

18

Health Care, Wellness and Society

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Abstract

The chapter examines the interconnection between health, wellness, and society, emphasizing their roles in individual and community well-being. It highlights the multidimensional aspects of health, various determinants, and the importance of healthy lifestyles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Additionally, it addresses the concept of healthy communities and digital health within the framework of Sustainable Development Goal 3, underscoring the shared responsibility of maintaining health among individuals, families, communities, health professionals, and governments.

Keywords: Health, Wellness, Social Determinants of Health, Health Promotion, Disease Prevention.

Introduction

Health is one of the most significant issues in human life which is vital for personal, family and community Health. A Healthy person can effectively participate in daily living, have Healthy relationships, attain goals and be positive contributors to society.

Previously Health was defined merely as the lack of illness. In today's Healthcare however, people understand Health to be multidimensional, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, occupational and environmental Health. These are all factors that are interrelated and affect the quality of life overall.

Wellness is an ongoing lifestyle of making Healthy choices and engaging in positive habits like eating a Healthy diet, exercising regularly, dealing with stress, getting enough sleep, and maintaining Healthy relationships.

In addition to the biological, social determinants of Health include education, income, employment, housing, access to Health services, sanitation, culture, environment. A shift in lifestyles, urbanization, technology and environmental issues

have led to new Health problems and Health promotion and disease prevention are critical.

The knowledge of Health, wellness and society enables individuals, families, Health and other community practitioners to collaborate in promoting good Health and building Healthy communities.

Understanding Health

Health is a good asset of ours for physical function, mental functions, emotional stability, social relationships and wellbeing. There has been a transformation in the way people think about Health, from being free from disease to being a more holistic aspect of life that is dynamic.

Across the lifespan the Health of individuals changes, and is affected by a range of factors including genetics, lifestyle, diet, exercise, education, income, environment and services received. People cope better with stress, carry out tasks and lead productive lives when they are Healthy.

Healthy population helps in the social progress, economic development, national growth etc. The focus of modern Health care is on Health promotion and disease prevention via Healthy lifestyle, immunization, screening and early intervention.

Health is a collective responsibility of the individual, family, community, Health professionals and the government. Healthy choices, a Healthy environment and equal access to the Health services are all important to good Health.

To sum up, Health is a multidimensional phenomenon that is a continuous process throughout the life span which allows a person to play the role of an active member of society at his or her best.

Definition of Health

Health is a basic human resource which is important for every person, family and community to be able to live a productive and meaningful life. The definition of Health has evolved from being free from disease to being a state of overall Health.

The World Health Organization (WHO) (1948) states that:

Health is defined as "an overall state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

This definition states that there are three key dimensions of Health:

- **Physical Well-being:** Relates to the correct operation of the body as a result of eating well, regular exercise, good sleep habits, personal cleanliness and avoidance of harmful habits.
- **Mental Well-being:** Cognitive, emotional regulation and adaptation to life challenges.

- **Social Well-being:** Refers to Healthy relationships, effective communication, social participation and positive contribution to society.

Modern Concept of Health

Modern Health science views Health as multidimensional, dynamic and holistic process involving physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, occupational, and environmental well being. The environment, Health services, socio-economic factors, and lifestyle all have an effect on Health.

Key Characteristics of Health

- **Holistic:** Includes all aspects of human well-being.
- **Dynamic:** Changes throughout life according to various factors.
- **Positive:** Focuses on achieving optimal Health, not only avoiding disease.
- **Preventive:** Emphasizes Health promotion and disease prevention.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Requires involvement of individuals, families, communities, Healthcare professionals, and governments.

Importance of Understanding Health

A clear understanding of Health helps to:

- Promote Healthy lifestyle practices.
- Prevent diseases through early intervention.
- Improve quality of life.
- Develop effective Health policies.
- Reduce Healthcare burden.
- Increase productivity and community development.

Concept of Health

The meaning of Health has evolved over the years. Previously Health was defined in terms of the lack of disease or illness. Today, however, Healthcare acknowledges that Health is a multidimensional and holistic phenomenon which involves a range of factors including physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, occupational and environmental Health.

Health is a dynamic process which varies with age and influenced by a range of factors including genetic makeup, lifestyle, nutrition, education, occupation, environment, socio-economic factors, and access to Health care services.

In modern times, the concept of Health places as much emphasis on the ability to engage in daily activities, manage stress, adjust to changes, maintain relationships, and contribute positively to society, and to being free from disease.

The various definitions of Health are all related to the idea that Health is determined by biological, psychological, social and environmental factors. People

and communities need to keep working toward good Health by making Healthy choices, and actively participating. Understanding Wellness

Health and wellness go together but are distinct. Health is about being physically, mentally and socially well, while wellness is an ongoing and active way of living for a Healthy and fulfilling life.

