



HEALTH LITERACY

Counseling Presentation & Demonstration

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What is **health literacy**?

“the degree to which individuals have the capacity to **obtain, process, and understand basic health information** and services needed to make **appropriate health decisions**”

age
income
health literacy
employment status
education level
race

A person's hands are shown holding a glowing, spherical crystal ball. The ball is bright yellow and white, creating a strong glow. The hands are positioned on either side of the ball, with fingers slightly curled as if holding it. The background is dark, making the glowing ball stand out.

**personal
health**

Health Literacy Facts

12%

consumers have proficient health literacy skills

63%

diabetes patients with reduced health literacy

33%

U.S. adults have trouble reading and acting on health related information

Health literacy level is frequently **3-4 YEARS**
below the highest grade completed.

8th
GRADE

reading level for most adults

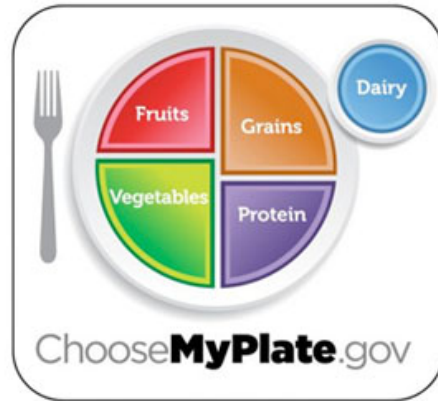
5th
GRADE
or below

reading level for 20% of adults

9th
GRADE
or above

level of most written health
education materials

Nutrition-Specific Concerns

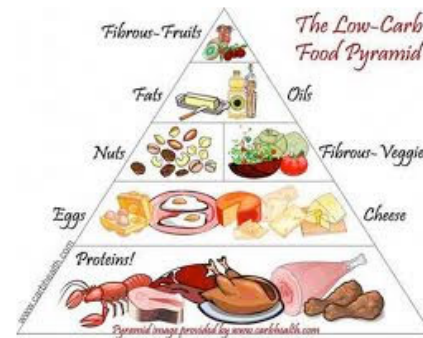


Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 1/2 cup (115g)	
Servings Per Container About 4	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 250	Calories from Fat 130
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 14g	22%
Saturated Fat 9g	45%
Cholesterol 55mg	18%
Sodium 75mg	3%
Total Carbohydrate 26g	9%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 26g	
Protein 4g	
Vitamin A 10%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 10%	Iron 0%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.

SIZE IT RIGHT
A guide (based on standards that most nutritionists follow) to what one serving should look like.

steak = iPod Classic	cheese = matchbox	pancake = DVD
pasta = ice cream scoop	potato = mouse	fish = checkbook
butter = postage stamp	salad dressing = 1-oz shot glass	brown rice = baseball
peanut butter = golf ball	beans = lightbulb	dark chocolate = dental floss



Clues of low health literacy



- Make excuses when asked to read or fill out forms.
- Lift text closer to their eyes, point to the text with a finger while reading, or wander over the page without finding a central focus.
- Take instructions literally to avoid mistakes.
- Signs of nervousness, confusion, frustration, and even indifference.
- Give incorrect answers when questioned about what they have read.

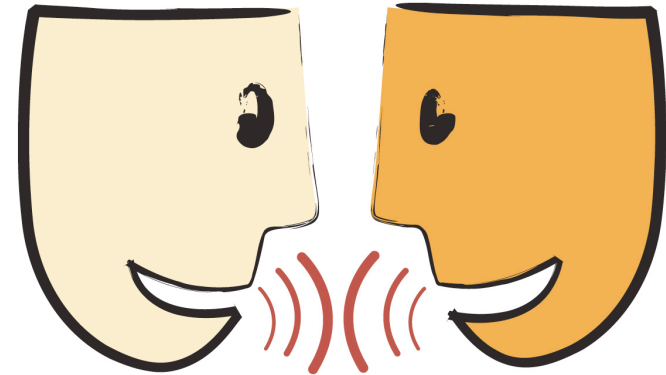
Best Practices

- Focus on selected critical behaviors
- Reduced complexity of health information
- Concrete examples
- Limited number of topics per educational session
- Use plain language, avoid jargon & vague statements
- Employ the “teach-back” method
- Print information at 4th to 6th grade reading level
- Picture-based information
- Shared goal setting



Best Practices: Oral Communication

- Assess patients' baseline understanding
- Use plain language
- Avoid vague statements
- Effectively solicit questions
- Use “teach-back” to confirm understanding
- Focus on a few key points
- Give patients clearly written information to take home



Best Practices:

Written Communication

- Explain the purpose of the document
- Involve the learner
- Make the material easy to read
- Make the material LOOK easy to read
- Select visuals that clarify the material and motivate the learner



References

- Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009) Simply Put: A guide for creating easy-to-understand materials. Retrieved from http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/toolstemplates/simply_put_082010.pdf
- Gibbs, H., Chapman-Novakofski, K. (2012). A Review of Health Literacy and its Relationship to Nutrition Education. *Topics in Clinical Nutrition*. 27(4), 325-333.
- Carbone, E. T., Zoellner, J. M. (2012) Nutrition and Health Literacy: A Systematic Review to Inform Nutrition Research and Practice. *Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics*. 112, 254-265.
- Cornett, S., (Sept. 30, 2009) "Assessing and Addressing Health Literacy" *OJIN: The Online Journal of Issues in Nursing*. 14(3), Manuscript 2.
- Pfizer Health Literacy. Improving Health Communication. Retrieved from <http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.com/public-health-professionals/WhatArePrecaution.aspx>

Today's client: Rosie

- 22-year old female
- 26th week of pregnancy, first child
- Diagnosed with gestational diabetes
- Low health literacy

- **Counseling techniques** covered:
 - Explain concept with health literacy in mind
 - Assess understanding (teach-back method)
 - Elicit client's ideas for goal setting
 - SMART goal setting