

UNIT-01 INTRODUCTION TO HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health → Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not merely the absence of disease and infirmity (WHO definition, 1947).

Wellness → The global wellness institute defines wellness as the active pursuit of activities, choices and lifestyle that lead to a state of holistic (overall) health.

* Difference between health and wellness

Health

- ① It is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- ② A state of being

Wellness

- ① Active process through which people become aware of, and make choices towards a more successful existence.
- ② A practical way of achieving health.

* Importance of health in everyday life

The benefits of good health in everyday life are enlisted below.

- ① Productivity and contribution → Good health enables individuals to fulfill their roles and responsibilities effectively. On the other hand, illness reduces one's ability to perform jobs, leading to decreased productivity.
- ② Financial benefits → Maintaining good health can save individuals from the financial burdens associated with

medical treatment and hospital visits.

③ Psychological well-being → Psychologically healthy individuals are better equipped to handle stress, maintain positive relationships, and experience a higher quality of life.

* Good health and well-being practices → The following practices need to be adopted to achieve good health.

- a) Balanced diet: One should consume a well-balanced and nutritious diet for good health.
- b) Regular Exercise: Regular physical activity and exercise helps to improve cardiovascular health, strengthen muscles and bones, etc.
- c) Sufficient rest and sleep: Getting enough sleep (at least 7 hours for adults) is extremely important for mental and physical recovery in order to overcome physical and mental fatigue.
- d) Stress management: Effective stress management techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, deep breathing exercise, engagement in hobbies, etc. help to reduce stress and in turn, maintain good health.
- e) Preventive measures: To prevent the occurrence of diseases, one should undergo regular health-checkups ^{and} get proper vaccinations.
- f) Hygiene and safety practices: One should maintain proper hygiene such as proper cleaning, regular bathing, practicing regular handwashing, etc.
- g) Social connections: One should cultivate meaningful ^{social} relationships in order to have a strong social support systems.

* Components of health and their relevance

① Physical health → It refers to the state of well-being and optimal functioning of the body's systems and organs. It includes various aspects like cardiovascular health, muscular strength and endurance, flexibility and overall physical fitness and absence of diseases.

To improve and maintain physical health, the following practices must be followed.

- ① Regular Exercise
- ② Balanced diet.
- ③ Sufficient sleep.
- ④ Stress management.
- ⑤ Avoid substance abuse (avoid the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs, etc.).
- ⑥ Regular health check-up.

② Social health → Social health refers to our ability to foster and maintain meaningful relationships with others. Positive social interactions have a profound impact on our mental and emotional well-being.

To maintain social health, one must follow these ways.

- ① Building relationships - Meaningful relationships with family, friends, colleagues, and community members is the first step to achieve social health. One needs to invest quality time and effort in building connections with other members of the society based on trust, mutual respect, and support.
- ② Effective communication - Effective communication skills not only includes verbal but also non-verbal cues, such as body language and active listening.
- ③ Developing Empathy - Empathy promotes deeper connections and fosters supportive and compassionate relationships.

- ④ Building a support network - Having a good support system during both good and bad times helps to navigate through life's ups and down.
- ⑤ Participating in social activities - This includes joining clubs, organizations, or community groups, participating in team sports, volunteering, etc. in order to meet new people and enhance social interactions.
- ⑥ Resolving conflicts → Effective conflict resolution skills is important to address conflicts and disagreements in a constructive and respectful manner.
- ⑦ Digital Balance → For effective social health, balance between online and offline social connections are important. We should give equal importance to face-to-face interactions as well.
- ⑧ Seek support → Difficulties in maintaining social health may be tackled by seeking support from mental health professionals, counsellors, etc.

③ Mental health - Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It includes how individuals think, feel, behave and how it influences their capability of making choices, handling stress, etc.

Importance of mental health and wellness

- a) Emotional well-being → Prioritizing mental health, one enhances his/hers ability to regulate ~~one~~ emotions and fostering a positive and balanced emotional state.
- b) Cognitive functioning → Mental health directly influences our cognitive abilities. A healthy mental state improves problem-solving skills, concentration, decision-making ability, etc.

c) Interpersonal relationships → When we are mentally well, we are better equipped to empathize with others, communicate effectively and establish deep connections.

