



Instruments to Assess Health Literacy³

Tool Acronym	Tool's Full Name	Time to Administer	Pros	Cons	Scoring
FSSQ	Duke-UNC Functional Social Support Questionnaire	Depends on Clinician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identifies social support issues. Assesses a person's need for and perception of their social support.² 	Does not resolve social support issues. Does not include other barriers to medication adherence. ²	Scale of 1-5. 5 is "as much as I would like". 1 is "much less than I would like". ²
Medication Knowledge Survey	Medication Knowledge Survey	Depends on Clinician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assesses a patient's knowledge of each medication they are taking Will help in developing a plan for improving knowledge² 	The patient needs to know what medications they are taking at the time of the test ²	Identifies knowledge gaps ²
MMS	Modified Morisky Scale	Depends on Clinician	Measures specific medication-taking behavior ⁶	Does not measure adherence ⁶	1 point for every yes. 0 points is high adherence 1-2 is intermediate. 3-4 is low adherence ⁵
NVS	Newest Vital Sign	3 minutes ³	It is available online, in English and Spanish ³ The test is limited to 6 items ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It can only be validated in primary care settings³ It only assesses reading 	0-4 questions correct= low literacy 5-6 questions correct= patients

				nutritional labels, not general written text ³	likely do not have low literacy ⁴
Readiness Ruler	Readiness Ruler	Depends on Clinician	Assess readiness to change (motivation) for a specific activity ²	Does not address barriers ²	The patient marks their own readiness on a scale of 0-10. A score above 5 shows that a person is ready to change. ²
REALM-R	Rapid Estimate of Adult Literacy in Medicine, Revised	Depends on Clinician	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a long version and a short version³ • Assesses adult literacy related to health² 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only available in English³ • Can only be used to test adults³ • Limited to word recognition, not reading comprehension³ 	Tally of the correctly understood words. A score of less than 6 may indicate poor health literacy ²
SAHLSA	Short Assessment of Health Literacy for Spanish Speaking Adults	5 minutes ³	This test is designed for Spanish speakers ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is only available in Spanish³ • It is only for adults³ 	Tally of correct answers ⁴
SILS	Single Item Literacy Screener	1 minute ³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a simple test with only one question³ • Identifies patients with limited reading ability⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It may not catch literacy issues in people with a marginal reading ability³ 	A selection of 2 or greater can indicate difficulty reading health materials

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respondents may not be honest, creating false negative⁴ 	<p>where 1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=Sometimes, 4=Often, 5=Always⁴</p>
<p>TOFHLA STOFHLA</p>	<p>Test of Functional Health Literacy in Adults (S)- short version</p>	<p>Long: 22 minutes³ Short: 7 minutes³</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a short version and a long version³ • There are English and Spanish versions³ • It has been used in numerous clinical trials³ • It is more effective than word recognition alone.³ • It can gauge a person's understanding of a health-related passage by assessing reading comprehension and numerical ability^{3,4} 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The original version is too lengthy³ • Even the shorter version has a longer administration time than other tools⁴ 	<p>One point per correct answer.⁴</p> <p><i>In the long version:</i> 0-59=Inadequate health literacy 60-74= Marginal Literacy 75-100= Adequate Literacy</p> <p><i>In the short version:</i> 0-53= Inadequate health literacy 54-66= Marginal health literacy 67-100= Adequate health literacy⁴</p>

1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. SAHLSA. <http://www.ahrq.gov/populations/sahlsa.pdf>
2. American Society on Aging and American Society of Consultant Pharmacists Foundation. Assessment Tools. <http://www.adultmeducation.com/AssessmentTools.html>



3. Evangelista et al. (2010). Health literacy and the patient with heart failure- Implications for patient care and research: A consensus statement of the heart failure society of America. *Journal of Cardiac Failure*, 16(1): 9-16.
4. HIV Clinical Resource. Health Literacy Tools. <http://www.hivguidelines.org/>
5. Improving healthcare for the common good. Morisky scale. http://www.ipro.org/index/cms-filesystem-action/care/medication-management/morisky_scale.pdf
6. Morisky, et al. (2008). Predictive validity of a medication adherence measure for hypertension control. Postprints, UCLA
7. Morris et al. (2006). The single item literacy screener: Evaluation of a brief instrument to identify limited reading ability. *BMC Family Practice*, 7(21).