Background The Arabic version of the short form of the Health Literacy in Dentistry scale (HeLD) had not yet been developed in previously published studies. This study aims to test the reliability and validity of an Arabic version of the short form of the HeLD questionnaire.

Methods The short version of HeLD was translated into Arabic and the psychometric properties were evaluated in a sample of 1,889 female students in their first year of secondary school. Test-retest reliability was assessed using the intra-class correlation coefficient (ICC), and internal consistency reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. Content validity was investigated by creating a correlation matrix between the individual items of the HeLD-14, and criterion validity was determined using Pearson's correlation between the HeLD-14 score and an overall oral health rating. Sensitivity analysis was assessed by testing the associations of the HeLD-14 score with oral health-related behaviours and residential area.

Results The Arabic version of HeLD-14 (A-HeLD) had acceptable ICC (0.54) and excellent internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha: 0.92). The correlations between the items of the A-HeLD-14 varied from 0.3 to 0.9. The A-HeLD-14 showed a statistically significant correlation with the overall oral health rating ($r = 0.37$, $p < 0.001$). The median A-HeLD-14 score was significantly higher in participants who brushed their teeth frequently (51.31), visited the dentist regularly (52.00), consumed fresh fruit frequently (51), and consumed soda or energy drinks infrequently (51.00) than participants who brushed their teeth infrequently (41.50), visited the dentist irregularly (49.00), consumed fresh fruit infrequently (47) and consumed soda or energy drinks frequently (48.00).

Conclusion The A-HeLD-14 instrument demonstrates sufficient validity, reliability, and sensitivity for measuring oral health literacy among the Arabic-speaking population**.**