

About half of seniors in ER willing to use tablet computers

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(HealthDay)—About half of older adults in the emergency department

are willing to provide information using a tablet computer, but few can do so without needing assistance, according to a study published online Nov. 2 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Sruti Brahmandam, from Northeast Ohio Medical University in Rootstown, and colleagues assessed whether participants would be willing to use a [tablet](#) computer to answer eight [questions](#) rather than answering questions verbally. Three hundred sixty-five individuals aged 65 years and older were approached in two U.S. academic emergency departments; of these, 248 were willing to answer screening questions.

The researchers found that 49 percent of the participants who were willing to answer screening questions were willing to use a tablet computer. Seventy-five percent of these were able to answer at least six questions correctly and 29 percent did not need assistance. Twelve percent were able to correctly answer all eight questions without needing help. The likelihood of being willing and able to use the tablet computer was increased for individuals aged 65 to 74 years and for those reporting use of a touchscreen device at least weekly. Forty-five percent of individuals with no or [mild cognitive impairment](#) were willing to use the tablet, and 32 percent answered all questions correctly.

"Tablet computers may provide an efficient means of collecting clinical information from some [older adults](#) in the [emergency department](#), but at present, it will be ineffective for a significant portion of this population," the authors write.

Two authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry.

More information: [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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