Strategies for nurturing good mental health

- ① Self-care practices - Engaging in self-care activities that promote relaxation, stress reduction, and emotional well-being. These activities may include meditation, engaging in hobbies, regular exercise, etc.
- ② seeking support - It is essential to reach out and seek support from trusted friends, family and mental health professionals.
- ③ Building resilience - Resilience is the ability to bounce back from setbacks and adapt to adversity. This can be achieved by cultivating a positive mindset, practicing gratitude, etc.
- ④ Reducing stigma - Addressing mental health ^{stigma} is essential for promoting mental health and wellness. It is important to have open and honest conversations about mental health, educate ourselves and others, and create supportive environments that encourage seeking help without judgement or shame.
- ④ Spiritual health → Spiritual health can be nurtured through practices such as meditation, prayer, reflection, and engaging in activities that align with our values and beliefs. It varies from person to person and can provide a sense of inner peace, purpose, and fulfillment.
The ^{key aspects and} ways to foster spiritual health are—
- ① Self-reflection and inner awareness - One must engage in activities such as journaling, meditation, or mindfulness practices to cultivate self-awareness.

- ② Meaning and Purpose → One must reflect on what gives a sense of fulfillment ^{of life} and engage in those activities.
- ③ Connection with nature → Spending time in nature can provide a sense of wonder and connectedness to something larger than oneself.
- ④ Cultivate gratitude → One must practice gratitude by focusing on and appreciating the positive aspects of life.
- ⑤ Seek meaningful connections → Foster meaningful connections and support one another on your respective spiritual journeys.
- ⑥ Engage in spiritual or religious practices → If one has spiritual or religious beliefs, one must participate in practices that are meaningful to their individual selves. This may include attending religious services, meditation, prayers, rituals, etc. These practices can provide a sense of community, guidance, and spiritual nourishment.
- ⑦ Explore wisdom and knowledge → Seek wisdom and knowledge from various sources like literature, philosophy and engage in activities or workshops that broaden understanding of spiritual concepts and principles.
- ⑧ Practice compassion and service → One must engage in acts of kindness and service to contribute to the well-being of ~~the~~ community. This promotes a sense of connection.
- ⑨ Seek guidance and support → If one desires guidance or support in spiritual journey, one must seek out mentors, spiritual guides, etc. who may provide

⑤ Environmental health → Environmental health focuses on the impact of the physical environment on well-being. By safeguarding the environment and minimizing environmental hazards, environmental health measures contribute to the overall well-being of individuals and communities. The environmental health is relevant because of the following reasons.

① Human health impact → Many diseases are directly linked to environmental factors like air quality, water, exposure to toxins, etc. Thus, maintaining a clean and green environment helps to prevent environment related illness.

② Disease prevention and control → By ^{employing} regular vector and pest control (eg, mosquitoes carrying malaria or dengue), ensuring safe drinking water, promoting proper sanitation practices, etc. ~~and~~ we may prevent occurrence of air & water-borne diseases.

③ Environmental justice → certain ~~on~~ communities living in marginalized areas or those with low-income are more exposed to contaminated water sources and other environmental hazards. By advocating for equity in access to a clean and healthy environment, environmental health initiatives strive to address environmental injustices and promote social equality.

④ Climate change and resilience → Rising temperatures and changes in precipitation patterns can have significant health impacts. Environmental health measures aim to mitigate and adapt to these challenges, promoting resilience and reducing the health risks associated with climate change.

⑤ Occupational health and safety: Environmental health encompasses the protection of workers' health and safety. Work related illness may occur due to exposure to harmful chemicals, noise, ~~and~~ etc. Environmental health programs should ensure safe working conditions.

⑥ Sustainable development → By promoting sustainable practices, pollution control, ^{etc} environmental health initiatives seek to minimize the negative effects of human activities on environment and thus lead to conservation of resources for future generations.

⑦ Economic benefits → By reducing healthcare costs associated with environmentally-related illness, improving worker productivity, and creating sustainable environment, environmental health measures may promote economic growth and development.

