

# HEALTH LITERACY SOURCES

## A Guide for Health Professionals

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Excerpt from Micromedex website discussing key considerations in writing CareNotes™ for Patients pages "In a concerted effort to make the patient education documents in the CareNotes™ System as accessible to patients as possible, without compromising content, our editorial team has developed a style sheet. All CareNotes clinical editors use this sheet when writing patient education leaflets. The style sheet has been compiled by reviewing the variety of literacy tests currently available. Among these were SMOG, FOG, Flesch Reading Ease, Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, Coleman-Liau Grade Level, and Bormuth Grade Level.

Utilizing the common features of the "literacy" tests, the style sheet has proven an effective foundation for creating documents that consistently test out at the **6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading level \***. When medical terminology is removed from CareNotes documents, they test at even lower literacy levels. Micromedex believes the medical terminology should be included because these terms are central to the patient understanding the care being received. Instead of excluding these terms, phonetic pronunciation is given and the terms are described in low literacy language."

Micromedex® CareNotes™

[http://www.micromedex.com/products/carenotes/carenotes\\_white.html](http://www.micromedex.com/products/carenotes/carenotes_white.html)

Micromedex® CareNotes™ -- JCAHO Standards for Patient Education

[http://www.micromedex.com/products/carenotes/carenotes\\_jcaho.pdf](http://www.micromedex.com/products/carenotes/carenotes_jcaho.pdf)

- Gunning-Fog Index \* <http://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/fog-index.html>
- Flesch-Kincaid Index \* <http://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/flesch-kincaid-index.html>
- Virginia Adult Education - *Health Literacy Toolkit* <http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/healthlit/>
- Health Literacy Links (Med Lib Assoc) <http://www.mlanet.org/resources/healthlit/index.html>
- LINCS - for Healthcare Providers <http://www.worlded.org/us/health/lincs/provider.htm>
- AMA Foundation - Health Literacy <http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/8115.html>
- University of Utah "Writing Patient Education Materials" <http://uuhsc.utah.edu/pated/>
- Center for Medicaid Services <http://www.hrsa.gov/quality/healthlit.htm>
- National Center for Education Statistics <http://nces.ed.gov/naal/>
- National Assessment of Adult Literacy Site
  - 2005 NAAL Report <http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL/PDF/2006470.PDF>
- EthnoMed (University of Washington) <http://ethnomed.org/>
- Diversity Rx <http://www.diversityrx.org/HTML/TOC.htm>
- Plain Language.gov <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/>
- Plain Language Initiative <http://execsec.od.nih.gov/plainlang/guidelines/where.html>
- Pfizer: Clear Health Communication <http://www.clearhealthcommunication.org/>
- AskMe3 <http://www.askme3.org/> and
  - Organization/Implementation Guide <http://www.askme3.org/pdfs/ImpGuide.pdf>
  - Fry Testing for Readability [http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.org/improving\\_fry.html](http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.org/improving_fry.html)
  - Low Literacy Calculator <http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.org/calculator.html>
  - AskMe3 - Pamphlets <http://www.askme3.org/PFCHC/download.asp>  
in English and Spanish

- Improving Health Literacy Page-Patient Education Handbook  
<http://www.pfizerhealthliteracy.org/improving.html>
- Center for Medicare Education - Two online briefing reports...
  - "Health Literacy: Responding to the Need for Help" (2001)  
<http://ihcrp.georgetown.edu/agingsociety/pdfs/CMEReport1.pdf>
  - "Considering Health Literacy" (2001)  
<http://ihcrp.georgetown.edu/agingsociety/pdfs/kieferlit.pdf>
- IHA <http://www.iha4health.org/>
- Health Literacy (Author Helen Osborne) <http://www.healthliteracy.com/>
- Health Literacy Month <http://www.healthliteracy.com/hlmonth/fact.html>
- Interactive Health Communications - Links <http://www.health.gov/scipich/pubs/default.htm>
- America's Health Rankings (2005) <http://www.unitedhealthfoundation.org/shr2005/survey.asp>  
Search for data by State

Finally: Web Authors? Here is a free interactive "Readability Check"... go to the site below, put in a web address and this site automatically calculate its' *Reading Level!* A unique and useful site.  
<http://juicystudio.com/services/readability.php>

### **Online Reports about Health Literacy or Disparities** *(requires Adobe Acrobat Reader to open documents)*

- **Health Literacy: A Prescription to End Confusion** <http://www.nap.edu/books/0309091179/html/>  
Free online textbook - National Academies Press (2004)
- A key online report is available from the AHRQ.gov website, entitled "Literacy & Health Outcomes"  
<http://www.ahrq.gov/downloads/pub/evidence/pdf/literacy/literacy.pdf> (259 pages long, Jan 2004)
- Health Literacy (NLM 2004) <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/cbm/healthliteracybarriers.html>  
Online Bibliography from National Library of Medicine (650 citations published between 2001-2003)
- Article: "6 Barriers to Health Literacy" <http://www.healthliteracy.com/files/HealthLiteracy.pdf>
- Kaiser Family Foundation <http://www.kff.org/>
- ERIC Digest (1995): Adult Learners & ESL <http://www.ericdigests.org/1996-1/low.htm> and  
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubs93/93275.pdf>
- Beyond the Brochure <http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/nbccedp/bccpdfs/amcbeyon.pdf>  
80-page article from CDC (1994)
- AMDA Health Literacy Article <http://www.amda.com/caring/january2003/healthliteracy.htm>

### **Websites for Patients and Their Families**

- MedlinePlus <http://medlineplus.gov/>
- MedlinePlus Interactive Tutorials <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/tutorial.html>
- MedlinePlus (in Spanish) <http://medlineplus.gov/spanish/>
- Patient Education Materials (in Spanish) <http://uuhsc.utah.edu/pated/handouts/indexspan.cfm>
- Harvard - Disease Risk Calculator <http://www.yourdiseaserisk.harvard.edu/>
- UCHC *HealthNet* Librarians <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet/> and  
• Patient Advocacy Resources <http://library.uchc.edu/departm/hnet/advocacy.html>
- Health Finder <http://www.healthfinder.gov/>
- NOAH (in English and Spanish) <http://www.noah-health.org/> and  
<http://www.noah-health.org/es/search/a2z.php>
- ESL Health/Picture Stories [http://www.cal.org/caela/esl\\_resources/Health/healthindex.html](http://www.cal.org/caela/esl_resources/Health/healthindex.html)
- UCSF - Patient Handouts <http://itsa.ucsf.edu/~hclinic/handouts.dir/lowlit.dir/lowlit.html>

