

Health

Definition:

The widely accepted definition of health is that given by the World Health Organization (WHO), which states that

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well being and not merely an absence of disease or infirmity." *physically weak*

However, some argue that health cannot be seen as a "state" at all, but must be seen as a process of continuous adjustment to the changing demands of living and of the changing meanings we give to life. It is a dynamic concept. It helps people in living well, working well and enjoying themselves. The WHO definition of health is therefore considered by many as an idealistic goal than a realistic proposition.

Concept Of Health:

Health in the broad sense of the word does not merely mean the absence of disease or provision of diagnostic, curative and preventive services. It also includes as embodied in the WHO definition, a state of physical, mental and social well-being. The harmonious balance of this state of the human individual integrated into his environment constitutes health, as defined by WHO.

Health is conceptualized

- best.*
- **Biologically as:** a state in which every cell and every organ is functioning at optimum capacity and in perfect harmony with the rest of the body.
 - **Psychologically as:** a state in which the individual feels a sense of perfect well being and of mastery over his environment
 - **Socially as:** a state in which the individual's capacities for participation in the social system are optimal.

However, this concept of PERFECT HEALTH is an IDEALISTIC one and cannot become a reality because man will never be so perfectly adapted to his environment and his life will involve struggles and changes.

Concept Of Well-Being:

The WHO definition of health introduces the concept of "well being". The question then arises what is meant by well-being?

Well-being constitutes the following concepts

- **Standard of living:** It refers to the usual scale of our expenditure, the goods we consume and the services we enjoy. It includes the education, employment status, food, dress, house, amusements and comforts of modern living. *same in meaning*
- **Level of living:** This is synonymous to standard of living. It constitutes of 9 components, which are health, food consumption,

education, occupation, working conditions, housing, social security, clothing, recreation, and human rights.

- **Quality of Life:** it is the condition of life resulting from the combination of the effects of the complete range of factors such as those determining health, happiness, social and intellectual attainments, freedom of action, justice and freedom of oppression

New Philosophy of Health:

In recent years, we have acquired a new philosophy of health, which may be stated as below:

- ✓ > Health is a fundamental human right.
- > Health is the essence of productive life, and not the result of ever increasing expenditure on medical care.
- ✓ > Health is intersectoral.
- ✓ > Health is an integral part of development.
- > Health is central to the concept of quality of life.
- > Health involves individual, state and international responsibility.
- ✓ > Health and its maintenance is a major social investment.
- ✓ > Health is a worldwide social goal.

What are the different factors that affect our health?

Responsibility for Health:

Health is on one hand a highly personal responsibility and on the other hand a major public concern. It thus involves the joint efforts of the whole social fabric i.e. the individual, the community and the state to protect and promote health.

- I. **Individual Responsibility:** Health is essentially an individual responsibility. Health has to be earned and maintained by the individual himself, who must accept a broad spectrum of *rainbowlike band of colors* responsibilities, known as "SELF CARE." SELF CARE refers to those activities that individuals undertake in promoting their own health, preventing their own disease, limiting their own illness, and restoring their own health. Self-care activities comprise observance of simple *basics* rules of behaviour relating to diet, sleep, exercise, weight, alcohol, smoking and drugs. Others include attention to personal hygiene, cultivation of healthful habits and lifestyle, submitting oneself to selective medical examinations and screening which include accepting immunization and carrying out other specific disease prevention measures.
- II. **Community Responsibility:** This involves an active involvement of families and communities in health matters i.e. planning, implementation, utilization, operation and evaluation of the health services. There are 3 ways in which a community can participate:

- The community can provide in the shape of facilities, manpower, logistic support and possibly funds
- Community can be actively involved in planning, management and evaluation
- Community can join in and use the health services especially the preventive and protective health measures

III. **State Responsibility:** The responsibility for health does not end with the individual and community effort. In all civilized societies, the state assumes the responsibility for the health and welfare of its citizens.

IV. **International Responsibility:** The health of mankind requires the cooperation of the governments, the people and the national and international organizations. This cooperation covers such subjects as exchange of experts, provision of drugs and supplies and border meeting with regard to control of communicable diseases.