

Writing for the Web for Health Care

GEONETRIC®

How and why *we read on the web*



Why do we go online?

- Access products and services and make purchases
- Choose entertainment when/where we want it
- Connect with family and friends
- Explore new subjects
- Find locations when walking or driving around
- Share our experiences

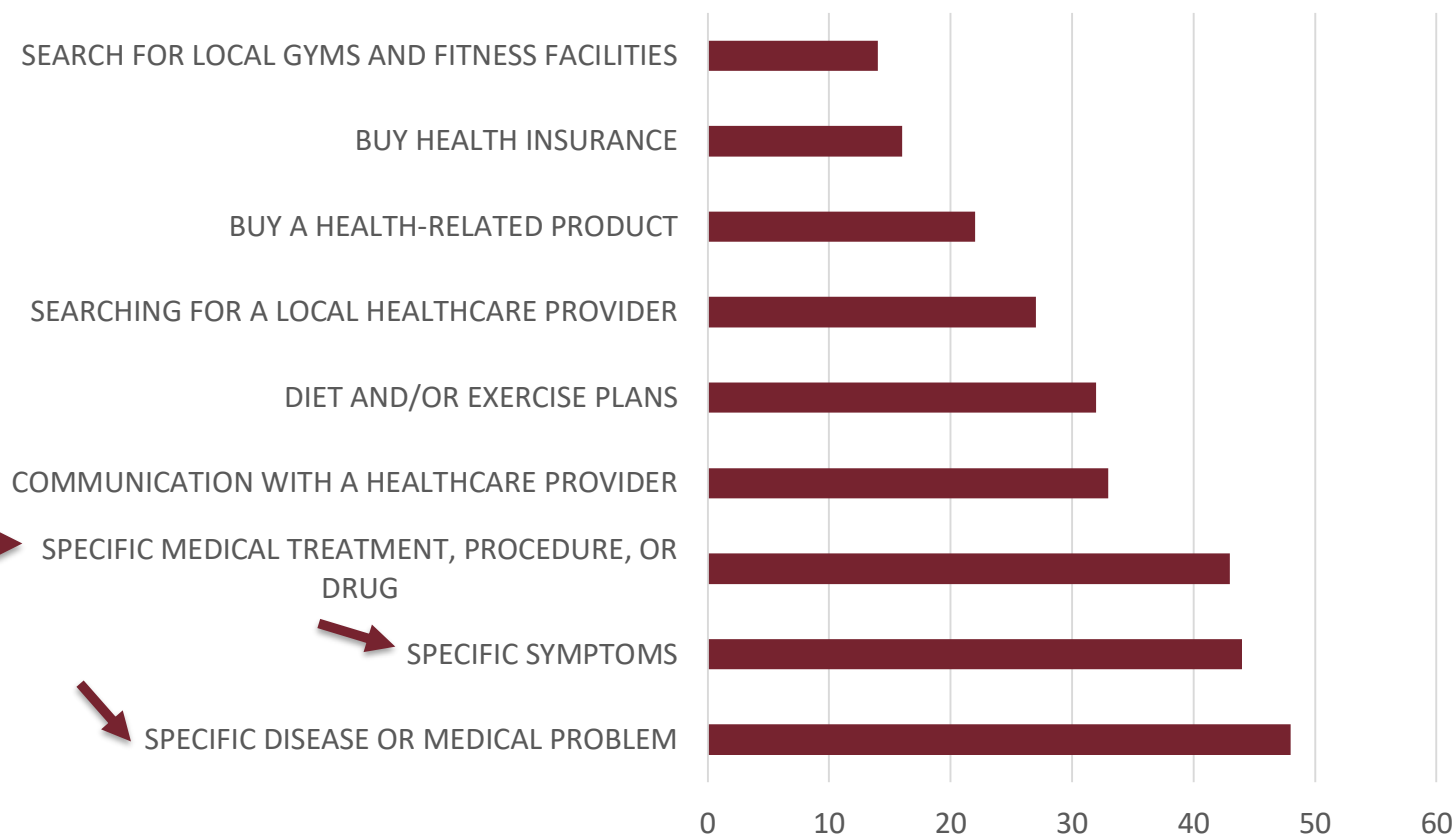


“Nobody cares about information for its own sake. ... The customer has a task they want to complete, a problem they want to solve.”

— Gerry McGovern
User experience expert

What are we looking for?

Health-Related Online Activity



*33 percent of people
have read online
physician reviews*

—BrightLocal, 2017

How we read online



The screenshot shows the desktop version of the Mount Auburn Hospital website. At the top is a green header with the hospital's logo (a circular seal with 'EXCELLENCE WITH COMMISSION' and '1886') and the name 'MOUNT AUBURN HOSPITAL'. To the right is a search bar labeled 'MAHConnection' with the placeholder text 'I Am Looking For...'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links: 'About | Locations | Careers | How You Can Help'. A dark red horizontal bar contains main menu items: 'Care & Treatment', 'Find a Provider', 'Quality & Safety', 'Patients & Visitors', 'Classes & Events', and 'Medical Education'. Below this is a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Care & Treatment > Women's Health > Pregnancy & Birth'. A 'TEXT SIZE' selector is visible. The main content area is titled 'Pregnancy & Birth' and includes a paragraph about the hospital's care, a section for 'Collaborative Pregnancy Care Providers' with a bulleted list of services, and a section for 'Education, Resources & Choices'. A sidebar on the left lists 'Women's Health' categories: 'Breast Care', 'Gynecology', 'Midwifery', and 'Pregnancy & Birth' (which is highlighted with a green bar and a location pin icon). Below these are links for 'Pregnancy & Parenting Classes', 'Bain Birthing Center', 'Labor & Delivery', 'Postpartum Care', 'Newborn Services', and 'New Parent Support'. At the bottom left is a 'Meet our Providers' section. On the right side of the main content area is a vertical green button that says 'I Want To' with a plus sign.

EXCELLENCE WITH COMMISSION
1886
MOUNT AUBURN HOSPITAL

MAHConnection I Am Looking For...

About | Locations | Careers | How You Can Help

Care & Treatment Find a Provider Quality & Safety Patients & Visitors Classes & Events Medical Education

Home > Care & Treatment > Women's Health > Pregnancy & Birth

TEXT SIZE A A A

Pregnancy & Birth

Your pregnancy isn't like anyone else's. That's why you can count on the doctors, midwives and nurses at Mount Auburn Hospital to provide clinically excellent care that's tailored to your values, beliefs and needs. Discover why 2,700 Boston-area families choose to deliver at Mount Auburn Hospital each year.

