients understand.



Communicate clearly

Make written communications more **readable** and **test** how readable your content is. Use words patients are more likely to understand. Numerous **plain language** resources are available to help.



Help with interpretations

Find language assistance **resources** for your office, and provide **health information** in multiple languages.



Guide to resources

Use **MyHealthfinder** as a resource to help patients learn more about their health and preventive care.



Stay informed

Take a **health literacy course** and suggest others in your practice do as well.

For more resources, visit [CareAllies.com](https://www.careallies.com).

1. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-health/interventions-resources/health-literacy>

2. <https://www.aafp.org/afp/2015/0715/p118.html>

3. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/shareinteract/TellOthers.html>

4. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/acem.13244>

5. <https://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/pdf/Report-on-2016-BRFSS-Health-Literacy-Data-For-Web.pdf>

6. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0196064416001463>

7. <https://www.ahrq.gov/health-literacy/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/healthlittoolkit2-tool5.html>

