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# Oral Health Literacy and Health Seeking Behavior of Older Adults in Rural Community

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## Abstract

**Objectives:** This community-based cross-sectional study aimed to examine health information seeking behavior regarding oral health and oral health literacy and their relationship in older adults.

**Methods:** The research was conducted with 432 participants from the rural area of, Noen Maprang District, Phitsanulok province, Northern Thailand. To measure oral health literacy, modified Short Test of Functional Health Literacy in Dentistry for Older Adults was used. The adapted questionnaire was used to collect health information seeking behavior in the past 3 months.

**Results:** Only 12.3% demonstrated adequate oral health literacy. Some 27.1% presented active health information seeking behavior, 57.3% presented passive health information seeking behavior and 15.6% had never obtained or sought any oral health information. The association between health information seeking behavior and oral health literacy could not be observed. Television, health personnel, family members/relatives and village health volunteers were the most popular information sources.

**Conclusions:** By adding oral health information and improving skills of oral health information for village health volunteers, it is possible to develop oral health literacy in older adults in rural areas.

**Keywords:** health information seeking behavior, older adults, oral health literacy