

## 1.10 Health Literacy Significance for Special Populations: Migrant Workers

Migrant workers are likely to have extensive health literacy needs. According to the [National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc.](#) (2009), "The health status of migrant farmworkers [in the U.S.] is at the same standard as most Third World Nations."

- Migrants' lifestyle and economic situations make primary care almost impossible.
- Chronic health conditions of migrant workers frequently aren't monitored or treated regularly.
- The work environment can create specific health concerns (e.g., extended exposure to pesticides). Workers may not have been trained in safe handling of pesticides or may lack resources on job sites to adhere to proper safety procedures.

### Common Health Concerns for Migrant Farm Workers

from [NCFH's fact sheet on Occupational Health and Safety](#)

- Heat stroke
- Skin disorders
- Dental problems due to lack of fluoridated water
- Urinary tract infections due to urine retention throughout workday
- Agriculture-related injuries
- Dehydration
- Back and muscle pain
- Depression and substance abuse due to isolated living and working conditions
- Eye injuries
- Communicable diseases due to crowded and unsanitary living conditions

### Possible Topics for Health Literacy Education

- Prevention of common health concerns
- Treatment information on common health concerns
- Creating and maintaining a personal and family health record to keep with migrant worker while moving from place to place
- How to access health care locally
- How to advocate for healthier working conditions when necessary

## Resources

### [For Your Health / Para Tu Salud](#)

Migrant Farm Worker Health Literacy Curriculum from Geneseo Migrant Center

### [Migrant Health Promotion](#)

This organization helps establish health education programs for migrant workers using health promotoras (community leaders).

### [National Center for Farmworker Health, Inc.: Health Education](#)

### [Amplifying the Health Literacy of Migrant Farm Workers](#)

This 1997 report from the Virginia Adult Educators' Research Network describes practitioner research carried out by Paul J. Long and Verónica Donahue in Nelson County; it is available on the NCFH website.

### [Telamon Corporation's Guide to Serving Farmworkers in the Commonwealth of Virginia](#)