Collaborative Pregnancy Care Providers

Choose a pregnancy and birth care provider that fits you:

- **Obstetrician** – Specializes in caring for women during pregnancy, labor and birth; have advanced training to manage complications and perform cesarean births
- **Certified nurse-midwife (CNM)** – Focuses on caring for and supporting women with low-risk pregnancies who desire low- or no-intervention births
- **Nurse practitioner (NP)** – Provides prenatal care in collaboration with obstetricians and CNMs

No matter which type of provider you choose, you'll have access to the expertise of the entire team. That's because our providers work closely together; doctors and midwives share offices. So you experience seamless care from your first prenatal appointment to the moment you welcome your baby at Bain Birthing Center.

Education, Resources & Choices

Find support for the birth you want from providers who take time to help you explore and evaluate your options. Take advantage of:

Women's Health

- Breast Care
- Gynecology
- Midwifery
- Pregnancy & Birth**

- Pregnancy & Parenting Classes
- Bain Birthing Center
- Labor & Delivery
- Postpartum Care
- Newborn Services
- New Parent Support

Urogynecology



Women's Imaging

Meet our Providers

Tour Bain Birthing Center

Get a firsthand look at the comfortable features, amenities and advanced technology available at Bain Birth Center. Search for upcoming tours and register online.

Related Providers

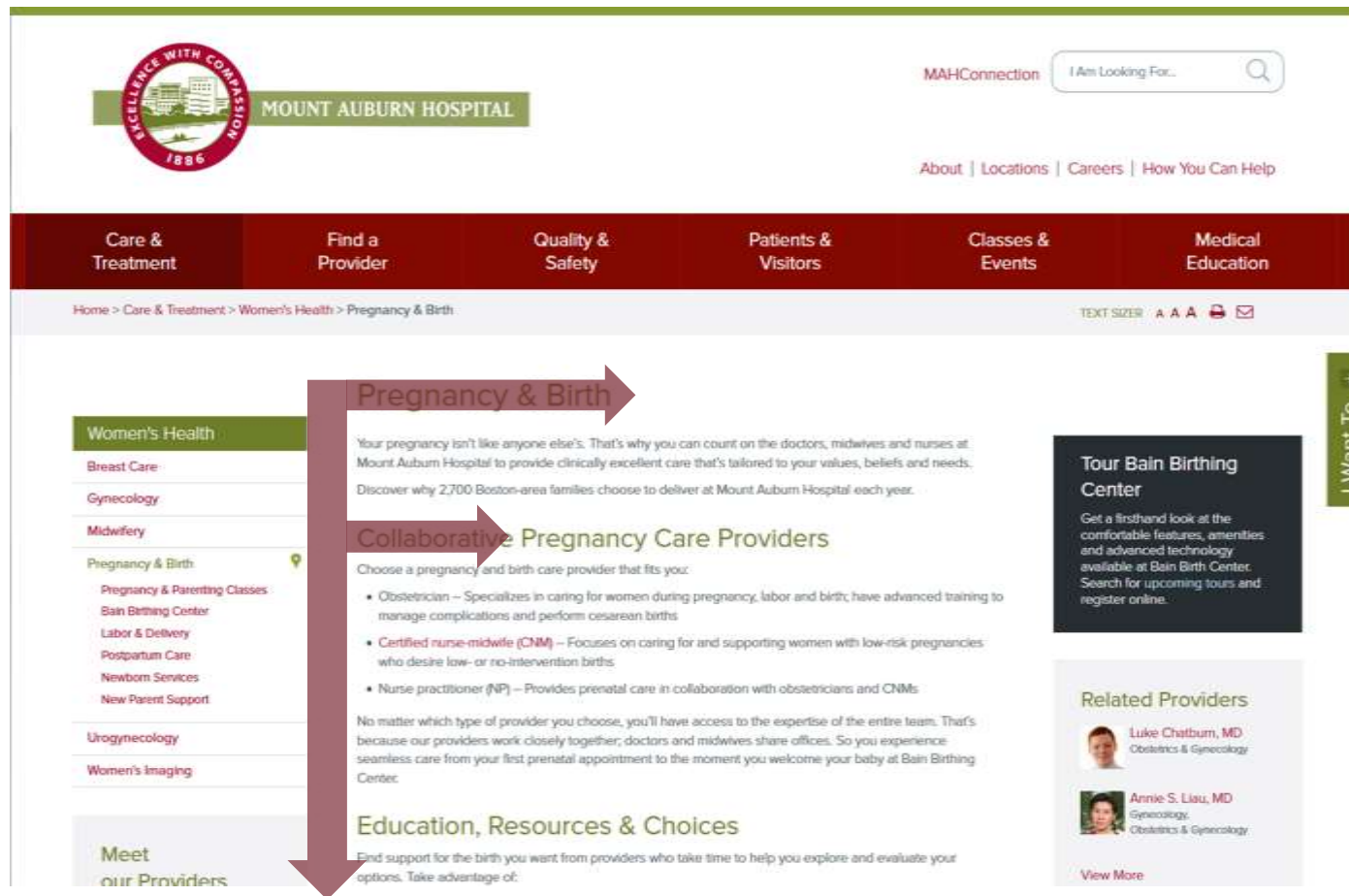
-  **Luke Chatburn, MD**
Obstetrics & Gynecology
-  **Annie S. Liaw, MD**
Gynecology
Obstetrics & Gynecology

[View More](#)

I Want To +



Classic F-shaped pattern



Layer-cake pattern

Cancer Screening & Prevention

Your health is your most important asset. Partner with Ballad Health to detect cancer early through regular screenings and learn about your risk for developing cancer.

Cancer Screenings

Choose Ballad Health for screening and diagnostic services that help detect cancer in its earliest and most treatable stage. Talk to your doctor about the screenings that are right for you. Ballad Health's services include:

• Cancer screening using the latest technology
• Expert health professionals to help you understand your cancer risk

- Colorectal cancer screening
- Low-dose CT lung scan
- Oral cancer screening
- PSA test for prostate cancer
- Skin cancer checkups

If a screening shows something unusual, follow up with your doctor.

Screenings Near You

Find out the next time a health screening test will be near where you live in East Tennessee or Southwest Virginia.

You may be able to receive a free mammogram through Project Access Breast Care (ABC), a Ballad Health partnership with community groups to make sure women get important breast health screenings.

High-Risk Cancer Services

Reduce your risk factors for cancer with the help of Ballad Health's high-risk cancer services in Kingsport, Tennessee. Your doctor may suggest a cancer risk assessment if you have a family history of cancer, take medications that could cause cancer, had childhood cancer or have another risk factor.

Genetic Counseling & Testing

If you have a family history of cancer, a genetic test can tell you if you inherited a gene that increases your risk of developing breast and ovarian cancer. Meet with a Ballad Health genetic counselor in to decide if testing is right for you.

Community Education & Awareness

Rely on Ballad Health for health education and resources that raise awareness about cancer risk factors. Attend a Ballad Health seminar, wellness fair or screening event, or visit a free or low-cost clinic for a cancer screening.

