ENGAGEMENT IN ONLINE HEALTH COMMUNITIES:  
EXPRESSED ATTITUDES AND SELF-EFFICACY OF  
ARTHRITIS SELF-MANAGEMENT BEHAVIORS  

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ABSTRACT  

The purpose of this research is to examine the computer-mediated  
communication within online health communities to understand the role engagement  
plays in eHealth literacy and the perceived benefits, perceived barriers, and expressed  
feelings of self-efficacy toward self-management behaviors of people with arthritis. This  
study used two methods: content analysis, and concurrent ethnomethodology. A four  
constructed-week sample was collected from four online health communities for the  
content analysis (N=1,960), and more than 6,500 archived posts were examined  
ethnomethodologically. Online health communities provide opportunities for health  
behavior change messages to educate and persuade regarding arthritis self-  
management behaviors.