

Who's here?

Why are you here?

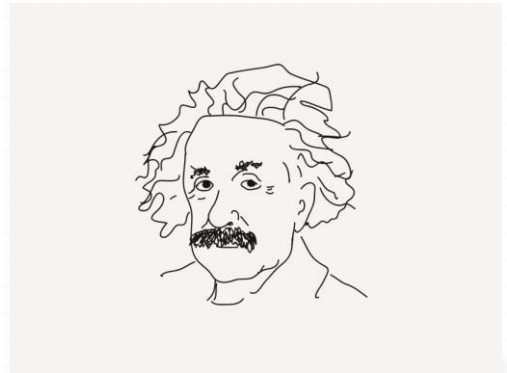
What I Hope You'll Learn

- Identify and apply the key principles of plain language
- Describe the types of literacy and their demands on verbal and written communication
- Be able to revise writing examples using plain language techniques

Prevalence based on fasting and 2-h glucose in the subsamples of people without diagnosed diabetes was adjusted by the prevalence of diagnosed diabetes, so that the sum of all diagnostic categories added to the total U.S. population. To compute the estimated numbers of people in the diagnostic categories in 1997, the NHANES III age-specific rates were applied to U.S. Census Bureau projections of the U.S. population of 1 July 1997 (17,18). Age-adjusted rates were computed by the direct method using the age distribution of the 1980 U.S. population (19). SE was calculated and tests of statistical significance were performed using SUDAAN, a program that accounts for the nonrandom sample design in computing variance estimates.

“If you can’t explain something simply,
you don’t understand it very well.”

Albert Einstein





“That sounds real nice, baby.
Now, can you just say it again
from your heart?”

My mother

What is Plain Language?

- Communication that your audience or readers can understand the **first time** they hear or read it.
- Language that is simple, clear, direct and uses common words.

Plain language is a health equity issue and includes:

- the way we talk
- the way we write
- the way we e-mail
- our body language
- all the ways we communicate

Goals of Plain Language

- Help the reader ***find*** what they need
- Help the reader ***understand*** what they find
- Help the reader ***use*** what they find to meet their needs

*If your document doesn't do all three,
it's not plain language.*

9

Plain Writing Act of 2010

President Obama signed the Plain Writing Act of 2010 (H.R. 946/Public Law 111-274) on October 13, 2010. The Act requires the federal government to write documents, such as tax returns, federal college aid applications, and Veterans Administration forms in simple easy-to-understand language.

Plain Language Myths

Plain Language is NOT:

- ✓ Imprecise
- ✓ An attempt to dumb-down information
- ✓ Stripping out necessary technical/legal information
- ✓ Just editorial “polishing” after you finish writing
- ✓ Something state leaders, legislatures will never go for
- ✓ Easy

//

What Your Audience May Think

- You don't care
- You don't want to want take the time to find a more plain way to write
- You want to show off
- You want to hide something not clear or not true

Unplain Language Writers Concerns

- Others will think you're not smart unless you use big words
- Think it sounds better
- Can't talk about hard, complex ideas in plain language
- Feel like you are talking down to people
- You want to fit in (it's the cultural norm, how it's always been done)

1/3 of US adults have trouble reading and acting on health related information



Health Literacy

- **Fundamental Literacy** (reading, writing, speaking, interpreting numbers)
- **Marginal Literacy** (difficulty obtaining, processing, understanding)
- **Quantitative Literacy** (basic math skills)
- **Scientific Literacy** (reading food labels)

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 ounce Servings in bag 4

Amount Per Serving

Calories 155 **Calories from Fat** 93

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 11g 16%

Saturated Fat 3g 15%

Trans Fat

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 148mg 6%

Total Carbohydrate 14g 5%

Dietary Fiber 1g 5%

Sugars 1g

Protein 2g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 9%

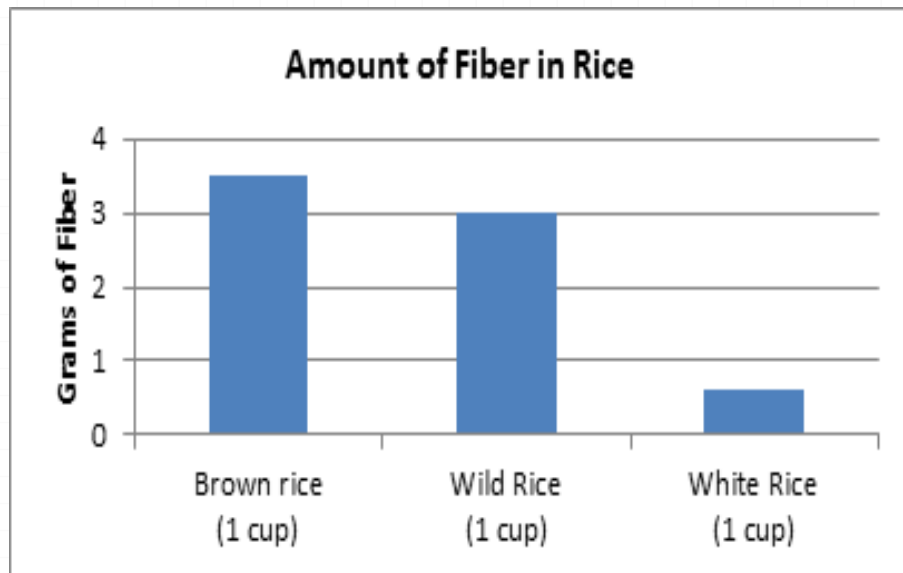
Calcium 1% • Iron 3%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

The Challenge of Explaining “Discretionary Calories”

For example, assume your calorie budget is 2,000 calories per day. Of these calories, you need to spend at least 1,735 calories for essential nutrients, if you choose foods without added fat and sugar. Then you have 265 discretionary calories left.