⑧ Comprehensive health - Comprehensive health basically focuses on the interconnections of various aspects of well-being, including physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. It stresses on the idea that overall health cannot be achieved by focussing on only one aspect of health.

The importance of comprehensive health can be understood from the following points.

① Overall well-being - Comprehensive health recognizes that one needs to focus on all aspects of health, i.e., physical, mental, emotional, social aspects. To achieve overall health, one needs to pay equal attention and importance to all the aspects.

② Prevention and early detection - By focussing on all aspects of health, one must go for regular health check-ups, screenings and lifestyle modifications to identify and address health risks before they escalate.

③ Holistic treatment - Comprehensive health aims recognizes the fact that physical symptoms can be influenced by mental, emotional, or social factors. By addressing the root causes of health issues and providing integrated care, comprehensive health aims to facilitate healing on multiple levels and improve outcomes.

④ Improved quality of life: When individuals actively engage in self-care practices that encompass physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being, they are likely to lead a more satisfying life.

⑤ Interconnectedness: All aspects of health are connected to each other. Comprehensive health recognizes these interdependencies and promotes a balanced approach for overall health.

⊕ Determinants of health behaviour → The behaviours that we adopt to improve our physical, mental, and social health are influenced by various factors known as determinants. The key determinants are —

⇒ Individual factors → refer to personal characteristics that influence health behaviour. These include —

① Knowledge and awareness → Understanding the consequences of certain behaviours and having access to correct information empowers individuals to make informed choices.

② Attitudes and Beliefs → If an individual values a healthy lifestyle and believes in the importance of preventive measures, they are more likely to engage in behaviours such as exercise, healthy eating, and regular health check-ups.

③ Self-efficacy → Self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs in their ability to successfully execute a particular behaviour. It increases the likelihood of engaging in positive health behaviours.

⇒ Social and environmental factors →

Social Norms: Social norms refer to the shared expectations and behaviours within a community or social group. If certain health behaviours are widely accepted and encouraged, individuals are more likely to adopt them.

Social support → The presence of supportive relationships and networks can significantly impact health behaviours.

Physical environment → The physical environment, including the availability of resources ^{like gyms, parks, etc.}, infrastructure, and opportunities ~~are~~ ~~parts~~ can shape human behaviour.

⇒ Economic factors → Economic factors influence health behaviours through affordability, accessibility and ~~on~~ socioeconomic status. These factors include:

Affordability - The cost of health-related products and services can impact ^{health} behaviour. Eg → Higher prices of healthy food can make them less accessible to individuals with lower incomes.

Accessibility - The physical and geographic accessibility of healthcare facilities, recreational areas, and health promotion programs can affect health behaviour.

Socioeconomic Status (SES): ~~SES~~ ~~into~~ Individuals with higher SES tend to have greater access to health information, healthier environments and resources that support +ve health behaviours.

⇒ Cultural and Environmental Factors → Cultural and environmental factors shape health behaviours through cultural norms, traditions, and broader societal context.

Cultural beliefs and practices → Cultural norms and traditions influence health behaviours. For eg → ~~for~~ certain cultural practices (for eg, fasting) may impact dietary choices or attitudes. ~~are~~

⇒ Digital media and marketing → Media and marketing play a significant role in shaping health behaviours. ~~Posi~~ Advertising can influence choices related to food, exercise, and lifestyle.

Embracing health and understanding wellness

→ Wellness refers to the active pursuit of overall well-being across various dimensions of health. It goes beyond mere absence of illness and encompasses physical, mental, emotional, social, and spiritual well-being. It basically includes holistic approach, self-care and balance, purpose and meaning, mindfulness and presence.

→ In our fast-paced and demanding world, the concept of wellness has emerged as a guiding principle for individuals seeking a harmonious and fulfilling life.

✿ Principles of wellness → These principles guide individuals in making choices and adopting behaviours that promote optimal health and happiness. These principles are -

Self-responsibility → Embracing wellness requires acknowledging that we are responsible for our own health and well-being. We must actively participate in our own self-care and make informed choices that support our overall wellness.

Balance and moderation → There should be a balance between work and leisure, setting boundaries, and prioritizing self-care. Trying to achieve balance allows us to avoid burnout, reduce stress, and maintain a sense of fulfilment and contentment.

