



Health and Safety
for You

Health and Safety for You

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Preface

Health and Wellness with a Comprehensive Scope

HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR YOU is a comprehensive textbook that will help you to learn about *total health*—physical, mental, and social well-being. Its focus is on *wellness* and *preventive health and safety measures*. It encourages you, the student, to choose responsible health behaviors right now to improve and safeguard your health.

Features

- *Solid content* with current, simple, direct explanations that allow you to make intelligent decisions about health behavior. You will learn how your body works, how to prevent disease, and how and where to get treatment if necessary.
- *Readable text* has many subject headings that organize the content for you and allow easy reference.
- *Colorful photographs and illustrations* bring the text to life. They show how your body works and help you to learn by letting you see facts and ideas for yourself.
- *Easy-to-read captions* focus your attention on the important ideas in each chapter. They help you to understand the more complex information.
- *Learning objectives* at the beginning of each chapter guide your learning. They alert you to the key concepts within each chapter.
- *Effective chapter summaries* in the form of Main Ideas and Key Words allow you to review and evaluate what you have learned. Important key words are defined in the glossary. Pronunciations are included.
- *Discussion* of the latest health topics and of research is encouraged in the periodic chapter feature called Something to Think About.
- *Active learning* is stimulated in the section called Apply Your Knowledge. This section engages you in independent research, class experiments, interviewing, and community participation.
- *Information on the latest health career opportunities* offers you the chance to consider a future in the field of health service.

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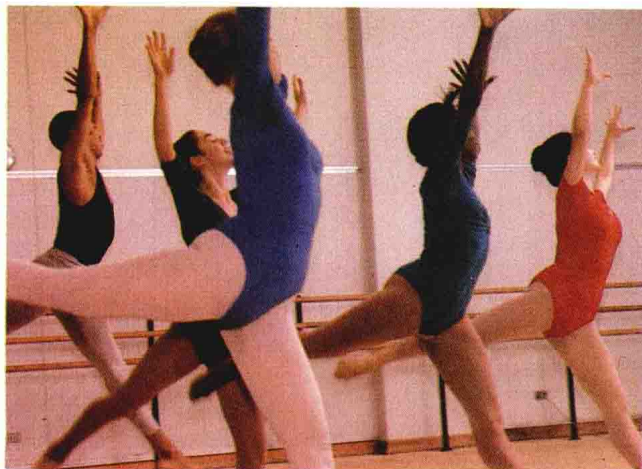
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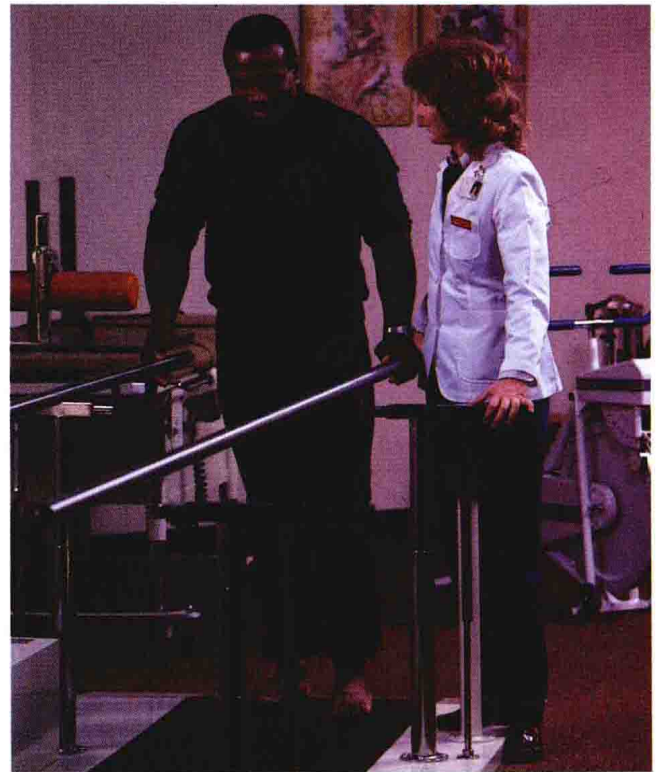
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Chapter 1

Health and Wellness

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- Explain the World Health Organization's definition of health.
- Describe how our health goals have changed since the beginning of the century.
- Give examples of wellness behavior.
- Explain the relationship between attitude and good health.
- Take an inventory of your own health and wellness.



