Micromedex® CareNotes® provide information patients can easily comprehend and use to participate in their own care — reducing the need for emergency care and increasing their adherence to care instructions.

Leveraging the ADDS Design Principles
To provide evidence-based education that is easily understood by patients at varying levels of literacy, the Micromedex editorial team uses ADDS design principles to create patient education documents. The ADDS principles use the best practices in patient education and strong writing to improve health literacy, motivate patient behavior, and increase compliance.

The Importance of Plain Language
The brain does not always process the written word well. Even strong readers can struggle with medical information, especially when they are sick or stressed. Some readers always experience brain function disruptions when they read. Disruptions are called decoding errors. Plain language helps the reader decode the text more easily and makes information more available to all readers.

Language is packaged information. In sentence construction, too much information between the subject and verb, the verb and the object, or before the subject, can overload the short-term memory and make comprehension difficult. That’s why, plain language is a key component to the content design of Micromedex CareNotes. Below are the other key components that comprise the ADDS principles.

Actionable
CareNote instructions emphasize how to complete a task. To accomplish this, crucial details and steps are provided to describe the behavior the reader must change or the actions the reader must perform.
In addition:
- Written steps, such as how to change equipment ties, give an extra dose of medication from a pump, or change a bandage, are easy for patients to follow.
- Home care procedures include practical instructions, such as “Prop your arm on pillows to keep it elevated comfortably.”
- Medical and technical information is limited to what the reader needs to use.
- Amounts are quantified. For example, rather than “Your wound bleeds a lot,” the instruction will specify how much and for how long bleeding would occur to be categorized as “a lot.”

**Directive**
CareNotes tell the reader what to do and what not to do. The reader is not left to guess whether directions are necessary or merely suggested.
- The imperative is used rather than the gerund (e.g., “Wash the wound each day to prevent infection,” instead of “Washing the wound each day may help prevent infection”).
- Directions are clear. Readers may miss steps or become confused if the essential elements of the steps are buried in complex language.
- Information is concise. Readers may stop after the first few steps if there are too many, or there is too much information in each step.

**Streamlined**
CareNotes remove information that is not necessary in order to highlight need-to-know information. Streamlined text is easier to decode.
- CareNotes exclude non-essential words, such as prepositional phrases, repeated words after a subheading, and introductory clauses.
- Each CareNote starts with the purpose of the material.
- The most important information appears first.
- The simplest, most familiar, and most concrete terms possible are used.
- Sentences are limited to fewer than 19 words.
- Information is provided in small chunks.

The ADDS principles leverage the best practices in patient education to improve health literacy, motivate patient behavior, and increase compliance. This design approach distinguishes CareNotes content.