Holistic approach → Wellness considers the interconnectedness of our physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. It encourages us to consider all dimensions of health and address imbalances or deficiencies in each area.

Prevention and early intervention → Wellness emphasizes the importance of preventive care and proactive health practices. Instead of waiting for illness to manifest, wellness encourages regular screenings,

and taking steps to prevent disease.

Positive mindset and attitude → By cultivating optimism, gratitude, resilience, and self-compassion contributes to emotional well-being and enhances overall quality of life.

Adaptability and resilience → Wellness includes the ability to adapt to change and bounce back from challenges. Cultivating resilience, developing effective coping strategies, and embracing flexibility support emotional well-being and increase overall resilience in the face of adversity.

Awareness and mindfulness → Developing self-awareness and practicing mindfulness are essential for wellness. Being aware allows us to make conscious choices and respond to situations in a way that promotes well-being.

Benefits of embracing wellness

Enhanced Physical health → Prioritizing wellness leads to improved physical health and vitality. Engaging in regular exercise, maintaining a balanced diet, and getting sufficient rest contribute to increased energy levels, reduced risk of chronic diseases, and improved overall physical functioning.

Mental and emotional well-being: Engaging in stress reduction techniques such as mindfulness, meditation, etc. helps to gain mental clarity, emotional stability and effective coping mechanisms. ~~As focus on~~

Increased productivity and performance: Taking care of our overall well-being allows us to approach tasks with clarity and efficiency, resulting in better outcomes and overall satisfaction.

Enhanced quality of life → By paying equal importance to all aspects of ~~life~~^{health}, we create a foundation for joy, fulfilment and a sense of contentment.

Harnessing the power of mass media for health promotion

When utilised effectively, mass media can be an asset in promoting health and encouraging positive behavioural change.

The power of mass media in health promotion: ^{Wide reach and influence} Mass media can disseminate health-related messages to millions of individuals simultaneously, raising awareness on a broad scale.

Educational and informative: Mass media can provide accurate and reliable health information to public ^{and educate them} through health campaigns, public service announcements, news coverage about disease management and prevention.

Social norms and role modelling: Mass media plays a significant role in shaping social norms and influencing behaviour through the portrayal of ^{positive} role models and appropriate health behaviours.

Advocacy and policy influence: Through media coverage, investigative reporting, advocacy campaigns, media can highlight health issues, expose inequities and create public pressure for policy framing and improvements in healthcare systems.

Evaluation and feedback: Feedback mechanisms in media campaigns can provide insights into the effectiveness of health promotion efforts.

Strategies of effective health promotion through mass media

→ Health campaigns: Designing and implementing targeted health campaigns by utilising compelling messages, visuals, etc. can effectively promote behavioural changes.

Entertainment-for education: Incorporating health messages into popular media formats, such as television dramas, movies, or reality shows, can be a powerful approach.

Social Media and Digital Platforms- Creating online communities, sharing and providing reliable health information through websites and mobile applications can facilitate knowledge exchange and behavioural change.

Partnerships and collaborations- Collaborating with media outlets, celebrities, influencers, etc. can amplify the reach and impact of health promotion initiatives.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS IN MASS MEDIA HEALTH PROMOTION;

Accuracy and balance → Health information spread through mass media must be accurate, evidence-based, and presented in a balanced manner. Media organizations should avoid distortion of facts or misinterpretation.

Avoiding stigmatization → Health promotion efforts should be sensitive to cultural, social, and individual differences, avoiding discrimination. Messages should promote inclusivity and respect diversity.

Protecting privacy and confidentiality- ^{Health} promotion campaigns must respect individuals' privacy and maintain confidentiality. Personal health information should not be disclosed without proper consent.

Collaboration with health professionals → Collaborating with experts ensures that health information spread through mass media is accurate, up-to-date, and aligned with medical guidelines.

Informed consent → Informed consent should be obtained to ensure that personal information is handled in accordance with relevant privacy laws and regulations.

Evaluation and continuous improvement → Regular evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of mass media health promotion by means of feedback from audience, etc. should be implemented to refine strategies, address ethical concerns in order to improve the delivery of health messages.

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