Reduce Your Risk for Cancer

Choose a healthy lifestyle to help lower your risk, prevent cancer and improve your overall health.



Eye-tracking patterns

- Spotted pattern
- Marking pattern
- Bypassing pattern
- Commitment pattern



How we read online

How much of your webpage content will users actually read?

20 – 28%

Three steps to *great web writing*



Three steps to great web writing

1. Keep it simple and scannable
2. Focus on the user
3. Make it easy to take action

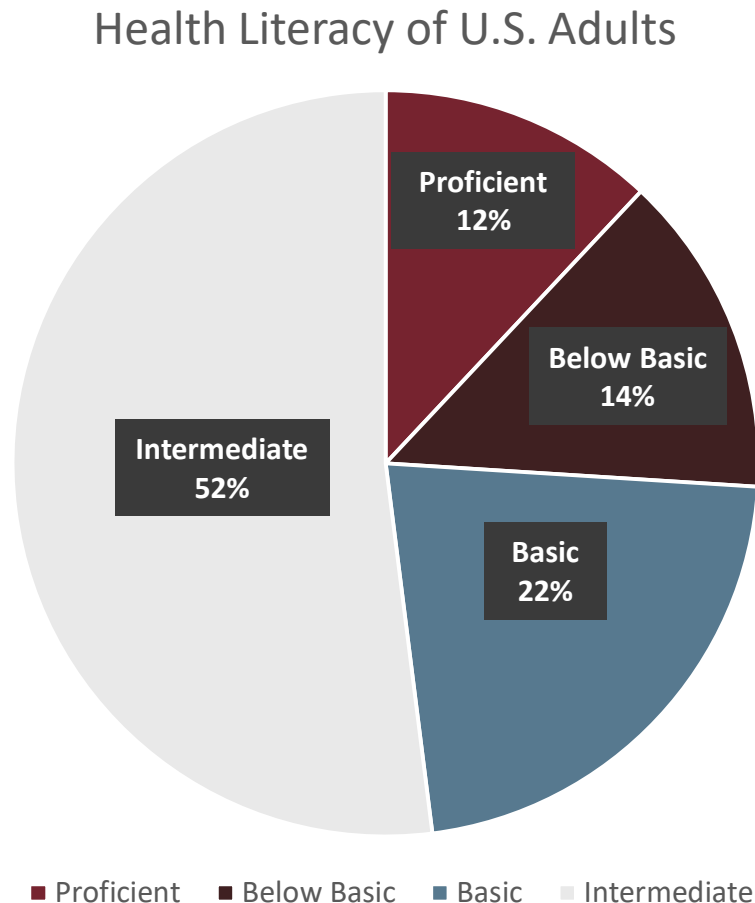


Step 1

Keep it simple and scannable



Keep it simple



Health Literacy

The ability to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services to make appropriate health decisions

Even people with strong literacy skills can face challenges when they're:

- Diagnosed with a serious illness and are scared or confused
- Not familiar with medical terms
- Interpreting numbers or risks to make a health care decisions

Health Literacy

People with low health literacy may have difficulty:

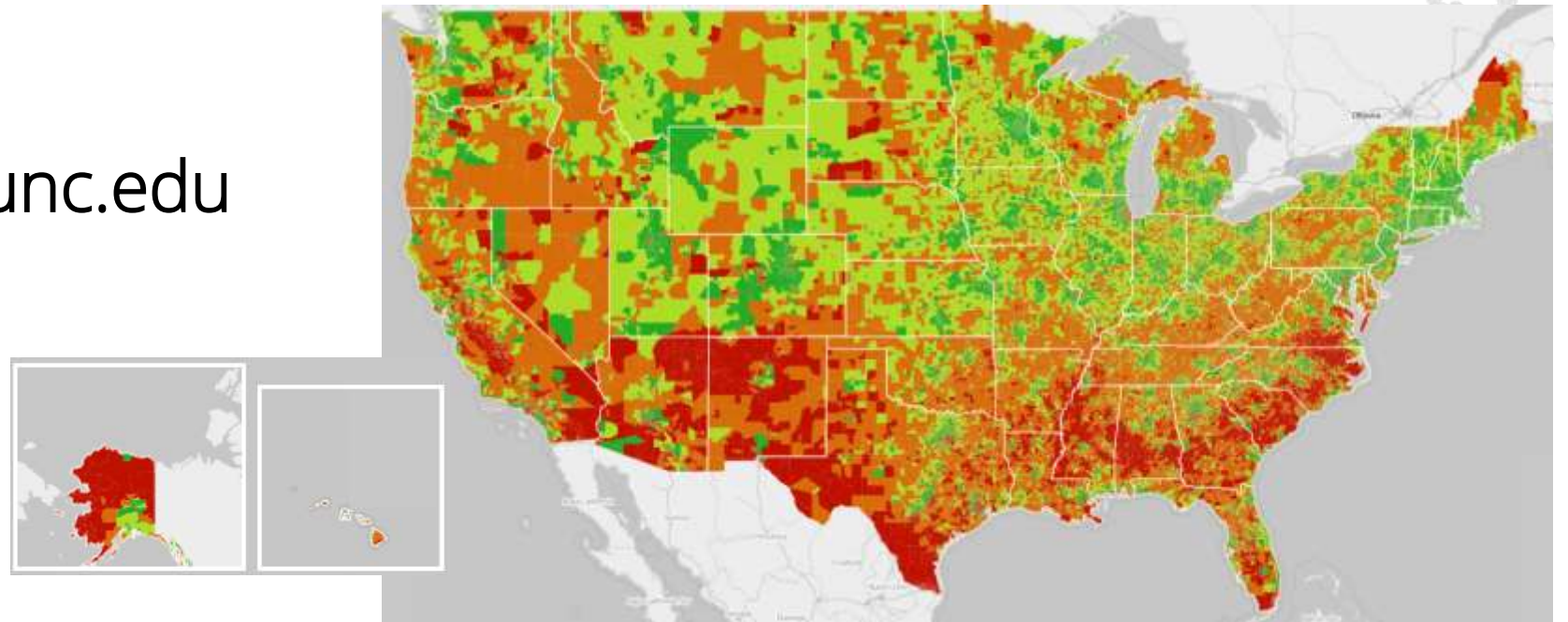
- Managing chronic diseases
- Measuring medications, understanding nutrition labels, calculating blood sugar levels, and completing other tasks that require math skills
- Navigating the health care system
- Understanding diagnoses and treatment options
- Understanding how lifestyle factors affect health



