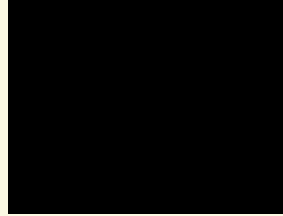


## Partnering with Patients to Use Teach-Back



UW Medicine

## Video: Prevalence of Low Health Literacy



## Definitions

### Health Literacy

The ability to obtain, understand, and use health information.

### Teach-Back

A simple 3-step process that will help you assess whether your patients understand health information you explain to them.

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### A doctor explains early-stage kidney disease

**"Early-stage kidney disease is a**

*condition in which the small blood vessels in the kidneys are damaged, making the kidneys unable to do their job. Waste then builds up in the blood, poisoning the body. Diabetes and high blood pressure damage the blood vessels in the kidneys, so the kidneys are not able to filter the blood as well as they need to. Usually this damage happens slowly over many years. The more and more blood vessels are damaged, the kidneys eventually stop working. Other risk factors for kidney disease are cardiovascular (heart) disease and a family history of kidney failure. If you have any of these risk factors, you should get tested for kidney disease. Diet and exercise seem to be the only way to treat early-stage kidney disease. A blood test measures your GFR and is used to check for protein. The right treatment can help prevent further kidney damage and slow down kidney disease. The best kidney disease is found, the sooner you can take medications, called ACE inhibitors or ARBs, and other steps that can keep your kidneys healthy longer. Kidney disease usually gets worse over time. Kidney disease can turn into kidney failure, at which point dialysis or a kidney transplant is needed. Kidney disease can also lead to heart disease."*



### What did the patient hear?

"Kidney disease, yada, yada yada yada yada yada yada."



### Story from UWMC Interpreter Services



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What is teach-back?



**A 3-step process:**

1. Explain.
2. Check.
3. Re-explain, if needed.

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What teach-back is NOT



Teach-back is NOT a test of the patient.

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Why should I use teach-back?



- To check comprehension
- To involve patients in their care
- To reduce preventable readmissions and medication errors

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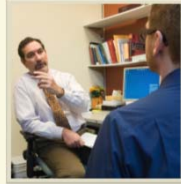
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### Why should I use teach-back?

**Endorsed by these organizations:**

- American Academy of Family Physicians
- American College of Surgeons
- American Hospital Association
- American Medical Association
- American Nursing Association
- The Joint Commission
- National Quality Forum



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### Why should I use teach-back?



**Quotes About Teach-Back**

"Both the National Quality Forum and **The Joint Commission recommended the use of 'teach-back'** to assess for and ensure understanding of discharge instructions with patients and their caregivers."

– *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*

"Substantial evidence demonstrates that **when patients repeat information in their own words and demonstrate health care skills ... learning and retention are increased.**"

– *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*

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### I decided to do teach-back on five patients.



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**Teach-back = Good communication**



*"Effective communication promotes greater satisfaction and helps ensure better adherence to treatment plans, with better health outcomes for patients.*

*"Good communication also reduces the likelihood of lawsuits even when the patients don't have good outcomes."*

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**Teach-back is efficient**



*"We're the busiest clinic in the hospital. We were afraid teach-back would slow us down to the point of being nonfunctional. But my clinic is proof that teach-back doesn't slow you down.*

*"With teach-back, cancellations plummeted."*

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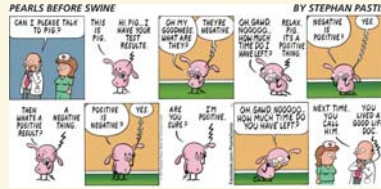
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**Use teach-back to check understanding of a range of information**



**Do you know if your patients understand that a "negative" test result is often a good result?**

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How do I use teach-back correctly?

**Chunk & Check**



Explanation understood by patient

Explanation **NOT** understood by patient

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How do I use teach-back correctly?

**Step 1**  
Give your patient information.

**Chunk**



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How do I use teach-back correctly?

**Step 2**  
Ask your patient to explain back to you in their own words what you have told them.

**Check**

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How do I use teach-back correctly?


**Step 3**

**Based on your patient's response in Step 2:**

- Add new information, as appropriate.

OR

- Find another way to present the information.



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Video: Teach-back Tip #1



**Avoid yes/no questions.**

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Teach-back Tip #2



**Set the stage.**

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**“In the absence of teach-back,  
the only indicator of  
misunderstanding may be a  
medication mistake or  
patient error...”**

*Dr. Fred Marsh, Iowa Health Study, 2004*

### Resources and References

- UWMC Patient and Family Education Services website: <http://depts.washington.edu/pfes>
- AHRQ Health Literacy Tool Kit: [www.ahrq.gov/qual/literacy](http://www.ahrq.gov/qual/literacy)
- American Medical Association
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- *No Time to Teach: The Essence of Patient and Family Education for Health Care Providers*. Fran London, MS, RN. Pritchett & Hull Associates, Atlanta, GA, 2009.
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- Teach-Back Toolkit. online at [www.teachbacktraining.com](http://www.teachbacktraining.com). Iowa Health Systems, et al
- Using "Teach-Back" to Promote a Safe Transition From Hospital to Home. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* (2012). Kornburger, C et al. Accessed online April 2013.

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To Learn More

**Andrea Dotson, CHES, Health Educator**  
*University of Washington Medical Center  
Patient and Family Education Services  
206-598-7448, dotsona@uw.edu*

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