

RENEW counseling: Skilled staff; Nutrition-focused

Try the activity on your own or with others from your agency.

RENEW Review Activity: Teach-Back Method

What is teach-back?

A way to check a person's ability to understand and apply information that does not feel like a test or quiz.

Why would it be helpful?

It can be helpful to check if you have explained information clearly and if the participant can explain what they learned or steps they should do in their own words. If the participant is unable to explain the steps, you can re-explain using a different approach and check for understanding again.

When would it be helpful?

Teach-back can be helpful when you explain important information to participants. It can be useful for the participant's understanding of complicated information we provide in WIC (e.g. breast pump instructions, how to use the WIC Shopper app, etc.). Combining hand-outs that have pictures and important messages with teach-back can also support participants understanding.

Key elements:

- Use open-ended questions, affirmations, reflective listening and summarizing (OARS) approach to provide patient centered service.
- Use plain language and avoid using medical jargon.
- Use the "show me" approach when asking participants to summarize what they learned. Ask them to show or restate the information or steps in their own words.
 - "Could you show me...?"
 - "How would you do this at home?"
 - "How would you explain this to a friend?"
 - "I want to make sure I was clear when explaining...could you tell me about...in your own words?"

Case Studies:

- A. “Molly, today we talked about ways to incorporate more fruit in your daughter’s diet by making breakfast smoothies. Please tell me exactly what I said so that I can make sure I explained it clearly.”

According to the key elements, what are the issues with this teach-back?

- B. Ben came into your office addressing his concerns about not having enough food to feed his family. You referred him to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and explained the steps to apply for SNAP benefits.

Write your own teach-back to make sure that Ben understands the steps to apply for SNAP Benefits:

- C. Caitlyn has a 6-month-old daughter named Ashton here for her mid-infant certification appointment. Caitlyn has expressed interest in incorporating new foods into her daughter’s diet. Caitlyn is currently exclusively breastfeeding and has started a few solid foods-including infant oatmeal cereal. She is mostly interested in adding fresh fruits and vegetables but is open about other food groups. She is unsure about what, when, and how much to add into Ashton’s diet. You see this as a perfect time to discuss first foods and decide whether to assign the fruit and veggie benefit starting at 9 months. You remember you need to cover safe food preparation, storage techniques and infant feeding practices as part of your nutrition counseling.

Time to Eat Handout-

https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYPEOPLEFAMILIES/WIC/Documents/709_engl_time_toeat.pdf

- a. Have one person be the client and another person be the counselor.
- b. Using the Time to Eat handout, explain what, when and how Caitlyn can incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables into Ashton’s diet.
- c. Counselor will use teach-back to measure the participant’s understanding.
- d. Participant will explain in their own words what steps they will take to incorporate new foods.
- e. Counselor will re-explain if needed.

Practice- five-day focus

For the next five days use teach-back with your clients.

- a. Reflect on what worked for you and what did not work after each session.
- b. Find what works best for your approach to the teach-back method.