Health literacy in your geographic service area

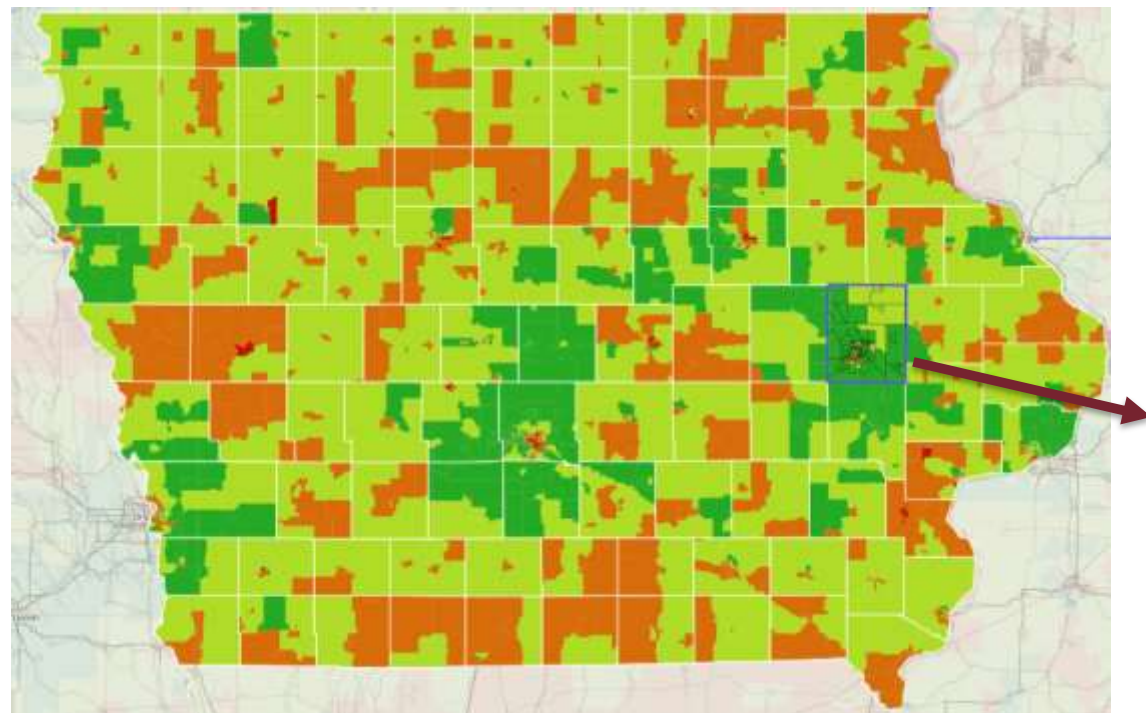
The University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill Health Literacy Data Map

Find it at:
healthliteracymap.unc.edu

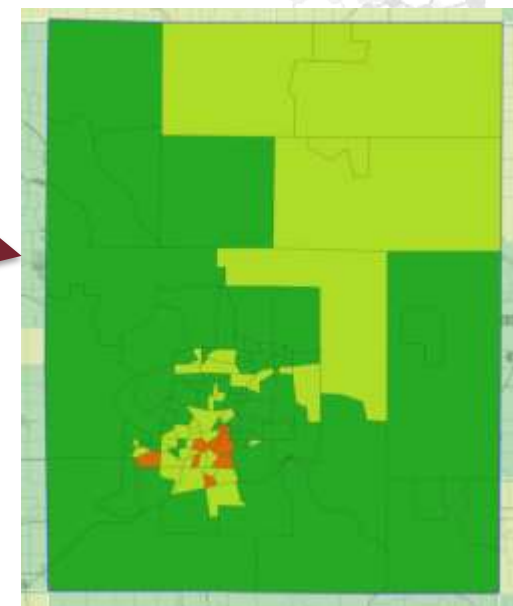


Health literacy in your geographic service area

- Quartile 4 (highest)
- Quartile 3
- Quartile 2
- Quartile 1 (lowest)

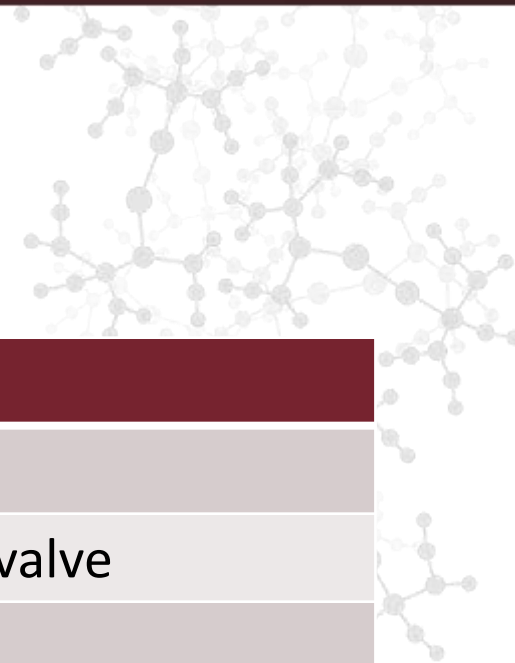


Iowa



Linn County

Keep it simple with everyday language



Instead of this	Try this
Seek prompt medical attention	Get care right away
Emergent and urgent aortic pathologies	Conditions that affect the aortic valve
→ Obstructs circulation →	Blocks blood flow
→ Does not require the use of →	Doesn't use
Hematological disorders	Blood disorders

Keep it simple: active voice

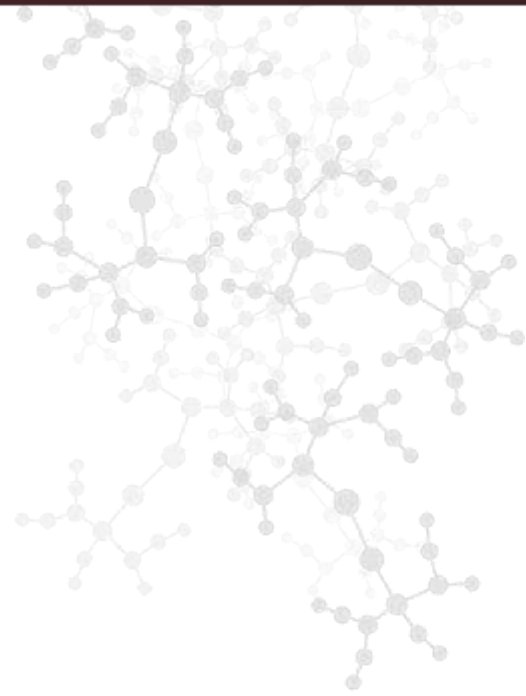
Active Voice

The nurse called the patient.