Tables, Graphs and Charts





So, what can you do?

Existing Label

Allergy Tablets

INDICATIONS: Provides effective, temporary relief of sneezing, watery and itchy eyes, and runny nose due to hay fever and other upper respiratory allergies.

DIRECTIONS: Adults and children 12 years and over—1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours, not to exceed 6 tablets in 24 hours or as directed by a physician. Children 6 to 11 years—one half the adult dose (break tablet in half) every 4 to 6 hours, not to exceed 3 whole tablets in 24 hours. For children under 6 years, consult a physician.

EACH TABLET CONTAINS: Chlorpheniramine Maleate 4 mg. **May also contain** (may differ from brand): D&C Yellow No. 10, Lactose, Magnesium Stearate, Microcrystalline Cellulose, Pregelatinized Starch.

WARNINGS: May cause excitability especially in children. Do not take this product unless directed by a physician, if you have a breathing problem such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis, or if you have glaucoma or difficulty in urination due to enlargement of the prostate gland. May cause drowsiness; alcohol, sedatives and tranquilizers may increase the drowsiness effect. Avoid alcoholic beverages, and do not take this product if you are taking sedatives or tranquilizers without first consulting your physician. Use caution when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery. As with any drug, if you are pregnant or nursing a baby, seek the advice of a health professional before using this product. Keep this and all drugs out of the reach of children. In case of accidental overdose, seek professional assistance or contact a Poison Control Center immediately.

Store at controlled room temperature 2°-30°C (36°-86°F).

Use by expiration date printed on package.

Protect from excessive moisture.

For better identification keep tablets in carton until used.



Made in U.S.A.

Drug Facts

Active ingredient (in each tablet)

Chlorpheniramine maleate 2 mg.....Antihistamine

Purpose

Uses temporarily relieves these symptoms due to hay fever or other upper respiratory allergies: ■ sneezing ■ runny nose ■ itchy, watery eyes ■ itchy throat

Warnings

Ask a doctor before use if you have

■ glaucoma ■ a breathing problem such as emphysema or chronic bronchitis
■ trouble urinating due to an enlarged prostate gland

Ask a doctor or pharmacist before use if you are taking tranquilizers or sedatives

When using this product

■ drowsiness may occur ■ avoid alcoholic drinks
■ alcohol, sedatives, and tranquilizers may increase drowsiness
■ be careful when driving a motor vehicle or operating machinery
■ excitability may occur, especially in children

If pregnant or breast-feeding, ask a health professional before use.

Keep out of reach of children. In case of overdose, get medical help or contact a Poison Control Center right away.

Directions

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| adults and children 12 years and over | take 2 tablets every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 12 tablets in 24 hours |
| children 6 years to under 12 years | take 1 tablet every 4 to 6 hours; not more than 6 tablets in 24 hours |
| children under 6 years | ask a doctor |

Drug Facts (continued)

Other information ■ store at 20-25°C (68-77°F) ■ protect from excessive moisture

Inactive ingredients D&C yellow no. 10, lactose, magnesium stearate, microcrystalline cellulose, pregelatinized starch

CALIFORNIA ADVANCE HEALTH CARE DIRECTIVE

Explanation

You have the right to give instructions about your own health care. You also have the right to name someone else to make health care decisions for you. This form lets you do either or both of these things. It also lets you express your wishes regarding donation of organs and the designation of your primary physician. If you use this form, you may complete or modify all or any part of it. You are free to use a different form.

Part 1 of this form is a power of attorney for health care. Part 1 lets you name another individual as agent to make health care decisions for you if you become incapable of making your own decisions or if you want someone else to make those decisions for you now even though you are still capable. You may name an alternate agent to act for you if your first choice is not willing, able, or reasonably available to make decisions for you. (Your agent may not be an operator or employee of a community care facility or a residential care facility where you are receiving care, or an employee of the health care institution where you are receiving care, unless your agent is related to you, is your registered domestic partner, or is a co-worker. Your supervising health care provider can never act as your agent.)

Unless the form you sign limits the authority of your agent, your agent may make all health care decisions for you. This form has a place for you to limit the authority of your agent. You need not limit the authority of your agent if you wish to rely on your agent for all health care decisions that may have to be made. If you choose not to limit the authority of your agent, your agent will have the right to:

- (a) Consent or refuse consent to any care, treatment, service, or procedure to maintain, diagnose, or otherwise affect a physical or mental condition;
- (b) Select or discharge health care providers and institutions;
- (c) Approve or disapprove diagnostic tests, surgical procedures and programs of medication; and
- (d) Direct the provision, withholding, or withdrawal of artificial nutrition and hydration and all other forms of health care, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation;
- (e) Make anatomical gifts, authorize an autopsy, and direct the disposition of your remains.

Part 2 of this form lets you give specific instructions about any aspect of your health care, whether or not you appoint an agent. Choices are provided for you to express your wishes regarding the provision, withholding, or withdrawal of treatment to keep you alive, as well as the provision of pain relief. Space is provided for you to add to the choices you have made or for you to write out any additional wishes. If you are satisfied to allow your agent to determine what is best for you in making end-of-life decisions, you need not fill out part 2 of this form.

Part 3 of this form lets you express an intention to donate your bodily organs and tissues following your death.

Part 4 of this form lets you designate a physician to have primary responsibility for your health care.

After completing this form, sign and date the form at the end. The form must be signed by two qualified witnesses or acknowledged before a notary public. Give a copy of the signed and completed form to your physician, to any other health care providers you may have, to any health care institution at which you are receiving care, and to any health care agents you have named. You should talk to the person you have named as agent to make sure that he or she understands your wishes and is willing to take the responsibility.

You have the right to revoke this advance health care directive or replace this form at any time.

