Limited health literacy is highly associated with poor health status. The concept of health literacy in public health relates to the concern that people with lower health literacy were also less likely to engage in health promoting behaviours.

This is an analysis on health literacy and its associated factors among housewives and also a sub analysis of the Malaysian My Body is Fit and Fabulous at Home (MyBFF@home) study involving 328 overweight and obese housewives living in low cost flats in Klang Valley, part of a weight loss programme recruited using convenient sampling. Health literacy was measured...
using the Malay version of Newest Vital Sign (NVS) test with scores ranging from 0 to 6. Total score of ≤2 indicate limited health literacy and total scores of >2 indicate adequate health literacy. Descriptive analysis, chi-square test and multiple logistic regression were used to analyse the data.
The mean(SD) NVS score was 1.07(1.19) with most (87.5%) housewives having limited health literacy. Factors that were significantly associated with limited health literacy were older age of 45 to 59 years old (p = 0.040), primary education and below (p = 0.001) and absence of internet connectivity (p = 0.001).
In the final model, absence of internet connectivity (OR 2.61; 95%CI 1.31 to 5.22) was associated with limited health literacy.
Majority of the housewives have limited health literacy and providing internet connectivity to housewives may increase their health literacy.

Keywords: housewives, health literacy, low cost flats, Newest Vital Sign, obese

Full text (PDF)