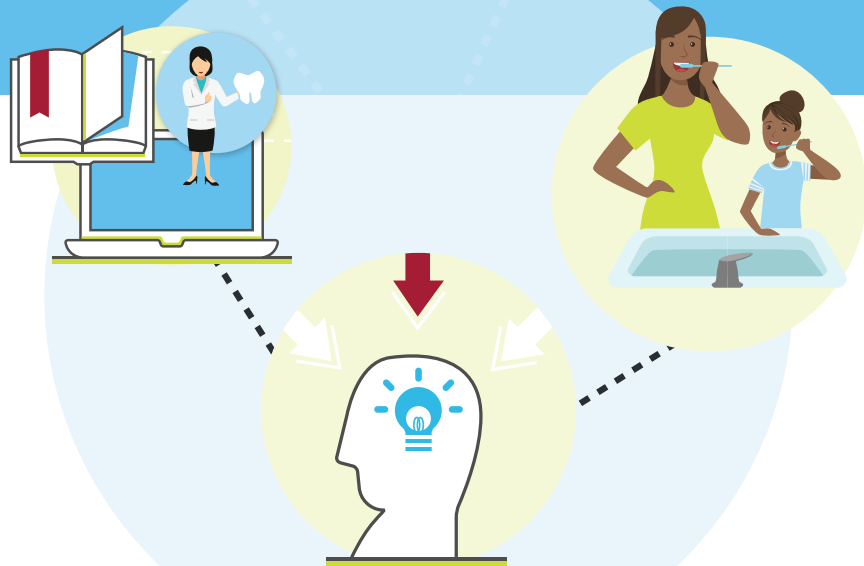


Always use plain language with patients.

What is dental health literacy?

The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate oral health decisions.¹



Who is affected by inadequate health literacy?

9 in 10 adults struggle to understand and use health information.²

Why is dental health literacy important?

Health literacy is critical because it affects people's ability to:

- Navigate the complex healthcare system
- Share health information with dentists and doctors
- Understand dental and medical concepts
- Engage in self-care



What can I do to improve dental health literacy?

Pledge to stop using jargon and words that are hard to understand. Instead, use words that people know the first time they hear them.

Instead of...
Dental caries
Say...
Tooth decay or cavities

Instead of...
Extraction
Say...
Take out or remove

Instead of...
Composite filling
Say...
Tooth-colored filling or cavities

Instead of...
Crown
Say...
Cap that covers the tooth

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