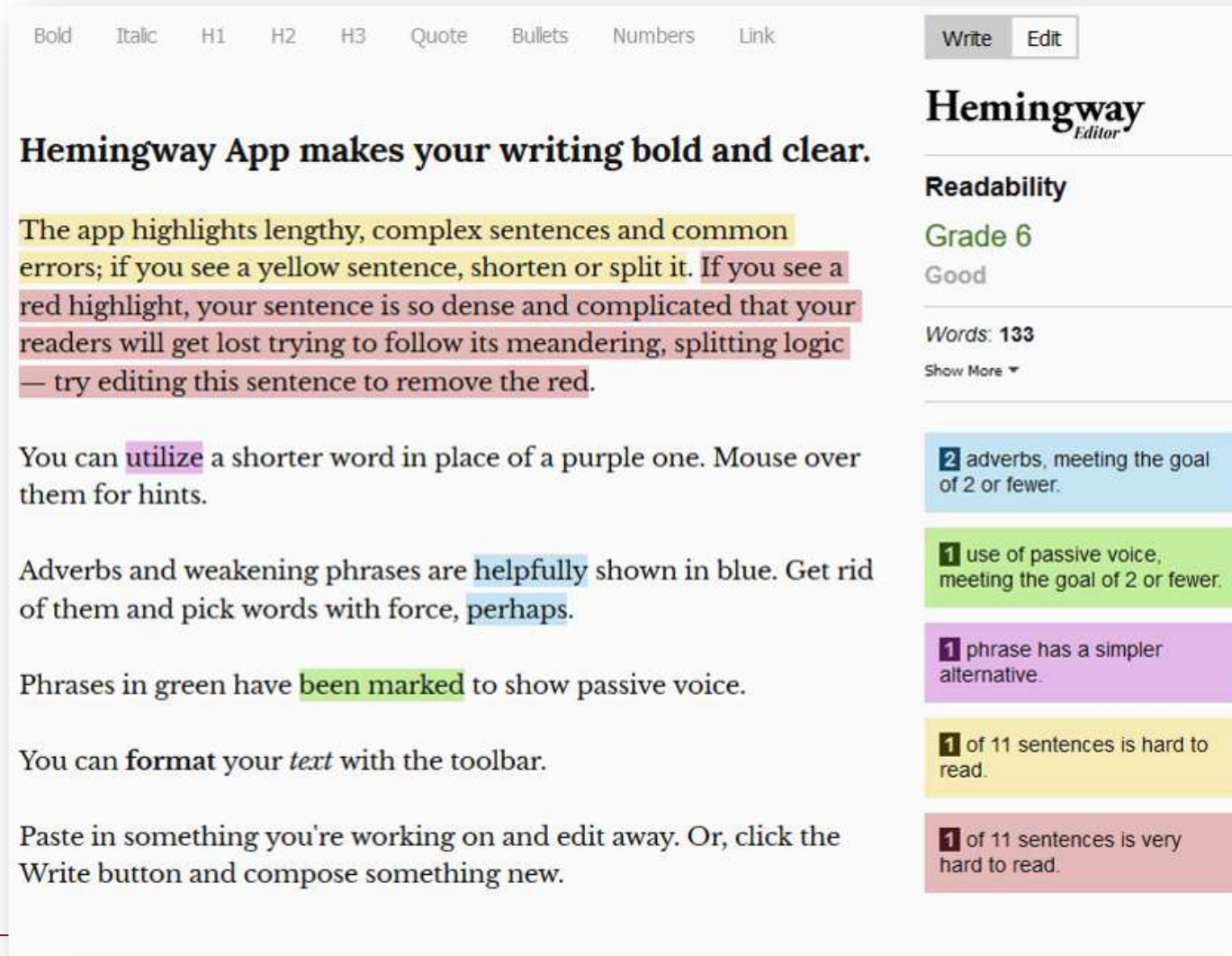


Passive Voice

The patient was called by the nurse.



Writing tools: Hemingway Editor



The screenshot displays the Hemingway Editor interface. At the top, there is a toolbar with options: Bold, Italic, H1, H2, H3, Quote, Bullets, Numbers, and Link. To the right of the toolbar are 'Write' and 'Edit' buttons. The main text area contains the following content:

Hemingway App makes your writing bold and clear.

The app highlights lengthy, complex sentences and common errors; if you see a yellow sentence, shorten or split it. If you see a red highlight, your sentence is so dense and complicated that your readers will get lost trying to follow its meandering, splitting logic — try editing this sentence to remove the red.

You can **utilize** a shorter word in place of a purple one. Mouse over them for hints.

Adverbs and weakening phrases are **helpfully** shown in blue. Get rid of them and pick words with force, **perhaps**.

Phrases in green have **been marked** to show passive voice.

You can **format** your *text* with the toolbar.

Paste in something you're working on and edit away. Or, click the Write button and compose something new.

On the right side, there is a sidebar with the following information:

Hemingway Editor

Readability

Grade 6

Good

Words: 133

Show More ▼

2 adverbs, meeting the goal of 2 or fewer.

1 use of passive voice, meeting the goal of 2 or fewer.

1 phrase has a simpler alternative.

1 of 11 sentences is hard to read.

1 of 11 sentences is very hard to read.

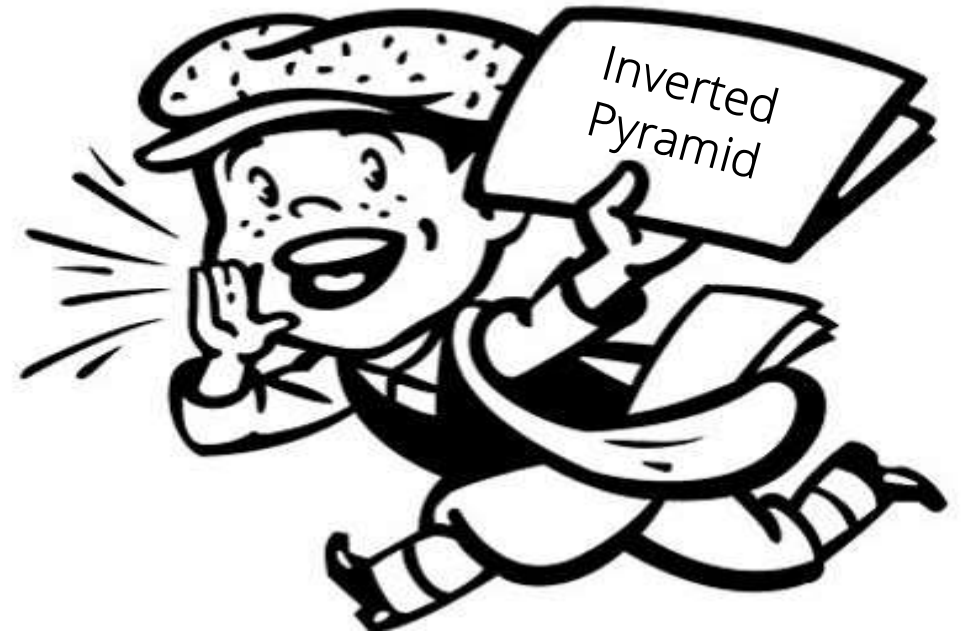
Find it at:
www.hemingwayapp.com

Keep it simple by getting to the point

Start with the main point/conclusion

Include supporting
information

Share less
important
details



Keep it simple by getting to the point

Thyroid Cancer

With early diagnosis and prompt care, most thyroid cancers can be treated successfully. Trust Cone Health Cancer Center for expert, multidisciplinary care that helps you achieve the best possible outcome and maintain a high quality of life.

