

New research investigates relationship between health literacy and self-care

February 3 2021



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

It is important for patients to understand the information they need for making health decisions, yet studies have shown that a large segment of the population lacks the health literacy to do so. Health literacy refers to

capacity of people to obtain, process, and understand health information needed for making health decisions. A researcher in the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is addressing this topic.

"Many people have inadequate [health literacy](#) to support them in understanding [health information](#) and/or performing basic self-care activities," said Assistant Professor Jessie Chin. "Successful self-care would lead to better health outcomes, especially for patients with [chronic illness](#)."

Chin's paper, "Health Literacy, Processing Capacity, Illness Knowledge, and Actionable Memory for Medication Taking in Type 2 Diabetes: Cross-Sectional Analysis," was recently published in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine*. The paper's coauthors include Huaping Wang, Adam W. Awwad, and James F. Graumlich, University of Illinois College of Medicine in Peoria; Michael S. Wolf, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine; and Daniel G. Morrow, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Illinois.

In their study, Chin and her colleagues investigated the relationship between health literacy and "actionable memory," or memory for medication purposes, among patients with diabetes. Their results demonstrated the link between health literacy and self-care, which the researchers said could be accounted for by both the processing capacity and health knowledge of the patients.

"The study also showed that there are [individual differences](#) in the way that people can compensate for limitations in their cognitive capacities in order to maintain their health literacy. The implications of our study include improving medication adherence for patients with chronic illness through multiple strategies to promote the actionable memory of medication-taking," said Chin.

More information: Jessie Chin et al, Health Literacy, Processing Capacity, Illness Knowledge, and Actionable Memory for Medication Taking in Type 2 Diabetes: Cross-Sectional Analysis, *Journal of General Internal Medicine* (2021). [DOI: 10.1007/s11606-020-06472-z](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11606-020-06472-z)

Provided by University of Illinois School of Information Sciences

Citation: New research investigates relationship between health literacy and self-care (2021, February 3) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-02-relationship-health-literacy-self-care.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.