



How to fill in PODS with content that patients can understand

- 1 Use COMMON WORDS.**
- 2 LISTEN:** To get a common word explanation of something, try explaining it verbally to a lower literate patient and having them explain it back, taking note of what words were used.
- 3 REFERENCE LIST:** The Plain Language Thesaurus for Health Communications is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
[HTTP://DEPTS.WASHINGTON.EDU/RESPCARE/PUBLIC/INFO/PLAIN_LANGUAGE_THESAURUS_FOR_HEALTH_COMMUNICATIONS.PDF](http://depts.washington.edu/respcare/public/info/plain_language_thesaurus_for_health_communications.pdf)
- 4 EXAMPLES OF WORDS PATIENTS MAY NOT UNDERSTAND**
 - a** Say: high blood pressure, Not: hypertension
 - b** Say: birth control, Not: contraception
- 5 KEEP IN MIND WHAT IS RELEVANT FOR THE PATIENT TO ACT ON** – to be able to complete proper follow up care at home. Skip details that are only nice to know.
- 6 BE CONSISTENT WITH WORD USE.** Pick the most familiar words and use them throughout your text.
 - a** For example: Mad cow disease and bovine spongiform encephalitis may be the same thing, but your patient may think they are two different diseases.
- 7 USE ANALOGIES FAMILIAR TO YOUR AUDIENCE.** When making comparisons, use references that your audience will recognize.
 - a** Say: Feel for lumps about the size of a pea, Not: Feel for lumps about 5 to 6 millimeters in diameter.
- 8 AVOID** unnecessary abbreviations and acronyms.
- 9 MATHEMATICAL CONCEPTS**, such as risk, normal, and range, **MAY NOT HAVE MEANING** to your audience. If possible, use words such as “chance” or “possibility” instead.