California Advance Health Care Directive

This form lets you have a say about how
you want to be treated if you get very sick.



This form has 3 parts. It lets you:

Part 1: Choose a health care agent.

A health care agent is a person who can make medical decisions for you if you are too sick to make them yourself.

Part 2: Make your own health care choices.

This form lets you choose the kind of health care you want.

This way, those who care for you will not have to guess what you want if you are too sick to tell them yourself.

Part 3: Sign the form.

It must be signed before it can be used.



You can fill out Part 1, Part 2, or both.

Fill out only the parts you want.

Always sign the form in Part 3.

Go to the next page

1

Before

I give my Agent the power to exercise or perform any act, power, duty, right, or obligation whatsoever that I have or may hereafter acquire, relating to any person, matter, transaction, or property, real or personal, tangible or intangible, now owned or hereafter acquired by me, including, without limitation, the following specifically enumerated powers. I grant to my Agent full power and authority to do everything necessary in exercising any of the powers herein granted as fully as I might or could do if personally present, with full power of substitution or revocation, hereby ratifying and confirming all that my Agent shall lawfully do or cause to be done by virtue of this Power of Attorney and the powers herein granted.

After

After

I give my agent the power to do anything that I have a right or duty to do, now or in the future.

Source: State Bar of Michigan Plain English Committee (Joseph Kimble)

Before

The plan covering the patient as a dependent child of a person whose date of birth occurs earlier in the calendar year shall be primary over the plan covering the patient as a dependent of a person whose date of birth occurs later in the calendar year provided.

After

What happens if my spouse and I both have health coverage for our child?

If your child is covered under more than one insurance policy, the policy of the adult whose birthday is earlier in the year pays the claim first. For example: Your birthday is in March; your spouse's birthday is in May. March comes earlier in the year than May, so your policy will pay for your child's claim first.

Important Questions to Ask

Why does the user need to read your document?

What questions might the reader ask?

In what order will they ask the questions?

What is the most important information so the reader can find it quickly?

Need to Know/Nice to Know

Prioritize the information you give:

- Choose 3 important points you want to cover in the message
- Prioritize need-to-know versus nice-to-know information

Example: A community member with asthma

- **Need-to-know information** is information about an action step, such as how to use an inhaler
- **Nice-to-know information** is information that the client won't act on, such as how many people have asthma in the United States

Colorectal Cancer Screening Awareness Campaign

Dear _____,

Your Fecal Occult Blood Test results were found to be positive.

A fecal occult blood test may be used to check for colorectal cancer, but it is never used to diagnose this condition. During your routine physical examination, your doctor offered you a fecal occult blood test (FOBT) to complete at home. It is used to detect microscopic blood in the stool and is a screening tool for some intestinal conditions or colorectal cancer. Other conditions that can cause blood in the stool include:

- o Hemorrhoids. These are enlarged, swollen veins in the anus.
- o Anal fissures. These are thin tears in the tissue that lines the anus (anal sphincters) up into the anal canal.
- o Colon polyps. These growths of tissue often look like a stem or stalk with a round top that is attached to the colon.
- o Peptic ulcers. These craterlike sores develop when the digestive juices made in the stomach eat away the lining of the digestive tract.
- o Ulcerative colitis. This type of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) causes inflammation and craterlike sores (ulcers) in the inner lining of the colon and rectum.
- o Gastro esophageal reflux disease (GERD). This is the abnormal backflow (reflux) of food, stomach acid, and other digestive juices into the esophagus.
- o Cohn's disease. This type of inflammatory bowel disease causes inflammation and ulcers that may affect the deep layers of the lining of the digestive tract.
- o Use of aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs).

Other tests for colorectal cancer include a barium enema, flexible sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, or CT scan (virtual colonoscopy).

As this is important for your health, please contact our health coordinator at 555-555-5555 or your health care provider for more information.

Colorectal Cancer Screening Awareness Campaign

Dear _____,

You recently did an at-home stool (poop) test for colorectal cancer screening. Blood was found in your stool, which is not normal. It is important to find out early why there is blood in your stool. It can be there because of cancer or because of other simple problems such as hemorrhoids.

You need to have a second test (colonoscopy) to find out why there is blood in your stool. This is the only way we can determine why you have blood in your stool. Our program will provide and pay for this second test. Our staff will help you schedule your colonoscopy.

Please contact our health coordinator at 555-555-5555 or your health care provider to schedule this important second test (colonoscopy).

Before:

“Managed care is coordinated care provided by a network of providers.”

After:

“When you join a health plan, doctors, nurses, and hospitals who work for the plan will give you the medical care you need. You can choose one doctor or clinic to go to every time you are sick or want a checkup.”



Reshape your thinking.

Begin at a point of “not understanding”.

Create Consumer-Friendly Materials


Write and design materials for your intended audience(s) so that information:

- is easy to find
- looks easy to read
- is easy to read
- is easy to understand
- seems easy to relate to

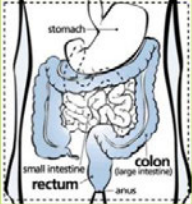
Make Information Easy to Find

Know the facts about...

Colorectal Cancer



Map of the colon and rectum



What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer is a type of cancer that starts as a tiny growth or polyp in the colon (large intestine) and rectum. This type of cancer happens most often in men and women over the age of 50.

Should I be screened?

You should be screened for colorectal cancer if:

- You are over 50 years old.
- If you are younger than 50 years old *and* ...
 - are African American;
 - have parents, siblings, or children with colon growths (polyps) or colorectal cancer; or
 - have a digestive system disease such as ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease.

What are the signs?


- ☐ Blood in your poop
- ☐ Soft or watery poop
- ☐ Belly pain for no clear reason
- ☐ Losing weight for no clear reason
- ☐ Hard to poop or feeling like you are "plugged up"
- ☐ No signs at all!