Multidisciplinary Thyroid Cancer Care

Receive coordinated care from a [multidisciplinary team](#) that includes cancer specialists as well as experienced endocrinologists and head and neck surgeons. Your team meets regularly to review your health and develop a well-rounded, customized care plan. Count on your nurse navigator for help understanding your options, coordinating medical appointments, and accessing resources.

Thyroid Cancer Treatments

Depending your condition, preferences and goals, your thyroid cancer care plan may include:

- [Radioactive iodine \(I-131\) therapy](#) – Deploys small doses of a radiation-emitting iodine isotope to destroy thyroid tissue, including thyroid cancer cells; administered as a pill or liquid
- [Thyroid surgery](#) – Physically removes all or part of the thyroid gland; usually the main treatment for thyroid cancer
- Targeted therapy – Uses medication that identifies and attacks cancer cells; usually administered in pill form

If thyroid cancer spreads to other parts of your body, your care plan may also incorporate chemotherapy and/or external beam radiation treatments. Learn more about cancer treatments at Cone Health Cancer Center.

Palliative Care

Take advantage of [palliative care](#) to help ease symptoms, including pain and difficulty swallowing, at any stage of treatment

Thyroid Cancer Rehabilitation

Partner with our dedicated speech-language pathologist (SLP) to address issues related to your ability to speak and swallow. Meet with your SLP before and after surgery to learn how treatment may affect your voice and how therapy can help you achieve the best outcome.

Learn more about [cancer rehabilitation](#) at Cone Health.

Main Point

Supporting Information

Make it scannable

- Cover one topic per page
- Keep paragraphs short – three sentences or fewer
- Use bullets and numbered lists
- Use straightforward headlines and subheads
- Write short sentences



Make it scannable: an example

Low-Vision Services

According to the National Eye Institute, low vision is defined as a visual impairment that cannot be corrected by medical or surgical intervention and is severe enough to interfere with the performance of daily living, but allows some usable vision.

Low-vision impairments may be caused by glaucoma, macular degeneration or diabetic retinopathy. Some neurological diagnoses also may cause visual impairments that interfere with abilities to perform daily activities, including stroke, brain injury or multiple sclerosis.

Our Low-Vision Rehabilitation program provides a new option for these patients. Each patient is evaluated by an occupational therapist specially trained in low-vision therapy. A therapy plan and goals are then developed to meet each patient's individual needs. Our therapy focuses on enabling patients with visual impairments to safely and independently complete daily living tasks compromised by vision loss.

Individuals who are experiencing low vision should see their physician, ophthalmologist or optometrist for an evaluation. A physician referral is required for evaluation and treatment in our low-vision program.



What is low vision?

Causes of low vision

Low-vision
rehabilitation program
services

Get an eye evaluation

Make it scannable: an example

Low-Vision Services

According to the National Eye Institute, low vision is defined as a visual impairment that cannot be corrected by medical or surgical intervention and is severe enough to interfere with the performance of daily living, but allows some usable vision.

Low-vision impairments may be caused by glaucoma, macular degeneration or diabetic retinopathy. Some neurological diagnoses also may cause visual impairments that interfere with abilities to perform daily activities, including stroke, brain injury or multiple sclerosis.

Our Low-Vision Rehabilitation program provides a new option for these patients. Each patient is evaluated by an occupational therapist specially trained in low-vision therapy. A therapy plan and goals are then developed to meet each patient's individual needs. Our therapy focuses on enabling patients with visual impairments to safely and independently complete daily living tasks compromised by vision loss.

Individuals who are experiencing low vision should see their physician, ophthalmologist or optometrist for an evaluation. A physician referral is required for evaluation and treatment in our low-vision program.



VS.

Low-Vision Services

When you're diagnosed with low vision, learn how to make the most of your eyesight with Cone Health's low-vision rehabilitation program.

What is Low Vision?

You have low vision if you experience a partial vision loss that can't be corrected by glasses or surgery. Low vision makes it difficult for you to accomplish everyday activities such as:

- Pouring liquids, setting dials on the stove, chopping food and other household tasks
- Reading small print
- Recognizing people when they're close
- Seeing steps, stairs or curbs
- Writing checks or filling out forms

Causes of Low Vision

Low vision may be caused by conditions such as:

- Age-related macular degeneration (AMD)
- Diabetic retinopathy
- Glaucoma
- Neurological conditions, such as stroke, brain injury and multiple sclerosis

Low-Vision Rehabilitation Services

Partner with an [occupational therapist \(OT\)](#) specially trained in low-vision therapy to develop an individualized plan to help you live safely and complete



Find an Ophthalmologist

If you're experiencing symptoms of low vision, make an appointment with a Cone Health Medical Group [ophthalmologist](#) for a comprehensive eye examination.

Clear subheads

Short sentences & paragraphs

Bulleted lists

Callout box

Step 2

Focus on the user



Focus on the user

Ask:

- WHO is your user? Who are you talking to?
- What does your user want to know?
- How will your service or product make your user's life better or easier?
- What do you want users to do after visiting your website?




Focus on the user

Speak TO your users, not AT them.

- Address the user directly; write in second person.
- Anticipate and answer your users' questions.
- Be warm, conversational, and empathetic.
- Focus on benefits, not features.





“Even when you are marketing to your entire audience or customer base, you are still simply speaking to a single human at any given time. Worry less about sounding professional and worry more about creating remarkable content that other humans can relate to.”

— Ann Handley
Digital marketing and content expert

Step 3

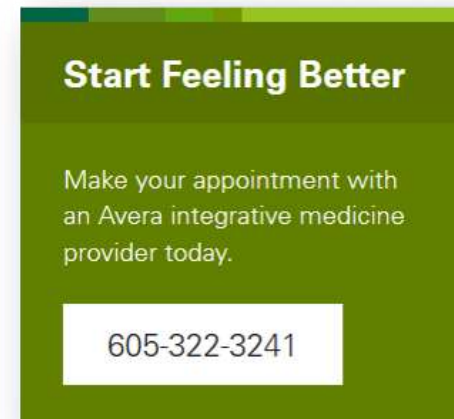
Make it easy to take action



Make it easy to take action

On every page, include a **call to action (CTA)** that's:

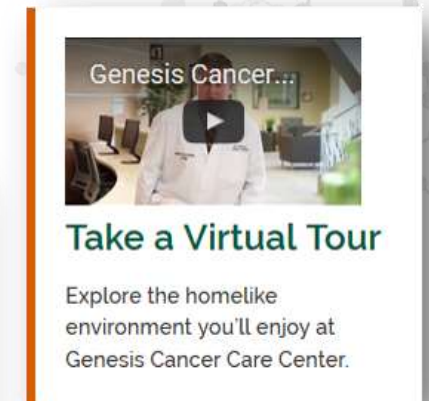
- Clear and concise
- Prominently displayed
- Relevant to the page and audience
- Trackable whenever possible



Start Feeling Better

Make your appointment with an Avera integrative medicine provider today.

