



Health Online: Finding Information You Can Trust

Train-the-Trainer Series
Wisconsin Health Literacy

Today's Agenda

- Health literacy & Digital Health Literacy
- Communication techniques
- Community-based workshop
- Community member feedback
- “Health Online” in your community
- Digital literacy Resources



Wisconsin Health Literacy

- Statewide nonprofit organization offering education and training on Health Literacy
- Community projects
- Division of Wisconsin Literacy (over 70 members)
- Health Literacy Summit (every other year)

WisconsinHealthLiteracy.org



Wisconsin Health Literacy



Which of the following is the single strongest predictor of an individual's health status?

1. Age
2. Income
3. Literacy skills
4. Employment status
5. Education level
6. Racial or ethnic group

Which of the following is the single strongest predictor of an individual's health status?

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1 in 5 read at or under the **5th grade level**.

Most health care information is written at a **10th grade level** or above.



Plain Language Exercise: Choose simple words

Prevents osteoporosis



Keeps bones strong

Why do we use these words?

- Additional
- Utilize
- In the event of
- In lieu of
- Due to the fact that
- At your earliest convenience
- More
- Use
- If
- Instead
- Because
- As soon as you can



But it's more than just Plain Language...

What it feels like...



2 sides to Health Literacy:

- A person's ability to access, understand and use health information
- The *other person's* ability to clearly communicate how to access, understand and use health information for better health

Health Literacy means a person is able to understand:

- Instructions on prescription bottles
- What their doctors say to them
- Appointment slips
- Medical brochures, provider instructions and consent forms
- Insurance benefits

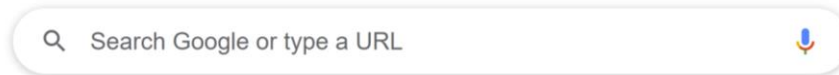
**Now, let's talk about
finding and understanding
this information online...**

What do you do when...

- You want to find ways to get healthy?
- Your child has a rash?
- You want to find the best health insurance?



Over 1 **billion** people search Google for health information, **every day!**



Source: Pew Research

Searching online has become the new norm – “Dr. Google”

- 81% of US adults use internet
- 59% of US adults look up health information online

(2013 Pew Research)

According to the Pew Research Center, “roughly half of U.S. adults (53%) say the internet has been essential for them personally during the pandemic.”

Digital Health Literacy



Amount of health information online

- 50% of health searches have an impact on the person's health care
(2006 Pew Research)



Digital Divide



Among Seniors and Low Health Literacy

- Only 15% of adults experiencing below basic health literacy find health information online
- While 62% of adults with proficient health literacy use online resources

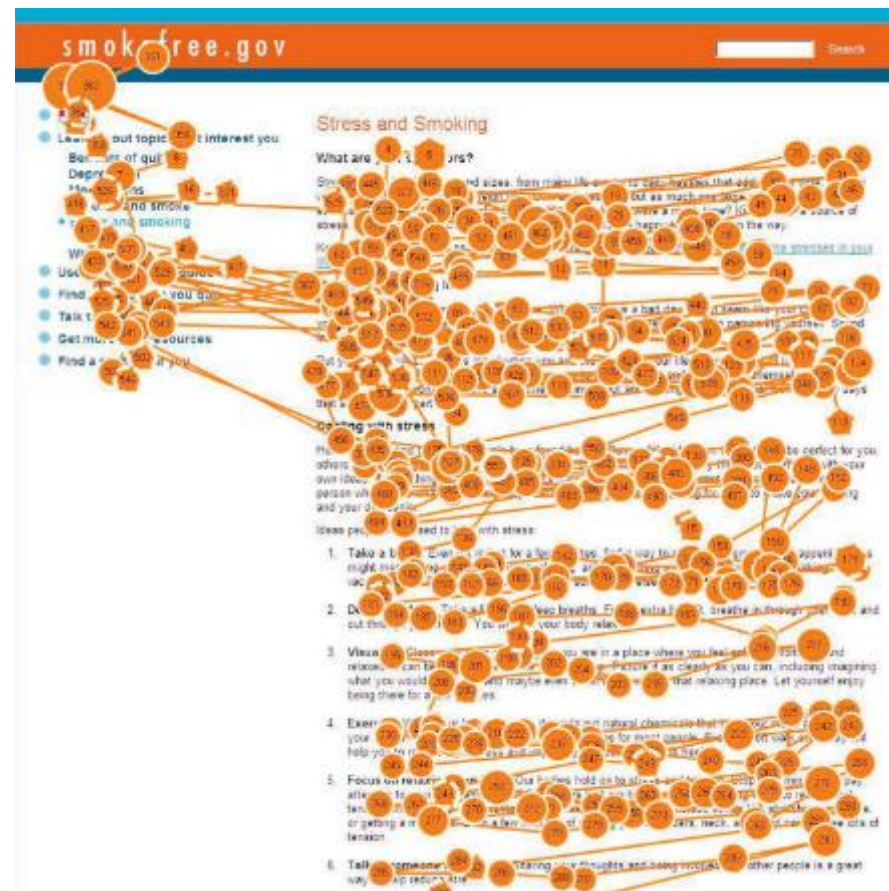
(2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy)

Why?

