

Your Patients: Help them understand!



Get ready!

Use every day, plain language:

- ✓ on the phone
- ✓ on signs and office forms
- ✓ on take-home health information and instructions.

Train all members of your team to use every day, plain language.

Train members of your team to use “teach back”:

- ✓ Ask the patient to explain in his/her own words what they heard you say.
- ✓ Clarify information that the patient did not understand. Explain again in another way until the patient demonstrates understanding.

Listen and Ask.

- Use plain language to explain treatment options and possible outcomes.
- Ask for details as you listen to your patients.
- Listen for signs that your patient is able, ready and willing to comply with treatment options.
- Ask your patients what questions they have.



Plain language examples

| Use: | Instead of: |
|-----------|-------------|
| Belly | Abdomen |
| Long term | Chronic |
| Shot | Injection |
| Stitches | Sutures |



Do!

- Use “teach-back”.
- Use plain language.
- Commit to learning more about health literacy:
 - ✓ Visit the agency for Healthcare Research and Quality website (www.ahrq.gov/browse/hlitix.htm). Look for the Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit.
 - ✓ Visit the Wake Health Literacy Coalition website (www.wakehealthliteracy.org).