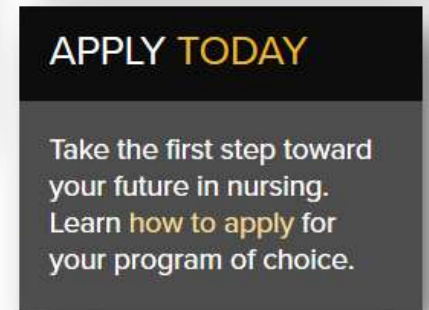
605-322-3241



Genesis Cancer...

Take a Virtual Tour

Explore the homelike environment you'll enjoy at Genesis Cancer Care Center.



APPLY TODAY

Take the first step toward your future in nursing. Learn **how to apply** for your program of choice.



How to incorporate SEO best practices

into your web writing

SEO requires good content

Some of Google's most important factors when ranking webpages:

- Content
- Links
- Localization, or how relevant your content is to local searches
- User engagement

SEO requires good content

Search engines love content that:

- Answers users' questions
- Incorporates words visitors use (keywords) effectively and in context
- Is well-written and regularly updated
- Offers value by providing original, useful information
- Uses headings to provide structure and context

SEO requires good content

Search engines do not like:

- Duplicate or plagiarized content
- “Keyword stuffing” – Using irrelevant keywords and/or repeating the same words or phrases in an unnatural-sounding way
- Lack of and/or improper page structure
- Thin or shallow content

Localize your service line content

Help your site appear in local searches by including keywords in your service line content relevant to your geographic service area.

Examples include:

- Cities
- Counties
- States
- Location names
- Other local regions

The bottom line?

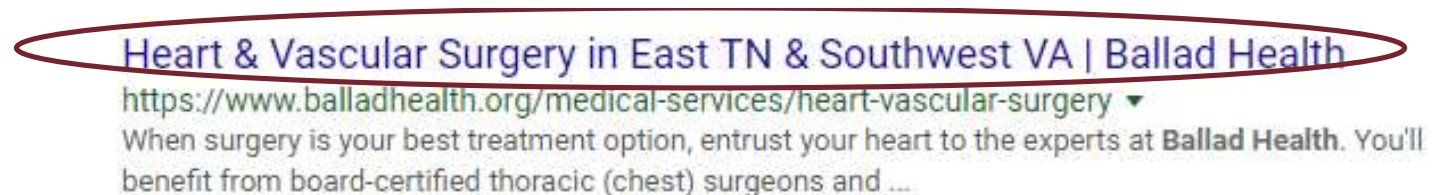
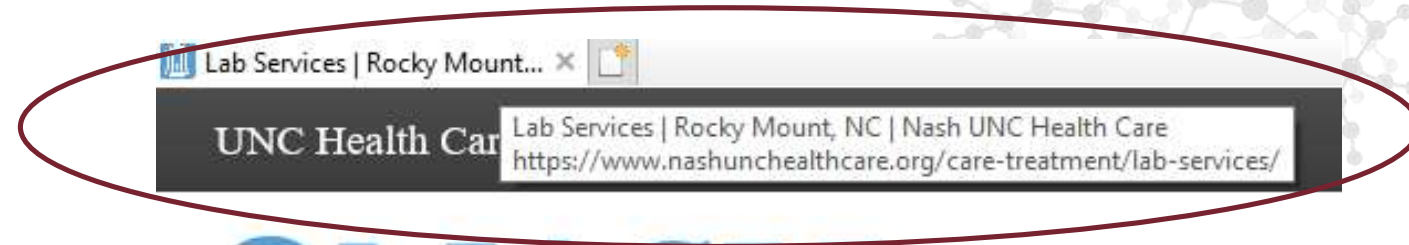
Write content that gives users what they want, and search engines will help them find you.

What about keywords?

- Incorporate keywords naturally and strategically; use them in context.
- Help search engines (and users!) understand what your page is about by using keywords in:
 - HTML page title
 - Meta description
 - Headings (H1, H2, H3)
 - Image titles and alt text
 - URL
 - Link anchor text

HTML page title (title tag)

- One of the most important on-page SEO elements
- Shows up on browser tabs
- Used on search engine results pages (SERPs)
- Will likely be pulled in as anchor text when sharing on other websites and social media



Stella Hart

Just now · 🌐 ▼

So excited to start my new nursing position!



Center for Cardiac Care

Choose Concord Hospital Center for Cardiac Care for treatment of coronary artery disease, angina, heart attack, stroke, valve disease and other cardiac conditions.

CONCORDHOSPITAL.ORG

How to write an HTML page title

- Avoid starting with generic or nonessential phrases, such as “welcome to” or “our”
- Be concise. Use about 60 characters or less.
- Give each page a unique title.
- Place important keywords closer to the start of the title.
- Consider this formula: **Cancer Care | Cedar Rapids, Iowa | Benefit Hospital**

Meta description (page description)

- Short paragraph that describes page content
- Used on search engine results pages (SERPs)
- Often appears when sharing on other websites and social media
- Most important tool for improving click-through rates from SERPs

Pediatric Inpatient Center | Cedar Rapids, IA | Benefit Hospital
www.benefithospital.com

Families, rest assured that Benefit Hospital's Pediatric Inpatient Center in Cedar Rapids goes the extra mile for your children. They'll stay as comfortable as possible and receive excellent care from a pediatrician in-house 24 hours per day, seven days per week.



Stella Hart

Just now · 🌐

So excited to start my new nursing position!



Center for Cardiac Care

Choose Concord Hospital Center for Cardiac Care for treatment of coronary artery disease, angina, heart attack, stroke, valve disease and other cardiac conditions.

