

CONCISE MEDICINE INFORMATION IMPROVES HEALTH LITERACY AND THERAPY COMPLIANCE AMONG PATIENTS WITH LOW HEALTH LITERACY

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INTRODUCTION

Many patients, especially those with low health literacy, have problems comprehending the medication package leaflet. To improve understanding and therapy compliance, there is a need for simplified, concise and easily accessible information during consultation at the pharmacy, the doctor's office, in the hospital or at home.

AIMS

To create simplified, concise information to be used alongside consultation and the medication package leaflet, and to dispense this information through the public health website www.apotheek.nl and Dutch pharmacy information systems.

METHODS

We identified the most prescribed and used medicines in the Netherlands and created information on a B1 language level tailored towards drug and dosage form.

Prototypes were tested among patients with low health literacy. We are researching implementation in Dutch pharmacy information systems and via our public health website.

RESULTS

Prototypes enhanced with symbols and a graphic layout reinforced the most important information for patients and improved understanding of the most important aspects of pharmacological treatment. In addition, a QR-code encourages users to navigate to more information in a video format. We identified a subset of 50 medicines to service over 50% of first-time medicine users. We are currently expanding coverage to provide 75% of first-time users with over 200 concise medicine information documents. In addition, availability via www.apotheek.nl is being developed alongside integration through pharmacy information systems to support prescription and consultation processes. At the date of this presentation, a total of 70 prototypes have been developed.

CONCLUSIONS

Presenting medicine information in a concise, visually appealing format improves health literacy and therapy compliance among patients, especially those with low health literacy. By integrating concise, simplified information into the consultation process, therapy compliance and patient understanding can be reinforced.

About Apotheek.nl

Apotheek.nl is the leading website for medicine information for patients in the Netherlands. The goal of Apotheek.nl is to improve therapy compliance by providing reliable and easy to understand information about medicines on a non-commercial basis.

With information and videos in several languages, and over 2000 entries, Apotheek.nl draws over 67 million views per year. Apotheek.nl was founded in 2000 by the Royal Dutch Pharmacists Association (KNMP) and is maintained by pharmacists and pharmacist assistants.

An example of concise medicine information for insulin.

Summary of insulin

Why do you use this medicine?

Insulin is a hormone.
Your doctor prescribes insulin when you have diabetes.

Diabetes causes your blood to contain too much sugar.

This is harmful for your heart, blood vessels, nerves, eyes, and kidneys.

Insulin makes sure that sugar doesn't stay in your blood. It helps your body to use sugar for energy.

There are different types of insulin.

Side effects

The most important side effect of insulin is **hypoglycemia**: low blood sugar.

When you have low blood sugar, you can experience:

- hunger
- pale skin
- trembling
- sweating
- feeling dizzy
- headache
- feeling tired
- fainting

People can experience low blood sugar in different ways. You might not have all these symptoms if you have low blood sugar.

What should you do if you have low blood sugar?
Eat or drink something with sugar. Then eat a sandwich. Do this as fast as possible.

How to use this medicine

Insulin is taken as an injection.

Your doctor will explain how you can inject this medicine.

You can also watch the **explanation video** on Apotheek.nl.

Scan the QR-code below to watch the video.

You are given your own schedule. In this schedule, you can see how much insulin you should use. And when to use it.

Important information

You can drive when you use this medicine.

Caution! Low blood sugar can cause road accidents.

What should you do when you want to drive?


- Only drive if you are feeling well.
- Test your blood sugar before you drive.
- Only drive if you know how low blood sugar feels to you.
- Discuss with your doctor if you can drive safely.

Caution! Alcohol can cause low blood sugar. And you might not feel low blood sugar setting in. Don't drink. Or drink less than 2 glasses of alcohol per day.

Caution! Are you pregnant? Or do you want to get pregnant? Ask your doctor or pharmacist if it's safe to use this medicine.


You can safely breastfeed your child if you use this medicine.

Scan the QR-code below to watch the video:



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Always read the official package leaflet before using this medicine. Use this medicine the way your doctor and pharmacist explained to you. This information is written by the Royal Dutch Pharmacists Association. The Royal Dutch Pharmacists Association is not responsible for harm caused by this information.





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