If you have any of these signs of colorectal cancer, are over the age of 50, or have close family members with a history of colorectal cancer – don't wait to get screened. Screening could save your life!

**Find cancer early and survive –
Get screened for colorectal cancer!**

Brought to you by the Iowa Department of Public Health – Chronic Disease Prevention and 34 designated sites by 3 grant sites that Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This material was adapted from the National Colorectal Cancer Research Program.

Turn the page to learn more...

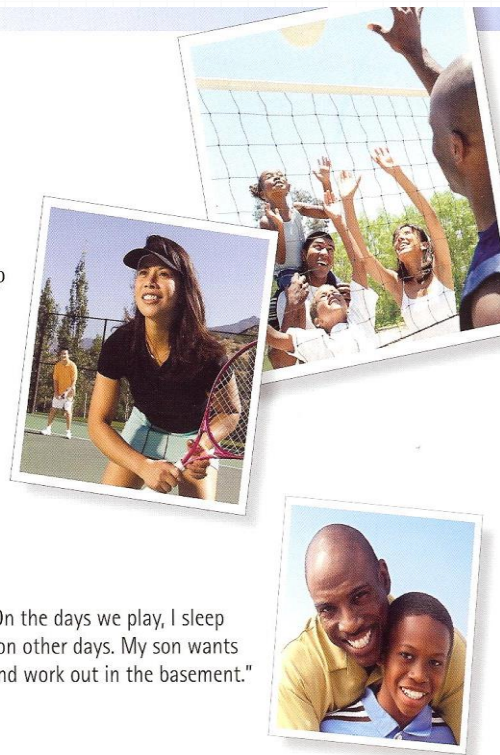


Iowa Get Screened
Colorectal Cancer Program

Make Information Look Easy to Find

For best success

- Team up with a friend. It will keep you motivated and be more fun.
- Pick activities that you like to do.
- Track your time and progress. It helps you stay on course. Fill in the forms on pages 20 and 21 to help set your activity goals. Before you know it, you'll be able to do at least **2 hours and 30 minutes** of activities at a moderate level each week.
- Add in more strength-building activities over time. For example, you can do sit-ups or push-ups.



Shaping up

"My son and I play in a baseball league twice a week. On the days we play, I sleep much better at night. This makes me want to do more on other days. My son wants to lift weights together, and so we got some weights and work out in the basement."

Easy to Read and Understand

Did you know?

When you are **not** physically active, you are more likely to:

- Get heart disease
- Get type 2 diabetes
- Have high blood pressure
- Have high blood cholesterol
- Have a stroke



Build up over time

Start by doing what you can, and then look for ways to do more. If you have not been active for a while, start out slowly. After several weeks or months, build up your activities—do them longer and more often.

Walking is one way to add physical activity to your life. When you first start, walk 10 minutes a day on a few days during the first couple of weeks.

Add more time and days. Walk a little longer. Try 15 minutes instead of 10 minutes. Then walk on more days a week.

Pick up the pace. Once this is easy to do, try walking faster. Keep up your brisk walking for a couple of months. You might want to add biking on the weekends for variety.

Who might these messengers appeal to?



Part 1. Getting Started



Start slowly

"The employee wellness program at my work just started a new lunchtime walking program. Some of us walk at a good clip, while others move at a slower pace. I get to be outdoors, and I feel more alert on the days I walk."

Thinking about adding physical activity to your life, but not sure how to get started? Sometimes taking the first step is the hardest part.

If you have not been active in some time, start at a comfortable level and add a little more activity as you go along. Some people find that getting active with a friend makes it easier to get started.

Is something holding you back?

Think about reasons why you have not been physically active. Then try to come up with some ways to get past what is keeping you from getting active.

Have you said to yourself . . . ?

I haven't been active in a very long time.

Solution: Choose something you like to do. Many people find walking helps them get started. Before you know it, you will be doing more each day.

I don't have the time.

Solution: Start with 10-minute chunks of time a couple of days a week. Walk during a break. Dance in the living room to your favorite music. It all adds up.

Things to Avoid

Wordiness

Common sources of excess words:

- ✓ Passive Voice
- ✓ Redundancies
- ✓ Prepositional Phrases
- ✓ Hidden Verbs
- ✓ Unnecessary modifiers
- ✓ Failure to use pronouns

Editing Exercise

Editing is a process that removes all those unnecessary words that take up large amounts of space but add nothing of any real significance to the meaning of a message.

Editing Exercise

Editing is a process that **removes** all those **unnecessary words** that take up large amounts of space but add nothing of any real significance to the meaning of a message.

Active/Passive Voice

In addition, authorization to release any of the following information must be initialed and dated in the appropriate section below:

Please put your initials and the date next to the information you are giving us permission to release:

Why Avoid the Passive Voice?

Passive voice

Disguises who does what:

**Hands should be washed
before eating.**

Is wordy:

***The application must be
completed by the applicant
and received by the Extension
office at the time designated
by that office.***

Active voice

Makes it clear who does what:

**Wash your hands before you
eat.**

Is concise:

***We must receive your
completed application by the
deadline.***

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Why Avoid Passive Voice?

Passive Voice

Is awkward:

The individual must be aware that the potential exists for that information to be re-disclosed by the recipient.

Active Voice

Is natural:

Your information could be shared by the person you are sending it to.

41

Redundancies

During that time period

Worked jointly together

Level of coverage

Will plan in the future

At least 12 years of age or older

At a later time

Prepositional Phrases

For the purpose of

At this point in time

In relation to

On the grounds that

On a monthly basis

Verbs disguised as nouns

- Conduct an analysis
- Present a report
- Do an assessment
- Provide assistance
- Came to the conclusion of

Abbreviations and Acronyms

- Readers complain more about abbreviations and acronyms than about any other feature of bureaucratic writing.
- Using abbreviations turns your material into a research project for readers.