CONCORDHOSPITAL.ORG

How to write a meta description

- Use a unique meta description for each page
- To optimize for Google, stay between 30 and 175 characters
- Write compelling, descriptive, relevant copy that makes sense out of context
- Incorporate important keywords

Test your meta description at moz.com/learn/seo/title-tag

Title Tag Preview Tool

Title

Check

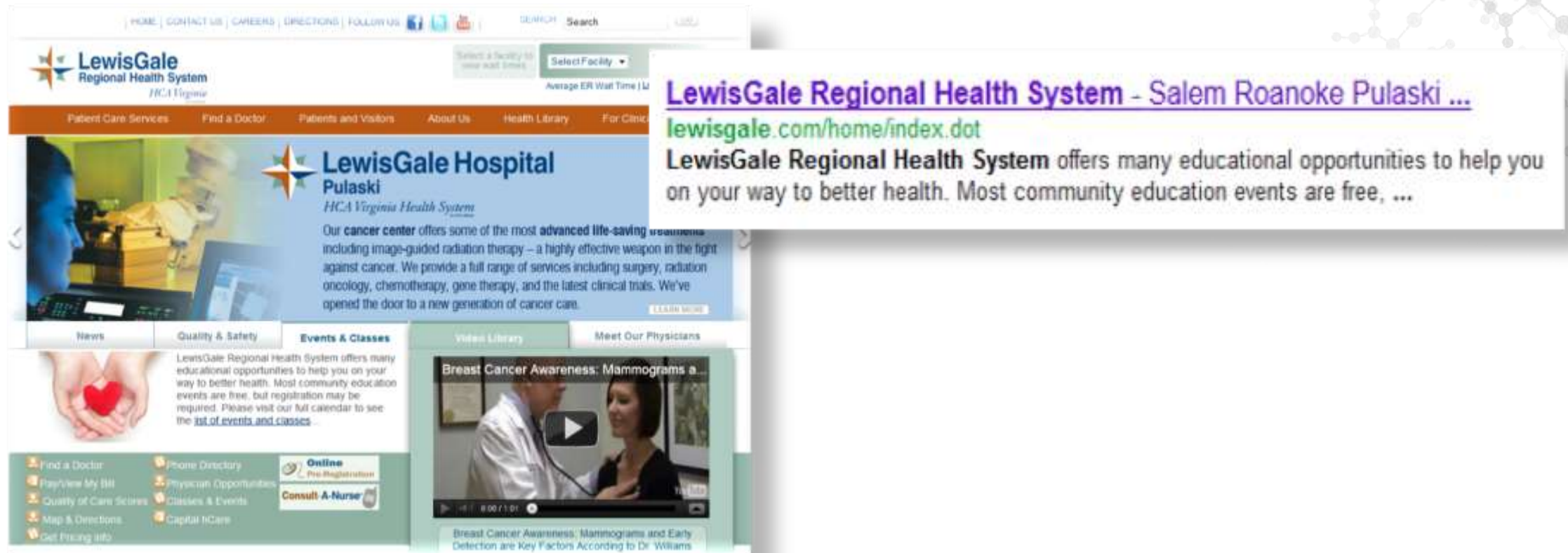
It Was The Best of Times, It Was The Worst of Times, It Was The Age ...

<https://example.com/your-url-goes-here>

Most snippets are limited to two lines, and we still generally recommend a 160-character limit for your meta descriptions, but Google can allow exceptions in certain cases.

Why write a meta description?

If you don't write a description, Google will pull text from your page.



The image shows a screenshot of the LewisGale Regional Health System website. The website features a header with navigation links (HOME, CONTACT US, CAREERS, DIRECTIONS, FOLLOW US) and a search bar. The main content area includes a large banner for LewisGale Hospital Pulaski, HCA Virginia Health System, with text about cancer care. Below the banner are sections for News, Quality & Safety, Events & Classes, Video Library, and Meet Our Physicians. A sidebar on the left contains links for Find a Doctor, Pay/View My Bill, Quality of Care Scores, Map & Directions, and Get Pricing Info. A bottom section includes links for Phone Directory, Physician Opportunities, Classes & Events, Capital hCare, Online Pre-Registration, and Consult A Nurse.

Overlaid on the right side of the website screenshot is a Google search result snippet. The snippet title is "LewisGale Regional Health System - Salem Roanoke Pulaski ...". The URL is "lewisgale.com/home/index.dot". The meta description text is "LewisGale Regional Health System offers many educational opportunities to help you on your way to better health. Most community education events are free, ...".

Meta description formula

Formula

[Action] + [Organization Name] + [City, State] + [Benefit]

Example

Get advanced treatments at Benefit Hospital Cancer Care Center in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where you'll find support from our friendly, trained professionals.

Tips for directory naming/URL structuring

- URLs should be simple, direct, descriptive and easy to read
- Use relevant keywords, but use a keyword just once in each URL (Don't overload with keywords or repeat keywords)
- Remove “stop words” (and, or, but, of, the, etc.) to shorten your URL
- Use hyphens (-) to separate words, not underscores (_) or spaces

DO THIS: benefithealth.com/services/rehabilitation/physical-therapy

NOT THIS: benefithealth.com/our-services-and-specialties/rehabilitation/outpatient-rehabilitation/outpatient-rehabilitation-services/outpatient-physical-therapy

Link anchor text

- Anchor text is the clickable text in a hyperlink
- Use keyword- and topic-specific anchor text when possible; don't use generic text, such as "click here" or "read more"
- When linking to documents or videos, include information about media format, file size, etc.

DO THIS: Explore our comprehensive [heart and vascular services](#) and call for an appointment.

OR THIS: Take our [Birth Center virtual tour \[video; 2:30\]](#) and call for an appointment.

NOT THIS: [Click here](#) to find out more about heart and vascular care.

Accessibility

in web content



Why accessibility is important

- Risks:

- Losing patients with accessibility challenges
- Lawsuits
- Bad PR
- Potential loss of government funding/ACA/Medicare payments

- Opportunities:

- Improves usability for all visitors
- Improves SEO
- Improve understanding of health topic
- Gain and retain patients with accessibility challenges
- Improves patient experience and is linked to better health outcomes

Creating accessible content

- AAA Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) state that content should be written as clearly and simply as possible. To meet AAA standards, content should register at a 9th grade reading level or below.
- Explain abbreviations or technical terms on first reference.
- Use descriptive text for links. (Never use “click here.”)
- Keep content within a clear and understandable hierarchy, using headings and subheadings to organize content.

Creating accessible content

- Don't refer to content using sensory wording (for example, "see below")
- Include captions for videos
- Follow guidelines for making PDFs and other files accessible (www.hhs.gov/web/section-508/making-files-accessible/index.html)
- Don't embed text in images
 - Don't use graphics alone to display information, always have text-based alternatives

Geonetric content resources



Learn more at Geonetric.com

- [Accessibility Guidelines that Healthcare Marketers Overlook](#) (blog post)
- [Build a Strong Website Location Strategy for Your Health System](#)
- [Creating an Editorial Calendar for Healthcare Marketers](#)
- [Content Marketing for Healthcare](#) (eBook)
- [Five Steps to Creating Content that Converts](#)
- [How New Accessibility Requirements Will Impact Healthcare Websites](#) (blog post)
- [Planning a Redesign? Start with Content Strategy](#)
- [Tackle Your Next Redesign with Strategy Content Migration](#)
- [Turn Competing Goals into a Balanced Content Strategy](#)
- [What You Need to Know About Content Marketing](#)
- [Web Content Voice, Tone, & Style](#)
- [Writing for SEO: 6 Tips to Improve Your Healthcare Content](#)