

5.1 Using Online Resources in ESOL Health Literacy Instruction

Quick Links:

Where to Find Reliable Health Information for ESOL Learners

The best places to start a search for reliable, scientifically-based information, in plain English or other languages, on a large variety of health topics are:

- [Healthy Roads Media](#)
This site is a collection of health information translated into many languages. The collection is in the form of articles, audio recordings, videos for iPod or online viewing, and other web-based [MedlinePlus](#). This site is a collection of health information maintained by the
- National Library of Medicine. It links to a vast collection of articles, videos, and information in other web-based formats. It links to many well-known, research-based health education sites such as the Mayo Clinic website. It contains sections on drugs and supplements, health topics, and “videos and cool tools,” as well as a medical dictionary. For articles in different languages, click “Multiple Languages” on the home page.

The online resources listed in this section of the toolkit may be helpful to teachers in designing health lessons or finding answers to questions learners ask about health and health care in the U.S. There exist few high-quality ESOL health literacy instructional materials that can be easily used by ESOL learners themselves. Keeping the following tips in mind will help instructors best use the resources listed here with or for their adult learners.

- Many of the resources are strictly for instructors’ reference in preparing health literacy lessons and materials. The websites would be too difficult for ESOL learners.
- Many resources were written with a public health/medical audience in mind. While they are not written from an adult education perspective, they contain helpful information and may provide additional perspective on issues learners may face in accessing health care.



- Some resources focus specifically on issues relating to immigrants and refugees, while others were written with a focus on native-English-speaking patients' situations. They are included here because they contain information that can be useful when applied to the needs or situations of ELLs.
- Some resources are suitable for learner use **if the instructor pre-selects small amounts of webpage information for learners** to focus on and creates activities to help learners understand and use that information.
- Be aware that the quality and difficulty of web-based health literacy materials marked as "easy-to-read" or ESOL-specific varies greatly. Always look through web-based materials before sharing them with students to determine whether they are appropriate or relevant to the learners' needs.
- The reliability of information included on health-related websites varies widely. This slideshow gives helpful pointers for identifying reliable medical information on the web: [Evaluating Internet Health Information: A Tutorial from the National Library of Medicine](#).