"The CEO KO'd our LOI with his MOU, and the SLA was BS for managing PNL, and the FDD was DOA, and now I'm on a PIP but next week I'm on ETO so WTF."

JARGON

Impactful

Drill down

Synergy

Engage

Reach out

UTILIZE

Leveraging

Use everyday words

anticipate

attempt

commence

demonstrate

implement

in the event that

submit

terminate

expect

try

begin, start

show, prove

start

if

send, give

end, cancel

48



Plain Language Tips

Check Boxes & Bullets

Prediabetes means your blood sugar is high, but you do not have diabetes. It means you will probably develop diabetes if you do not lose weight, exercise and improve your diet. Things you can do to prevent diabetes and stay healthy include cutting back on empty calories such as pop, eating a lot of vegetables, low-fat foods and foods with fiber such as beans, whole wheat bread and oatmeal, making physical activity part of your routine by dancing, playing a sport, or walking instead of driving, keeping your weight in a normal range and getting tested every few years for diabetes.

Here are some things you can do to prevent diabetes and stay healthy:

- Cut back on empty calories such as pop
- Eat a lot of vegetables, low-fat foods and foods with fiber such as beans, whole wheat bread and oatmeal
- Make physical activity part of your routine: dance, play a sport, or walk instead of driving
- Keep your weight in a normal range
- Get tested every few years for diabetes

Style Tips

- o **For the body of the text, use fonts with serifs.** Serifs make the individual letters more distinctive and easier for our brains to recognize quickly. (Bookman, Cambria, Georgia, Times New Roman)
- o Use sans serif fonts in headings and subheadings. Sans serif is more readable when your type must be small or when used on a web site.
- o **Keep the following style tips in mind:**
 - o *Do not use FANCY or script lettering.*
 - o Use both upper and lower case letters.
- o **DO NOT USE ALL CAPS**

Style Tips

- Use **bold type** to emphasize words or phrases.
- Limit the use of *italics* or underlining. They are hard to read.
- Use dark letters on a light background. Light text on a dark background is harder to read.



A caption can tell exactly what the visual is trying to convey. Captions should be repeated in a sentence found in the body of the document to reinforce the message.

Officer helps a child put on his bicycle helmet correctly

Images and Symbols

Not all cultures understand universal symbols



No Smoking



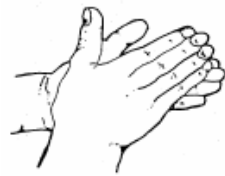
Stairs

Photos are best for showing life events



Illustrations

- **Simple illustrations or line drawings work best in some instances.**
 - Can simplify complexities and highlight key components of an idea.
- **Drawings work best for:**
 - showing a procedure (drawing blood)
 - showing socially sensitive issues (drug addiction)
 - explaining an invisible or hard-to-see event (airborne transmission of a cold).



1. Palm to palm



2. Right palm over left dorsum and left palm over right dorsum



3. Palm to palm fingers interlaced



4. Backs of fingers to opposing palms with fingers interlocked



5. Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa



6. Rotational rubbing, backwards and forwards with clasped fingers of right hand in left palm and vice versa



© 1997 USPC





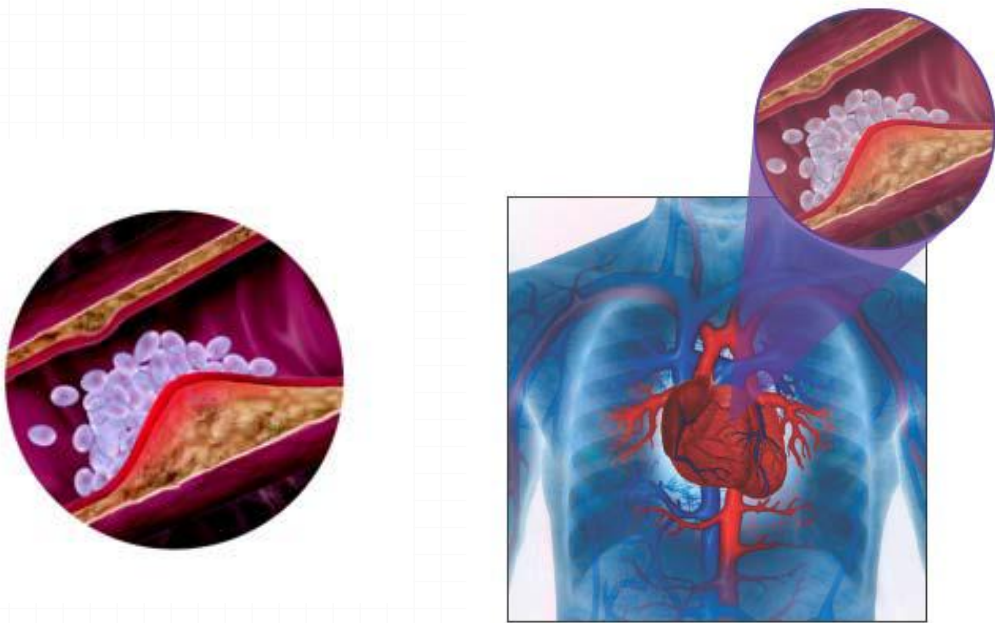


Image B





Plain Language in Action

Before370 words
9.1 grade reading level**Original Text****Staying in school**

This section provides information about:

- Your legal rights to stay in school while pregnant or parenting
- Things to consider if you are thinking of changing schools
- Services available to help you stay in school and be a parent

Will I be able to stay in school while I am pregnant?

