

Care Transitions & Reduction in Hospitalization

aahfn.org

American Association of Heart Failure Nurses



What is “Health Literacy”?

Being able to find, understand, and use health-related information to make good decisions about medical care and personal health.

Why is Health Literacy important?

Having good health literacy skills helps you to:

- Take care of your health
- Prepare for medical tests
- Take your medicines the right way
- Understand how the choices you make affect your health
- Understand and stick to your treatment plan
- Talk to your health care providers about your needs and wants

What can I do to improve my personal Health Literacy?

- Ask questions. If you don't understand what you've been told, ask questions! Don't be embarrassed. When it comes to your health, there are no dumb questions.
- Repeat what your provider tells you in your own words. “Let me make sure I understand what you told me...”
- Bring a friend or loved one to your appointments if possible.
- Ask to work with a patient navigator if one is available.
- Keep a running list of questions for your provider or patient navigator.
- Ask for a translator if you need one.
- Ask if there are handouts or other materials you can use to help you understand. Not everyone learns best by listening to someone talk. Some people learn best by reading information, others by looking at pictures, still others by watching videos. Ask for the information in the form that works best for you.
- Don't believe everything you read on the Internet. Use reliable sites from nationally recognized organizations, like the American Heart Association, American College of Cardiology, Heart Failure Society of America, or the American Association of Heart Failure Nurses.

Three Questions

Ask three questions every time you talk with a Healthcare Provider

1. **What is my main problem?**
2. **What do I need to do?**
3. **Why is it important for me to do this?**