

CULTURAL LINK



Volume 3,
Issue 8

OCTOBER
2004

Health Literacy Month

Question of the Month!

OCTOBER QUESTION:

What percentage of the US population is estimated to have inadequate literacy for reading and acting on most health care materials?

Email your responses to comcatmp1@mail.etsu.edu by 4:30 pm on October 25th. Please include your full name and telephone number with your response.

The answer to the September question: **Children of Puerto Rican parentage** are the Hispanic subgroup with the highest prevalence of asthma. Two-thirds of the 500,000 Hispanic children with asthma are of Puerto Rican descent.

Source: Reyes et al, [Genes, culture, and medicines: bridging gaps in treatment for Hispanic Americans](#), National Alliance for Hispanic Health, 2004.

WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HEALTH LITERACY?

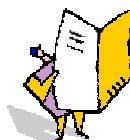
- Definition: Health Literacy is "The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate health decisions." (Ratzan & Parker, 2000)
- More than 300 studies indicate that most health materials and forms far exceed the average reading ability of US population.
- Demonstrated results of low health literacy: decreased ability to share in health decision making; lower compliance with therapy, lower self-reported health status; and higher rate of hospitalization and ER use.

ARTS, CULTURAL, AND HEALTH AWARENESS EVENTS AT ETSU		
Event	When	Where
Indian Dance Troup	10/2 6:30 pm	Culp Auditorium
Hispanic Dance Lessons	10/5 2:30 pm	Culp Ballroom left
Feel Your Best At Any Age Lunch Break Seminar- WRC	10/5 12 noon	Culp Forum
Depression Screening Day Confidential & Free	10/6 10 am – 2 pm	Culp Atrium
Hispanic Dance Lessons	10/7 2:30 pm	Culp Ballroom left
Love Your Body Festival	10/20 10 am – 2 pm	Culp Atrium
WRC Book Review Group: The Birth of Venus: A Novel by Sarah Dunant	10/20 12 noon	WRC Panhellenic Hall, basement
CME/CE: Medical Challenges of an Aging Population	10/21—22	VAMC

OCTOBER HEALTH OBSERVANCES

Topics of Interest In this Issue

- Health Literacy Month
- Domestic Violence Awareness Month
- Dental Hygiene Month
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- Depression Screening Day, 6



- Can you tell who has low health literacy by looking? Not really.

75% were born in USA
50% are White
40% hold full time jobs
25% finished high school

Source: [Report Brief of Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion, Institute of Medicine, 2004](#)

October 1 – 31



www.healthliteracymonth.org

Other Health Awareness Topics in October

Healthy Lung Month
Physical Therapy Month
World Blindness Awareness Month
Mental Illness Awareness Week, 3 – 9
Respiratory Care Week, 24 – 30





Article of the Month

Betancourt JR, "Cultural Competence – Marginal or Mainstream Movement?" *New England Journal of Medicine* 351;10, September 2, 2004.

Betancourt examines the inclusion of cultural competency training in medical education. Originally, training focused on addressing language barriers and learning about customs and values for specific cultures. While addressing language barriers remains important, focus on cultural customs has led to the danger of stereotyping. The goal of cultural competence training is patient-centered care in which the provider explores the patient's understanding of illness and use of complimentary therapies, responds to patient preferences, and acknowledges patient's fears. Evaluating the effects of cultural competence training is expected to ultimately lead to better health outcomes, but at present evaluation should focus on process measures. Cultural competence will become mainstream as providers gain a combination of skills to deliver quality health care to all patients in an increasingly diverse population.

HEALTH LINKS ON DIVERSITY

The listing below represent just a few of the resources intended to promote knowledge, awareness and discussions on diversity in health care for our students and faculty. We encourage you to use some of these as a beginning for classroom discussion, outside assignments, or student research.

Topic	Title/Location
Health Literacy Month  October 1 – 31 www.healthliteracymonth.org	<p>What is health literacy? Fact Sheets: Who has health literacy problems? Strategies to assist low-literate health care consumers; Health communication and cultural diversity; Preparing patient education materials http://www.healthliteracymonth.com/</p> <p>What can providers do? <http://www.askme3.org/></p> <p>Use the SMOG Readability Formula to test the reading grade level of patient education materials http://www.med.utah.edu/pated/authors/readability.html</p> <p>Medical-English Translator. A medical writer lists 500 plain English substitutes for medical terms http://www.linda-andrews.com/medicalese_translator.htm</p>
Domestic Violence Awareness Month 	<p>Domestic Violence Awareness Handbook: Who are Victims? What Can You Say to a Victim? What is a Safety Plan? What Can Each of Us Do? Where to Find Help http://www.usda.gov/da/shmd/aware.htm</p> <p>Ethnicity A Factor In Domestic Violence http://www.aphroditewomenshealth.com/news/20030815002742_health_news.shtml</p> <p>National Domestic Violence Hotline: Follow DV Information and DV Links to information on specific populations and immigrants at http://www.ndvh.org/</p>
Dental Hygiene Month 	<p>2004 Theme: "Ask, Advise, Refer" reminding dental professionals and patients about the importance of quitting tobacco and tobacco cessation resources. <http://www.adha.org/media/facts/tobacco.htm></p> <p>English/Spanish Materials for "Ask, Advise, Refer" <http://www.askadviserefer.org/></p> <p>Tobacco use in specific populations <http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/specpop.htm></p>
Breast Cancer Awareness Month 	<p>National Breast Cancer Awareness Month: Goals, including needs for special populations; materials for use with diverse populations <http://www.nbcam.org/about_futureGoals.cfm></p> <p>Studies show that obesity affects mammography accuracy and screening rates http://www.ahrq.gov/research/aug04/0804ra3.htm</p> <p>Fewer Minorities Than Ever in US Cancer Trials http://www.healthfinder.gov/news/newsstory.asp?docID=519407</p>

For more information or assistance contact Elaine Evans, Reference Assistant, COM Library, evanse@etsu.edu.