Difficulty:

- finding reliable health information
- navigating/reading
- accessing the internet

Usability Testing



Source: Colter, A and Summers, K (2014). Low Literacy Users. In Bergstrom & Schall (Eds.), *Eye Tracking in User Experience Design* (p. 339). Waltham, MA: Elsevier.

Trusting Librarians



- Librarians 2nd most trusted
- Valuable information
- Essential to communities



**Remember:
Information found on ANY website
does NOT replace the advice of
medical professionals!**

What can you do?

Adopt Universal Precautions

Since you can't always tell by looking....

- Take actions that minimize risk for everyone
- Use plain language with everyone



Digital Literacy Strategies

- Slow down
- Use teach-back
- Help with accessibility
- Host technology trainings

Share Best Practices

What are ways you already/or can adapt universal precautions?

Health Online Partnership



U.S. National Library of Medicine

National Network of Libraries of Medicine

Greater Midwest Region



wisconsin
**health
literacy**

Goal

Help consumers, especially from vulnerable populations and those at risk for low health literacy, identify and effectively use trustworthy sources of online health information

Handouts

Health Online: Finding information you can trust

Using online resources for your health allows you to:

- Find information quickly
- Check your health symptoms
- Research diseases
- Communicate with your doctor or nurse
- Look for wellness tips
- Track your health conditions
- Much more...

Websites to visit for health information:

- medlineplus.gov
- cdc.gov
- mayoclinic.org/patient-care-and-health-information
- familydoctor.org
- healthline.com
- healthcare.gov
- medicare.gov
- badgerlink.dpi.wi.gov
- dhs.wisconsin.gov/medicaid
- patientpartnerships.wisc.edu

For more websites visit:

mlanet.org/page/top-health-websites



Remember: Information found on ANY website does NOT replace the advice of medical professionals!



2115 Paterson St., Suite 170 | Madison, WI 53703
WisconsinHealthLiteracy.org

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Handouts

Website Checklist:

Use this checklist to ask some questions about the website and find reliable health information.

WEBSITE OWNER	
Who is in charge of the website?	
Why are they providing the site?	
Can you contact them?	
FUNDING	
How is the website supported?	
Are there ads? Are they from the website company or an outside company looking to sell a product or service?	
QUALITY	
Where does the information on the site come from?	
How is content selected?	
Do medical professionals review the information on the site?	
Is the site believable and not have far-fetched ideas?	
Is it up-to-date?	
PRIVACY	
Does the site ask for your personal information?	
Does it tell you how it will be used?	
Are you comfortable with how it will be used?	

(adapted from http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/images/webeval_checklist.jpg)

Handouts

Health Online: Finding information you can trust



Searching for health information

Tips for doing a search:

- List multiple symptoms
- Use full disease name
- Be gender specific
- Be age specific

Search tools for privacy:

- www.duckduckgo.com
- Google Chrome Incognito Browser



Reading a webpage

Scanning makes for a quick and easier way to find what you are looking for.

Scanning tips:

- Start with bigger, bolder words
- Read left to right
- Use left tool bar and top menu bar to find topics
- Read content before clicking on hyperlinks

When scanning search results:

- Scan more than just the top two results
- If you don't find what you want, start over with new words in search box



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Handouts



Looking for credibility

Tips for doing a search:

Proof that information is reliable and from a trusted source.

- Look at "About Us" section
- Look for unbiased research
- Check bottom of webpage for dates, sponsors, crediting, and other details

Be careful of:

- Brand names or products being credited
 - may be trying to sell you something
- Content reviewed by "medical experts"
 - anyone can claim they are medical experts
- Information based on someone's opinion



Other online resources

Health portals through healthcare provider. Here you can find:

- After visit summaries
- Medications
- Communication with providers
- Prescription requests
- Health news

Apps: provides online health resources for mobile devices

Examples:

Mayo Clinic

Health insurance provider



For more workshop information and resources, visit the program website at:
wihealthliteracy.wixsite.com/healthonline

Community-based workshops

Online Program

- 90 minute workshop
- Facilitator Script
- Hands-on learning
- Resources to take home



What we're learning



Adult literacy survey found:

- Want to find health information on symptoms, resources to stay healthy and in other languages
- Want help scanning websites for relevancy

What we're learning

University of Wisconsin— family medicine practice focus group (2018)

- Younger population preferred MyChart or searching out symptoms
- Older population preferred urgent care or primary care
- Most used websites: Mayo Clinic, WebMD, Google search

Pre & Post-Survey Results

Phase 1 Program Results

N=282 community-based workshop participants

After the workshops there was a:

↑ 40.2% identifying reliable website

↑ 32.2% using evaluation technique to find credible website

↑ 37.3% feeling very confident finding good health information

How can you get involved?

- Become familiar with online program
- Learn what websites are reliable in your practice
- Bookmark MedlinePlus
- Host a workshop



Share best practices

How are you keeping community members engaged?



Digital Literacy Resources

National Network of Libraries of Medicine

<https://nnlm.gov/all-of-us/resources/digitalhealthliteracy>

Wisconsin Health Literacy:

<https://wisconsinliteracy.org/health-literacy/programs/current-programs/health-online-finding-information-you-can-trust.html>

Pew Research Center

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet>

NLM Resources

- Website
- Email
- Print materials



Thank you!

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What questions do you have?

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