Wellness involves taking responsibility for oneself, Healthy lifestyles, inner growth and development and continuing learning. It is not a fixed target, but rather a life-long process to help people enhance their life quality by adopting positive lifestyle choices.

Wellness refers to a balance of various life dimensions including, physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual, intellectual, occupational and environmental that are in harmony. These dimensions are related to each other and have an impact on Health.

Definition of Wellness

Wellness is a dynamic way to become conscious of and make choices toward a Healthier, more fulfilling life.

Wellness involves:

- Continuous growth and self-improvement.
- Maintaining balance in different areas of life.
- Promoting Health and preventing disease.
- Realising personal potential and improving quality of life.

While Health can be affected by many external factors, wellness relies heavily on the choices and behaviors of each of us -- including exercise, nutrition, sleep, stress management, relationships, and self-denial.

Difference between Health and Wellness

The word "Health" is closely connected with the word "wellness" but it has different meanings. Health is the overall condition or status of a person and wellness is the process of making lifestyle decisions that allow a person to achieve and maintain good Health.

Health is defined as physical, mental, social and emotional Health. It's affected by things like age, inheritance, lifestyle, environment, socioeconomic status and Health care services. A person who is Healthy can manage his daily activities well and doesn't have a big disease.

Wellness is a personal state of Health that centers on personal responsibility, Healthy lifestyle choices and ongoing self improvement. It involves elements of balanced nutrition, regular physical activity, stress management, positive relationships and preventive Health care.

Put simply, Health is a state, and wellness is a process to get to and maintain that state.

Even if you have a chronic disease you can be Healthy if you take care of your disease and practice Healthful behaviours. Likewise, an individual who doesn't have any sickness could have bad well being because of unHealthy way of life practices.

Good Health is a part of good wellness. Wellness has a foundation, which is good Health and wellness practices help to maintain or improve Health and are essential for a productive and meaningful life.

Determinants of Health

There are factors other than the absence of disease and medical care that affect Health. These are called determinants of Health and influence the circumstances in which people are born, grow, live, work and age.

Biological factors, lifestyle behaviors, environmental factors, socioeconomic factors, Health system access, social and cultural factors are all determinants of Health. Some factors like age, sex and genes cannot be changed, others like dietary pattern, exercise, hygiene and harmful habits can be changed.

There are many determinants of Health, and Health is a product of these multiple determinants. For instance, Healthy eating, regular physical activity and regular Health checkups can lower a person's risk of developing diabetes if they are genetically at risk of diabetes.

Identifying the determinants of Health will enable persons, communities and governments to recognize and address risks, encourage Healthy behaviors, prevent disease, reduce Health inequities, and enhance quality of life.

Determinants of Health

- **Biological Determinants**

Biological determinants are inherent in the nature of the organism and influence Health, growth and development, immunity and disease susceptibility. These are predominantly outside a person's control.

Major biological determinants include:

- **Age:** One's Health requirements and risk of disease vary by age. Infants require nutrition and immunization, adolescents undergo growth and development, adults have a risk of life style diseases and older adults are more likely to have chronic diseases.
- **Sex (Gender):** Biological differences between males and females influence Health needs and disease patterns. For example, women require reproductive Healthcare, while some diseases may occur differently between genders.

- **Heredity and Genetics:** Genes inherited from parents influence physical characteristics and risk of diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, thalassemia, sickle cell disease, haemophilia, and certain cancers. Early detection and Healthy lifestyles can reduce complications.
- **Immunity:** Immunity protects the body from infections. Good nutrition, vaccination, exercise, adequate sleep, and Healthy habits help strengthen the immune system.
- **Lifestyle and Behavioural Determinants**

Lifestyle determinants are daily habits and personal choices that influence Health. These factors can be modified through Healthy behaviours.

Major lifestyle determinants include:

- **Balanced Nutrition:** A Healthy diet provides essential nutrients, supports growth, improves immunity, and prevents chronic diseases.
- **Regular Physical Activity:** Exercise improves fitness, maintains Healthy weight, strengthens muscles and bones, and reduces the risk of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.
- **Adequate Sleep and Rest:** Proper sleep supports physical recovery, mental Health, memory, and immune function.
- **Personal Hygiene:** Practices such as handwashing, oral hygiene, bathing, and safe food handling prevent infections and promote Health.
- **Stress Management:** Healthy stress management techniques such as yoga, meditation, exercise, hobbies, and social support improve mental and physical well-being.
- **Avoidance of Harmful Habits:** Avoiding tobacco, alcohol, substance abuse, and excessive screen time reduces Health risks.
- **Regular Health Check-ups:** Routine screening, immunization, and Health examinations help detect diseases early **and improve outcomes.**

Dimensions of Health and Wellness

Health and wellness are multidimensional concepts that include various aspects of life. These various dimensions are interrelated and imbalances in any dimension can have a negative impact on overall Health. Balance between these dimensions enables one to have a Healthy and fulfilling life.