Yes. The law protects your right to stay in school whether or not you are pregnant or have a child. You also have the right to continue in your same school if you wish.

The school district may have schools that are specifically for pregnant and parenting minors or other alternative schools. You may want to visit these schools to see if they would be a good option for you, because they may offer services to assist you in pregnancy or parenting. But, the school district cannot require you to go to a special school. You get to choose. No one should pressure you to stay in a particular school or go to another.

In addition to a right to stay in your school, you have the right to participate in all school activities, including sports, extracurricular activities, school clubs, prom, and graduation. Your school cannot require a note from your doctor saying that you are able to participate in school and/or various activities unless it requires this from all students with medical conditions.

If you are told that you cannot stay in school or participate in activities because you are pregnant or have a baby, you can contact a lawyer. The California Women's Law Center defends the rights of pregnant and parenting students to stay in school and participate in school activities. The Center's staff can be reached at 1-323-951-1041 or www.cwlc.org.

Are there other laws that protect me at school?

Yes. You cannot be treated unfairly (discriminated against) because you are pregnant or a parent. Other laws protect you from discrimination or harassment based on characteristics including your race, gender, sexual identity, and sexual orientation. Talk to your school counselor if you are being harassed or discriminated against for any reason. If you cannot resolve the problem to your satisfaction, you should contact a legal aid lawyer. You can find free legal help at <http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org/CA/index.cfm/index.cfm>.

After249 words
5.1 grade reading level**Transcend
Plain Language - DRAFT****Staying in School****This part of the guide explains**

- your right to stay in your same school if you are pregnant or have a child,
- how to choose another school, if you want, and
- Cal-SAFE and Cal-Learn, government programs to help you keep going to school.

Can I stay in school if I am pregnant or have a child?

Yes. The law says you have the right to stay in your same school, if you want to. You also have the right to

- change schools, and
- take part in all school activities, including sports, after-school activities, clubs, proms, and graduation.

If your school tells you that you cannot stay in school or take part in school activities because you are pregnant or have a baby, you may be able to get free legal help from the California Women's Law Center:

- call 1-323-951-1041, or
- visit www.cwlc.org.

Can the school treat me differently because I am pregnant or have a child?

No. It is illegal for the school to treat you unfairly or harass you because you are pregnant or have a child. It is also against the law for you to be treated unfairly because of your

- race,
- gender,
- sexual identity, or
- sexual orientation.

Talk to your school counselor or another adult if you are being treated unfairly for any reason.

If the problem does not go away, call a lawyer. The lawyer will help you no matter how old you are. You can get free legal help at www.lawhelpcalifornia.org/CA/index.cfm/index.cfm.



Before

The intent of this notice is to inform and aid in the planning of your community events. Under the Michigan Food Law (Act No. 92, as amended), a temporary Food Service License is required for a public event where food is served. The following forms are enclosed for your assistance.

After

You must get a Temporary Food Service License if you serve food at an event where the public is invited.

The following forms and guidelines will help you plan and prepare for safe food handling at your community event.

Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program Information and Consent

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Mott Children's Health Center has provided oral health services to Genesee County students for many years. The current Flint water crisis also has an impact on children's oral health. Children who drink only bottled water do not receive optimal levels of fluoride to help protect their teeth. This puts children at greater risk for developing tooth decay. Tooth decay causes poor overall health, pain, and the loss of time from school. We want to help prevent tooth decay!

Together, with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services and Delta Dental, a preventive dental program is being planned at your child's school. Topical application of fluoride is one way to help reduce the amount of tooth decay. This means that fluoride is applied directly to the outside of teeth to strengthen tooth surfaces. One method of topical application is for children to rinse with a fluoride solution once a week, for one minute. Fluoride mouth rinse has been tested, and is safe and effective in preventing tooth decay.

Fill out the form below to let us know if you want your child to participate. A dental hygienist will help your child with the fluoride rinse. This is a free program. There is no cost to you or your child's school. Please sign and return this form to your child's teacher right away. Thank you for letting us help your child prevent tooth decay.

If you have any questions about this program, please contact our oral health program coordinator, Leigh Ann Albro or Carol Lutey at (810)768-7583.

Permission for Fluoride Mouth Rinse Program

- ☐ Yes, I want my child to participate in this preventive dental program. I understand that I can withdraw my child from participation in the program at any time by notifying the school in writing.
- ☐ No, I do not want my child to participate in this preventive dental program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: ____ Name of Child: _____

_____ Age: _____ School: _____ Teacher: _____

_____ Grade: _____

TO KEEP YOUR CHILDREN'S TEETH HEALTHY DURING THE WATER CRISIS: FLUORIDE RINSE IS COMING TO YOUR SCHOOL!

Genesee County Public Schools are now providing all students with a **free fluoride mouth rinse program** to help prevent cavities.

How does the free fluoride mouth rinse program work?

At school, a Dental Hygienist will give a weekly fluoride mouth rinse to your child, which is used like mouthwash.

When your child swishes the mouth rinse over their teeth, the fluoride in the rinse will attach to the outside of the teeth to make them stronger.

The mouth rinse will also lower the chances of getting a cavity. Your child will use the rinse once a week for one minute, at school.

Are fluoride mouth rinses safe for my child?

Yes! They are safe and have been approved by the American Dental Association, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

What if I have questions about the Fluoride Program?

Call the Program Coordinator Leigh Ann Albro or Carol Luley at 810-768-7583



PERMISSION FOR THE FLUORIDE MOUTH RINSE PROGRAM

What do I need to do if I want my child to participate in the fluoride program?

1. FILL OUT THE FORM BELOW
2. SIGN THE FORM
3. RETURN THE FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER TOMORROW

___ **Yes**, I want my child to participate in this fluoride mouth rinse program. I understand that I can withdraw my child from participation in the program at any time by notifying the school in writing.

