

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND WELLNESS

Physical Activity has been defined as any bodily movement produced by skeletal muscles that result in energy expenditure and includes activities of all intensities. Therefore, things such as housework, gardening, and occupational activity may all be considered types of physical activity.

Exercise is considered a subcategory of physical activity and has been defined as planned, structured, and repetitive movements which result in the improvement and/or maintenance of one or more facets of physical fitness (cardiovascular fitness, muscular strength and endurance, body composition, and/or flexibility).

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION IN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

1. Exercise helps the heart become stronger.
2. Exercising also improves lung function and improves the ability of the heart and lungs to handle stress and strain.
3. It lowers the risk for lifestyle diseases by strengthening the immune system in the body.
4. It improves recovery time after an illness or injury, posture and muscle tone.
5. Many mental-emotional benefits can be gained through regular, brisk exercise.
6. Regular physical activity serves as a therapy by improving psychological well-being and alleviates depression.
7. In terms of psycho-social development, it also enhances the self-esteem and socialization of individuals, thus promoting a healthy lifestyle.
8. Physical activity is an important regulator of obesity & helps in weight reduction.
9. Regular physical activity is essential for healthy growth and development.
10. Regular weight-bearing physical activity reduces the rate of bone loss, maintains strength, flexibility, balance, coordination and can help reduce the risk of falls.
11. It improves stamina and muscle strength, and postpones the effects of old age.
12. Improves psychosocial & physiological functions of differently abled individuals.
13. Being physically active is a key element in living a longer life.
14. It leads to a more active lifestyle during unscheduled leisure time.

15. It allows daily tasks to be accomplished with greater ease and comfort, and with less fatigue.

Participation in physical activity improves aerobic fitness, muscle endurance, muscle power and muscle strength.

17. The ability to reach safety or survive under conditions of natural disaster requires that a person is physically fit.

18. Aerobic activities speed-up the heart rate and breathing, and improve heart and lung fitness. e.g. brisk walking, jogging and swimming.

19. Resistance, strength building and weight-bearing activities help build and maintain bones & muscles by working them against gravity. e.g. lifting weights & walking.

20. Balance and stretching activities enhance physical stability and flexibility, which reduces risk of injury. e.g. stretching, dancing, yoga, martial arts and t'ai chi.

21. Moderate intense activities, when done regularly are beneficial. e.g. brisk walking.

WELLNESS

In a broad sense, the term wellness means healthy living. This state of healthy living is achieved by the practice of a healthy lifestyle which includes regular physical activity, proper nutrition, eliminating unhealthy behaviours and maintaining good emotional and spiritual health.

Wellness means engaging in attitudes and behaviors that enhance the quality of life and maximize personal potential. It emphasizes the need to take responsibility for engaging in behaviors that develop optimal health.

BENEFITS ASSOCIATED WITH WELLNESS

1. The biggest outcome of wellness is an attitude that helps each person to see life's possibility and to work towards the ones that are the most personally fulfilling.
2. Improves awareness of persona needs and the ways to meet them.
3. Teaches to view life's difficulties as challenges and opportunities rather than overwhelming threats.
4. Increases the ability to cope with stress and resist depression.
5. Increases the energy level, job productivity and decreases absenteeism.
6. Regulates and improves overall body function.

7. Improves the outward appearance of a person by increasing muscle tone, strength, flexibility, endurance while on the journey towards wellness.
8. Increases the ability to communicate emotions to others and to act assertively rather than aggressively or passively.
9. Expands and develops intellectual abilities from a cognitive base and applies these abilities to their fullest extent in society.
10. Decreases risk of developing chronic diseases.
11. Reduces incidents of accidents.
12. Decreases recovery time after injury, illness and childbirth.
13. Delays the aging process.
14. Acts from an internal locus of control.

HEALTH

In 1948, in its constitution, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** defined health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. In more recent years, this statement has been modified to include the ability to lead a 'socially and economically productive life'. The term health signifies that there is no obvious evidence of disease, & a person is functioning normally; several organs of the body are functioning adequately in themselves & in relation to one another, adapting to internal & external stimuli.

COMPONENTS OF HEALTH

HEALTH

- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Social Health
- Spiritual Health
- Emotional Health
- Vocational Health

CONCEPT OF WELL-BEING

The term itself implies a positive, beneficial and peaceful state of existence which may be the direct outcome of various activities that we engage in, in a manner most conducive to our state of mind or conscience. Well-being of an individual or a group of individuals has objective and subjective components.

Objective Components

- Standard of living
- Level of Living

Subjective Components

- Quality of Life

CONCEPT OF POSITIVE LIFESTYLE

A positive or active lifestyle can be said to be observed when a human being indulges in beneficial physical activity consistently over a number of years producing desirable effects such as more energy, positive health and improved mood. Lifestyle changes that will improve the quality of life are as follows:

- A positive attitude with a spiritual connection.
- Careful consumption of food.
- Healthy and nutritious diet.
- Supplements of vitamins, minerals and herbs.
- Physical fitness, regular exercise and activity.
- Rest and relaxation.
- Positive support groups, friends & family.
- Reduction in stress through stress management techniques.
- Positive habits regarding smoking, drugs, caffeine and alcohol.

CONCEPT OF BODY IMAGE

Body image is a term used to describe the mental picture an individual has about his or her body. For example, a poor body image developed because of obesity can retard the socio-emotional development of that individual and impair the quality of life. A person with a good body image will see himself or herself as attractive to others, will not be overtly concerned about others' opinion about them, will be confident and self-assured. The perception about one's body image is developed over a lifetime. Attitudes are formed and re-formed as a result of the influences of a range of factors, including:

- Feedback from parents and siblings.
- Social, political, racial, age and gender constraints.
- Attitudes of friends and relations.
- Cultural traditions.
- Representation in the media.

CONCEPT OF QUALITY OF LIFE

Quality of life is the condition of life resulting from the combination of the effects of the complete range of factors such as those determining health, happiness (including comfort in the physical environment and a satisfying occupation), education, social and intellectual attainments, freedom of action, justice and freedom of expression.

Quality of life is a composite measure of physical, mental and social wellbeing as perceived in such life concerns as health, marriage, family work, financial situation, educational opportunities, self-esteem, creativity, belongingness, and trust in others.