- **Physical Dimension**

Refers to maintaining a Healthy body through balanced nutrition, regular exercise, adequate sleep, personal hygiene, and avoiding harmful habits.

- **Mental Dimension**

Involves clear thinking, learning, problem-solving, decision-making, stress management, and adapting to changes.

- **Emotional Dimension**

Focuses on understanding, expressing, and managing emotions effectively to maintain emotional stability and positive relationships.

- **Social Dimension**

Includes developing Healthy relationships, effective communication, cooperation, and active participation in family and community life.

- **Spiritual Dimension**

Relates to personal values, beliefs, purpose, inner peace, compassion, and ethical living.

- **Intellectual Dimension**

Involves lifelong learning, creativity, knowledge development, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities.

- **Occupational Dimension**

Refers to satisfaction and balance in work or profession, including productivity, skill development, and work-life balance.

- **Environmental Dimension**

Focuses on maintaining a safe and Healthy environment through sanitation, pollution control, conservation, and environmental responsibility.

Interrelationship of Dimensions

All dimensions influence each other. Good physical Health improves mental and emotional well-being, positive relationships support social Health, and a Healthy environment promotes overall wellness. Balance among all dimensions leads to better quality of life and complete well-being.

Relationship Between Health and Society

There is a close relationship between Health and society. Factors other than biological ones, such as social, economic, cultural and environmental factors, also affect an individual's Health. Health and well-being is linked to family support, education, work, income, social relations and living environment.

A Healthy society offers quality education, clean water, nutritious food, sanitation, Health services, employment opportunities and safe environment, thereby enhancing quality of life and reducing the diseases.

However, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, discrimination, poor living conditions and lack of Health care facilities have a negative impact on Health and burden it with diseases, malnutrition, mental Health issues and lower life expectancy.

Therefore, to enhance and improve the Health of individuals and communities is a key element of the development and progress of society.

Social Determinants of Health

Social determinants of Health are the social, economic, and environmental conditions that influence the Health and well-being of individuals and communities.

- **Education**

Education improves Health awareness and helps individuals make better decisions regarding nutrition, hygiene, disease prevention, and Healthcare. Higher education is linked with better Health outcomes.

- **Income and Economic Status**

Income affects access to nutritious food, safe housing, education, and Healthcare services. Financial stability supports better physical and mental Health.

- **Employment and Working Conditions**

Employment provides financial security and self-confidence. Safe workplaces reduce Health risks, while unemployment and unsafe conditions can negatively affect Health.

- **Housing and Living Conditions**

Safe, clean, and hygienic housing prevents infections and environmental Health problems. Poor housing and overcrowding increase disease risk.

- **Nutrition and Food Security**

Access to adequate and nutritious food supports growth, immunity, and disease prevention. Poor nutrition can lead to various Health problems.

- **Healthcare Access**

Availability of quality Healthcare, immunization, screening, and timely treatment helps prevent diseases and improves Health outcomes.

- **Social Support**

Family, friends, and community support improve emotional Health, reduce stress, and encourage Healthy behaviours.

- **Physical Environment**

Clean air, safe water, sanitation, and a Healthy environment protect individuals from diseases and promote overall well-being.

Healthy Lifestyle Practices

A Healthy lifestyle promotes physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being by encouraging positive habits that prevent diseases and improve quality of life. Healthy practices should be followed throughout life for better Health outcomes.

- **Balanced Diet**

A balanced diet provides essential nutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, minerals, fibre, and water. A variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, pulses, and proteins support growth, immunity, and disease prevention.

- **Regular Physical Activity**

Regular exercise such as walking, cycling, yoga, swimming, and sports improves fitness, maintains Healthy weight, strengthens muscles and bones, and reduces the risk of chronic diseases.

- **Adequate Sleep and Rest**

Proper sleep supports physical recovery, mental alertness, emotional balance, memory, immunity, and overall Health. Adults generally require 7–9 hours of sleep daily.

- **Personal Hygiene**

Good hygiene practices such as regular bathing, handwashing, oral care, clean clothing, and safe food handling help prevent infections and maintain Health.

- **Stress Management**

Managing stress through meditation, yoga, deep breathing, exercise, hobbies, time management, and social support improves mental and emotional well-being.

- **Avoiding Harmful Habits**

Avoiding tobacco, alcohol, substance abuse, and excessive screen time reduces the risk of various diseases and promotes long-term Health.

- **Regular Health Check-ups**

Regular Health examinations, vaccinations, screening tests, and monitoring of blood pressure and blood sugar help detect diseases early and improve treatment outcomes.