___ **No**, I do not want my child to participate in this fluoride mouth rinse program.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Name of Child: _____ Age: _____

School: _____ Teacher: _____

Grade: _____

*This program is provided by Mott Children's Health Center, Delta Dental and the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

HEALTHY TEETH HELP CHILDREN :

- DO BETTER IN SCHOOL
- STAY HEALTHIER AND HAVE LESS SICK DAYS
- HAVE SHINY SMILES, WHICH MAKE FRIENDS



**Osteoarthritis (OA)**

A joint is the place where two bones meet. The end of each bone is covered in a layer of rubbery stuff called cartilage. This keeps them from rubbing together. But cartilage can wear away over time or after an injury. When it's gone, the bones hit one another, and sometimes, tiny pieces break off. The result is a stiff, swollen, painful joint.

Healthy Eating and Diabetes

Healthy eating prevents the sugar in your blood from getting too high or too low. Healthy eating can keep your weight down and prevent complications from diabetes.

There are several ways to plan what and how you eat. What works best for you and your lifestyle may be different than for someone else with diabetes. Make sure that you are:



- Eating the right kinds of food
- Not eating too much of any food
- Eating regular meals with appropriate snacks

Eating Right With Diabetes

Carbohydrates are starchy foods such as white bread, white rice and white potatoes. They give your body and brain energy, but they can also raise the sugar in your blood. Whole grain and high-fiber carbohydrates are better for you than white bread and white pasta. High-fiber carbohydrates help lower cholesterol, digest slowly and keep your blood sugar low. Some examples include: wheat bread, rye bread, oats, pinto beans, black-eyed peas, barley, corn, peas, a small serving of potatoes, or tortillas. Look for products that say "whole grain" on them.

Write down some examples of high-fiber carbohydrates that you like:



The Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU) has worked in partnership with Nipro Diagnostics, Inc. to develop and disseminate these education materials and appreciates the education grant provided to complete this national project.

Eating Right With Diabetes

Eat lots of **vegetables**. They are naturally low in fat and in calories; and are full of vitamins, minerals and fiber. Vegetables include: spinach, broccoli, cabbage, bok choy, brussels sprouts, kale, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers and lettuce.

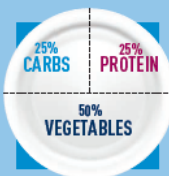
Eat **proteins** that have a small amount of fat, including lean meats, seafood, low-fat dairy, or legumes (soy products, peanut butter, beans).

Avoid food that is high in fat. High-fat foods include: butter, cream, whole milk, cooking oil, coconut oil and lard. If you have diabetes, then any extra weight can put you at risk for heart disease, so limiting fats – including chicken skin, red meat and full-fat dairy foods – is important. Even olive oil, a healthy fat, has lots of calories, so use just a little bit.

Do not eat too many sweets. Sweets include natural sweets, such as sugar or molasses, not just candy, cake, or cupcakes. When cooking sweets, use less sugar or use a sugar substitute.

What are some of the vegetables you like to eat?

Some healthy proteins you like to eat are:



Eating the Right Amount

The amount of food you eat will affect the level of sugar in your blood. Eat small amounts of food. If you are checking the sugar in your blood, then make sure you write down these readings.

One easy way to eat less is to divide your plate into three parts. Half of the plate should contain vegetables. One-quarter of the plate should contain meat or protein, such as eggs, peanut butter, fish, chicken or tofu. One-quarter should contain a carbohydrate or starch, such as corn, potato, rice or whole-grain bread.

Eating at the Right Time

The timing of your meals can affect the level of sugar in your blood. If you wait too long to eat, then your sugar level can be too low. If you eat meals too close together, or snack throughout the day, then your sugar level can be too high.

It is important to eat after taking your medicine or insulin to make sure your sugar level does not fall too low. **Do not skip meals.**



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You may have diabetes and not even know it. Some symptoms include being thirsty, peeing a lot and unexplained weight loss. It is important to have your blood sugar tested to make sure it is normal. If you have diabetes, then you can start to eat right, exercise and take medicine to control it. If you are tested and do not have diabetes, then you can still start to add healthy foods and physical activity into your life to stay healthy.

Prediabetes means your blood sugar is high, but you do not have diabetes. It means you will probably develop diabetes if you do not lose weight, exercise and improve your diet.

Things you can do to prevent diabetes and stay healthy include:

- Cut back on empty calories such as soda
- Eat a lot of vegetables, low-fat foods and foods with fiber such as beans, whole wheat bread and oatmeal
- Make physical activity part of your routine: dancing, playing a sport, or walking instead of driving
- Keep your weight in a normal range
- Get tested every few years for diabetes



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COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Health Education is dedicated to supporting the health, safety and well-being of all community members, schools, businesses and organizations. Various strategies are used to assess, inform, protect and educate the public about current health issues including educational programming and trainings; community assessments, screenings, surveys; consultation, technical assistance and support for community partners, coalitions and advisory boards; communications, media releases, notifications and warnings; and social media and web page postings and updates.

2014 Division Highlights include:

Nearly 250 health education/outreach activities were provided to approximately 6,500 participants during 2014 ranging from health screenings, presentations on communicable disease prevention education, reproductive health, public health services, nutrition and relationship safety, as well as participation in health fairs.

The Health Education team was contracted for oversight of two coalitions that addressed substance abuse prevention. The Prescription Drug Abuse Workgroup and St. Clair County Smoke Free Team (tobacco coalition) were funded through the St. Clair County CMH Authority's Substance Abuse Coordinating Agency (CA) and allowed for reimbursement for staff time and prevention efforts/activities specific to the contract. Funding opportunities also arose through the CA contract to provide communicable disease prevention education sessions for at-risk populations. As FY 15 approached, a new contract included CD Prevention Education; St Clair County Smoke Free Team coalition time and environmental/policy change work; Rx Abuse Prevention Coalition participation; MCCRUD Coalition participation; Needs Assessments/Community Scan Tool; and Safe Dates programming.

