

The Power of Stories for People Living with Chronic Conditions

To reach and empower people living with chronic conditions, pharma marketers first need to understand them — who they are, their challenges, and how they make decisions. In short, you need to know their stories.

Stories are a powerful lens because they get to the heart of how people relate to health and wellness, through elements such as:

EMOTION

Delve into emotional needs and challenges

PLOT

Dig into the steps and motivations behind health journeys

CHARACTER

Understand the whole person, across areas of well-being

CONFLICT

Look at common stressors for people with health conditions

With a more authentic understanding, you can build your own marketing stories that reach, engage, and resonate at a deeper level.



CHARACTER

Stories give insight into a whole person

Gain a fuller understanding of what impacts your audience's wellness. People are more than their health condition. Their experience of well-being is holistic, which means food, sleep, money, race, gender — it all matters.

Like 65% of those with rheumatoid arthritis, Imani wants more information about how nutrition relates to her condition.¹ Could a gluten-free diet help manage her symptoms? Should she try yoga or acupuncture, too? She plans to do research online before she visits her doctor.

EMOTION

Stories are a lens for deeper understanding

Learn how to offer support and build trust with audiences. Stories provide authentic emotional insights in a way that data alone can't. It's worthwhile to understand why and when people turn to social media, online communities, and content creators for kinship and support.

Like 43% of those with a chronic condition, Sam feels that others don't understand his experience with inflammatory bowel disease, including his friends and family.² Online, he eagerly reads articles like "5 Things I Wish People Understood About IBD" and "What It's Like to Date with IBD."



Those with a chronic condition are 15% more likely to care about personal stories than science-based advice²



Top stressors include⁴

Mental health 33%

Personal appearance 22%

Relationships 20%

Loneliness 13%

Finances 12%

CONFLICT

Stories clarify your audience's challenges

Become a true supportive partner for those with chronic conditions. Stories reveal unmet needs, pain points, and potential stressors that can arise when living with a health condition.

Like 26% of those with HIV, Ellen has days where her anxiety and depression makes it harder to remember to take her medication.³ The high cost of HIV medication adds to her stress. But when she shares her story with others, their encouragement and advice gives her a sense of hope.

PLOT

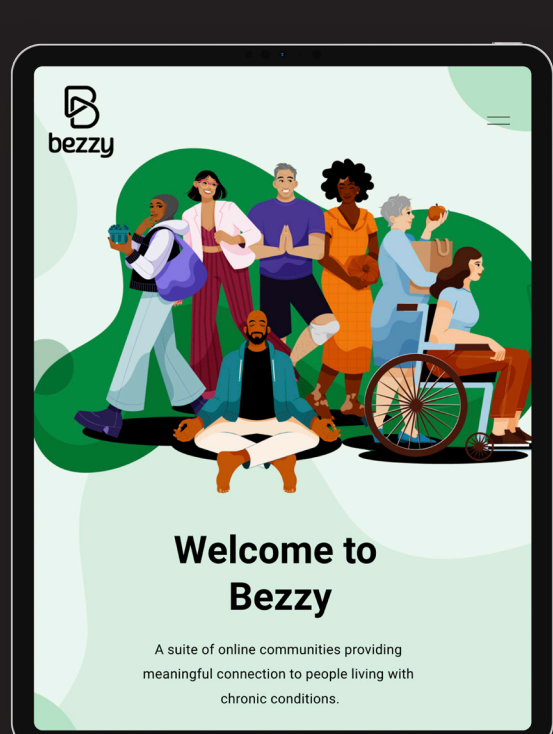
Stories offer insight into health journeys

Choose the channels, messaging, and timing that will resonate. How and when do people with health conditions research, choose treatment, celebrate, grieve, and share experiences? Stories give context for behavior as people move through their health journeys.

Like 69% of those with a health condition, Jose has found community helpful at every stage of his condition journey.⁷ 68% percent of those with multiple sclerosis consider support groups a valuable source of healthcare information.⁸ Like 80% of those with multiple sclerosis, he will look for as much information as possible before taking any drug.⁹



63% of people living with a chronic condition say that they want to hear about the experiences of people who have dealt with health challenges like theirs⁶



How Healthline Media Makes an Impact

Our whole person approach lets us create **uniquely impactful content and experiences** for people living with health conditions

Pharma partners align with target audiences where and when their messages matter most.

[Get in touch](#) to learn how your brand can make a difference in partnership with Healthline Media.

Sources:

(1) 2020 Healthline Media Planning Insights Lab data (HIV, PsO, PsA, COPD, RA); (2) Healthline Media Landscape Segmentation Study, Dec 2020. Insights from 88 people living with one of 7 chronic conditions who value community experiences; (3) Healthline Media PIL studies, 2019-2020. Studies conducted among people living with rheumatoid arthritis (N=756), psoriasis (N=608), psoriatic arthritis (N=432) Crohn's (N=300), ulcerative colitis (N=400), breast cancer (N=505), and Leukemia (N=179); (4) Healthline Media Landscape Segmentation Study, Dec 2020. Insights from 88 people living with one of 7 chronic conditions who value community experiences; (5) 2020 Healthline Media Planning Insights Lab data (HIV, PsO, PsA, COPD, RA); (6) Healthline Media Landscape Segmentation Study, Dec 2020. Study conducted among 88 people living with one of 7 chronic conditions who value community experiences; (7) Chronic Conditions Qualitative Research, May 2021. Study conducted among 72 respondents across 10 chronic conditions; (8) 2021 MARS Consumer Health Study (68%, Index 129); (9) 2021 Comscore Multi-Platform/GFK MRI Media + Fusion (09-21/522)

About Healthline Media:

Healthline Media is the #1 digital health and wellness property, connecting 85 million people each month with expert content, communities, and partners that impact their road to well-being and create a stronger, healthier world. Learn more at [HealthlineMedia.com](https://www.healthline.com).