Health Promotion

- **Meaning of Health Promotion**

Health promotion is an action that helps individuals and communities gain greater control over their Health and enhance it. It emphasizes on following Healthy habits, preventing diseases and providing an environment that facilitates individuals

to be Healthy and feel good. Health promotion helps to motivate individuals to choose Healthy behaviours and make informed decisions for a Healthier lifestyle.

This course introduces you to the theory and practice of Health promotion.

Key concepts of Health promotion are:

- Help people to take personal responsibility for their Health.
- Promoting the involvement of the community in Health-related activities.
- Promoting Healthy public policies.
- Creating supportive and Healthy environments.
- Improving Health education and preventive Health care.
- Reducing Health inequalities.
- Encouraging a lifelong Healthy lifestyle.
- This document outlines some of the strategies used in Health promotion.

The following strategies can be used to achieve Health promotion:

- Health education and awareness raising activities.
- Promoting regular exercise and good nutrition.
- Immunisation and preventive Health care services.
- Early detection via Health screening programmes.
- Community participation in Health promotion activities.
- Building Healthy schools, workplaces and communities.
- Government policies that promote public Health.

Disease Prevention

- **Meaning of Disease Prevention**

Disease Prevention is the use of measures designed to minimize the incidence of disease, early detection of disease and to avoid complications. Its goal is to enhance Health, decrease disability and extend life span.

The amount of disease prevention at different levels.

- **Primary Prevention**

Primary prevention is the prevention of diseases before they ever happen by minimizing risk factors and encouraging Healthy lifestyles.

Examples

- Immunization
- Balanced diet
- Regular exercise
- Personal hygiene
- Safe drinking water
- Health education
- Steer clear of alcohol and tobacco

- **Secondary Prevention**

Secondary prevention is aimed at early detection and treatment of diseases to avoid complications.

Examples

- Blood pressure screening
- Blood sugar testing
- Cancer screening
- Vision and dental check-ups
- Routine medical examinations

Healthy Community

- **Meaning of Healthy Community**

A Healthy community is one where people work together to create conditions that promote Health, safety, and well-being. It provides equal opportunities for all people to live Healthy and productive lives through access to education, Healthcare, employment, sanitation, clean water, nutritious food, and a safe environment.

- **Characteristics of a Healthy Community**

A Healthy community has the following characteristics:

- Safe and clean environment.
- Availability of quality Healthcare services.
- Safe drinking water and proper sanitation.
- Good educational facilities.
- Adequate employment opportunities.
- Healthy lifestyle practices.
- Community participation in Health programmes.
- Equal access to essential Health services.
- Environmental protection and waste management.

- **Importance of a Healthy Community**

- Improves the quality of life.
- Reduces the burden of diseases.
- Promotes Healthy lifestyles.
- Encourages community participation.
- Supports economic and social development.
- Improves public Health outcomes.

Digital Health

- **Meaning of Digital Health**

Digital Health refers to the use of digital technologies to improve Healthcare services, Health education, disease prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and Health management. It helps Healthcare professionals provide better and faster Healthcare services.

- **Components of Digital Health**

- Telemedicine
- Electronic Health Records (EHR)
- Mobile Health (mHealth)
- Health Information Systems
- Health Applications (Health Apps)

- **Advantages of Digital Health**

- Improves access to Healthcare services.
- Promotes early diagnosis and treatment.
- Saves time and reduces travel.
- Improves communication between patients and Healthcare professionals.
- Supports Health education and disease prevention.
- Improves record keeping and continuity of care.

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 3): Good Health and Well-being

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3 aims to ensure Healthy lives and promote well-being for people of all ages. It focuses on improving Healthcare services, reducing diseases, promoting mental Health, and achieving universal Health coverage.

Objectives of SDG 3

- Reduce maternal mortality.
- End preventable deaths of newborns and children.
- Control communicable diseases.
- Reduce non-communicable diseases.
- Promote mental Health and well-being.
- Achieve universal Health coverage.
- Ensure access to safe medicines and vaccines.
- Strengthen national Healthcare systems.

Importance of SDG 3

- Improves the Health of individuals and communities.
- Reduces disease burden and mortality.
- Promotes Healthy lifestyles.
- Strengthens Healthcare services.
- Contributes to sustainable social and economic development.

Chapter Summary

Health is a multidimensional concept that includes physical, mental, social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, occupational, and environmental well-being. Wellness is a lifelong process of making Healthy choices to improve quality of life.

Health is influenced by biological, lifestyle, environmental, and social factors. Health promotion, disease prevention, Healthy lifestyle practices, Healthy communities, digital Health, and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) all contribute to better Health outcomes.

Maintaining good Health is a shared responsibility of individuals, families, communities, Healthcare professionals, and governments, helping to build a Healthier society.

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