Team members were charged with working with SCC IT to revamp the new SCCHD website. The process took over a year and the improvements have been favorable among users. A new domain name was selected, www.scchealth.co and was implemented for easier access and usage. With this new change, a new SCCHD logo was created by Eighth Day Media which was implemented on the website and social media pages. This rebranding was critical in our public health outreach efforts.



COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Our Health Education Team is dedicated to supporting the health, safety and well-being of our community. Our job is to assess, inform, protect and educate the public about current health issues. We do this by providing:

- Educational Programming and Trainings
- Health Screenings
- Consultation and Technical Assistance for Partners
- Social Media and Webpage Postings
- Community Assessments
- Surveys of the Community
- Notifications and warnings
- Communications and Media Releases

2014 Division Highlights

6,500 community members served with nearly 250 health education and outreach activities

Participants were involved in:

- Health screenings and health fairs
- Presentations on reproductive health, available public health services, nutrition, disease prevention and relationship safety

Provided oversight to two Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions

New 2015 Contact

Revamping the Health Department Website

For over a year we have been working with St. Clair County IT to rebrand our public health outreach efforts.

The improvements have received favorable comments from users and include:

- A new domain name (www.scchealth.co) that is easier to use and access
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St. Clair County Health Department

Division of Environmental Health
3415 28th Street, Port Huron, MI 48060
(810) 987-5306
www.stclaircounty.org/offices/health

Nitrate in Drinking Water FAQ Information for Private Water Well Owners

What is nitrate?

Nitrate (NO_3) is a form of nitrogen combined with oxygen. It can be converted in the body to nitrite (NO_2). The major adult intake of nitrate is from food rather than water, but sometimes excessive amounts of nitrate can get into drinking water.

How does nitrate get into drinking water?

Nitrate can get into drinking water if a well is improperly constructed or located where it is subject to contamination sources. Typical sources of nitrate include septic tank and drain field effluent, crop and lawn fertilizers, waste from livestock operations, and natural geological nitrogen.

What illnesses can nitrate cause?

Large amounts of nitrate in drinking water can cause a serious illness in infants under six months of age called *Methemoglobinemia*, or Blue Baby Syndrome. *Methemoglobinemia* is a condition in which the ability of the red blood cells to carry oxygen is reduced and the acutely poisoned person will have a blue discoloration of the skin due. Also, because nitrate contamination can be related to human, animal or industrial wastes, excessive levels of nitrate in drinking water may indicate potential for the presence of other types of contaminants.

What is the procedure for testing my well water for nitrate?

The Health Department recommends a Partial Mineral test for \$34 to test your water for nitrates, which will also test for chloride, fluoride, iron and other minerals. You must come into the Health Department to purchase your water sample bottle. You must mail the bottle to the DEQ laboratory within 48 hours of taking the sample. Results are mailed to you from the DEQ usually within one week.

How often should I sample my water for nitrates?

Unlike public water supplies, private household water systems are not required by law to sample on a routine basis. The St. Clair County Health Department does recommend testing a private water supply for nitrates once a year.

For more information
St. Clair County Health Department
3415 28th Street, Port Huron

Mondays 10:00am – 6:30pm and Tuesday – Fridays 8:00am – 4:30pm
(810) 987-5306



Why You Should Worry About Nitrates in Your Drinking Water

Information for Private Water Well Owners

What is nitrate?

Nitrate (NO_3) is a compound formed by combining nitrogen with oxygen. Adults get most nitrates from food rather than water. But sometimes excessive amounts of nitrate can get into drinking water.

How can nitrate get into my drinking water?

Nitrate can get into your drinking water if your well is not properly constructed or it is located too close to sources of contamination. This includes septic tanks and drain field **effluent**, crop and lawn fertilizers, waste from livestock operations, and nitrogen that is naturally present in the soil.

What illnesses can nitrate cause?

Large amounts of nitrate in drinking water can cause a serious illness in infants under six months called *Methemoglobinemia*, or Blue Baby Syndrome. This condition reduces the ability of red blood cells to carry oxygen and **can cause the baby's skin** to turn a blueish color.

Because nitrate contamination can also be caused by human, animal or industrial wastes, too many nitrates in your drinking water may mean there are other contaminants in your water.

How do I test my well water for nitrate?

The Health Department recommends a Partial Mineral test. This test costs \$34 and checks for nitrates as well as chloride, fluoride, iron and other minerals. Water sample bottles and complete instructions for doing the test are available at the Health Department.

How often should I sample my water for nitrates?

The St. Clair County Health Department recommends testing a private water supply for nitrates once a year.

For more information contact
St. Clair County Health Department
3415 28th Street, Port Huron, MI.
(810) 987-5306

Reference: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
S:\Stormwater\Public Education\Website\Nitrates in Drinking Water.doc

03/18/2013

Plain Language Resources

National Institutes of Health – Health Literacy Initiative

<https://www.nih.gov/institutes-nih/nih-office-director/office-communications-public-liaison/clear-communication/plain-language/plain-language-getting-started-or-brushing/>

Center for Plain Language – www.centerforplainlanguage.org

CDC Clear Communication Index

<http://www.cdc.gov/ccindex/>

Plainlanguage.gov

National Institute of Minority Health & Health Disparities

Portal with resource to organizations who work with health disparity populations with limited English proficiency (LEP) to help improve language access to health information.

<https://nimhd.nih.gov/programs/edu-training/language-access/index.html>

Questions?

Viki Lorraine

517-420-5070

vikilorraine@gmail.com