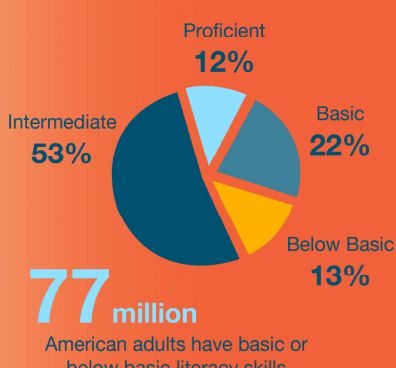


the facts about HEALTH LITERACY

in the united states

Health Literacy is an individual's ability to *understand and act on* health information.

(brochures; warning signs; food & product info; health info on the internet)

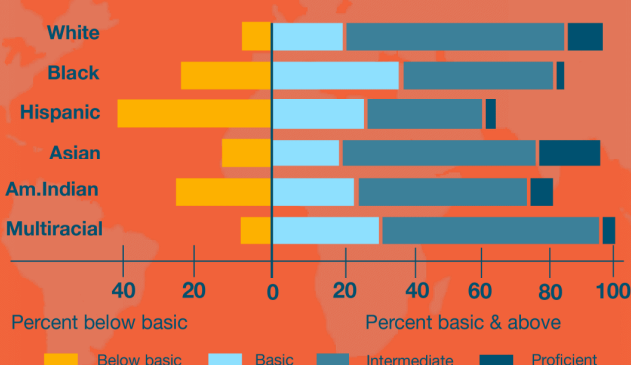


Why is this important?
Mistakes happen.



Individuals with **low** health literacy have an average annual healthcare cost of **\$13,000**
Compared to only **\$3,000** for those with **high** literacy levels

By Race



Vulnerable populations include:

Elderly



Chronic disease patients



Immigrants



81% of patients age 60 and older at a public hospital could not read or understand basic materials.

In a study ...

Patients were given **5** pill bottles



50% did not understand at least one of the labels

10th grade

The average reading level of health communications material

5th grade

The reading level of 30 million Americans

Strategies for improvement:

Assess materials for ...

relevant content; **learning stimulation; literacy demand; graphics; layout; typography; cultural appropriateness; learning motivation**

Avoid ...

technical words; statistics; concept words; value-judgment words; negative words, ALL CAPS

Literacy tools such as the **Health Literacy Advisor (HLA)**

The HLA, created by Health Literacy Innovations, scans documents for readability and brings them down to a 6th grade reading level



“To stage your malignancy, we need to perform diagnostic scans. Then, once we know the etiology, we can discuss some of the various treatment options.”



“You have cancer. I need to know where it has spread. A CAT scan should tell us. Then, we'll know if drugs can stop it.”