Preparing for teaching:

- Establish a trusting relationship
- Invite a second person to attend the teaching session, if appropriate
- Plan with the person what they can and want to do
- Limit information to essentials for achieving desired behaviors. Be realistic!
- Plan what to say and organize information with 3 most important points

Giving the health information:

- Make time for patient to tell story and express feelings
- Frame the message first by telling them what you will cover and then give specifics
- Speak Slowly! Allow time to ask questions.
- Use common words consistently. Do not use medical jargon. Define medical terms if needed
- Use real world examples and analogies to make key points
- Make instructions concrete / specific and vivid rather than general
- A picture is worth a thousand words so use easy-to-understand illustrations, pictures, models, videos, posters, audiotapes, color coding medicines
- Break down complex instructions and teach one step at a time
- Use a variety of teaching methods (tailoring, cuing, simplifying regimens, providing reminders, action planning, problem-solving)

Evaluating the learning:

- Verify patient understanding by using teach-back method and problem solving situations
- Reinforce learning and correct any misinterpretations
- Use praise and rewards

© 2006 (rev) Sandra Cornett, Ph.D.
AHEC Health Literacy Program
The Ohio State University