“A-OK”

“In the pink”

“Fit as a fiddle”

“Right as rain”

“Sound as a dollar”

“Healthy as a horse”

These people aren't talking about space shots or color or music or weather or money or animals. They're talking about their good health.

Are you a healthy person? There are a lot of different ways to express the idea of good health and probably as many ideas about what health means. One of the most important things you will learn in this book is what your own health means to you.

Let's look at one definition of health. The World Health Organization defines **health** as “A state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

Health

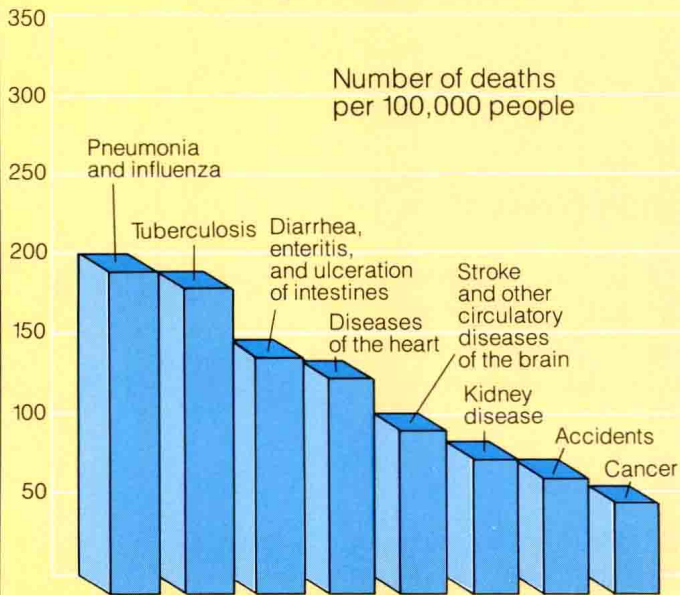
Physical well-being

During this century, the leading causes of death changed in the United States and in other developed countries. In 1900, at the beginning of the century, the leading causes of death were pneumonia, influenza, and tuberculosis. These are diseases caused by bacteria and viruses. They are known as **communicable diseases** because they can spread when conditions are favorable for bacteria and viruses to grow.

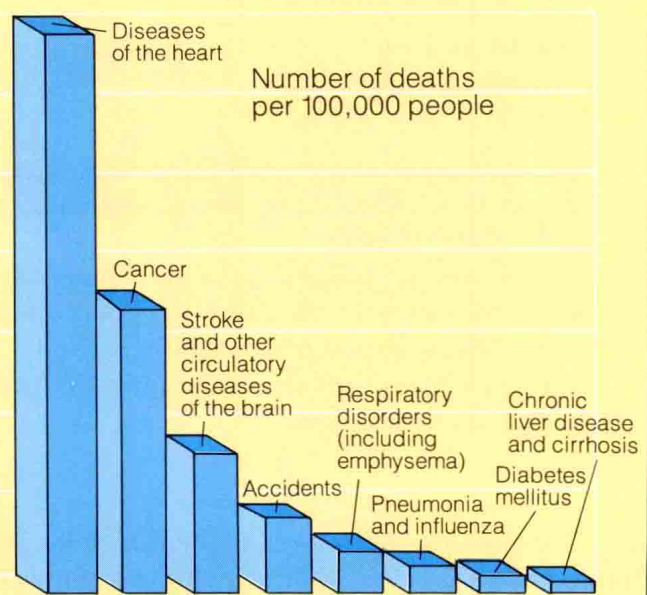
Medical research in the twentieth century found a way to prevent and control these diseases. New sanitation laws and better drugs meant that people could avoid these illnesses or be cured of them. By 1979, more than three-fourths of the way through the century, the leading causes of death were different. People were more free of communicable diseases. They lived a longer time and were now becoming victims of noninfectious diseases: heart attacks, cancer, high blood pressure, and strokes. Most evidence shows that these diseases are *not* spread by bacteria and viruses. They are diseases that often occur later in life. And they are influenced by a lifetime of day-to-day health habits. This has led to new ideas about what health means. The term **wellness** is often used to describe a broader view of good health. Wellness includes not only physical well-being but also emotional, social, and intellectual fitness.

Through this decade and into the 1990s, medical researchers will be finding new ways to control some of these noncontagious killer diseases. More important, many people are now taking steps to prevent these diseases.

Leading Causes of Death: 1900



Leading Causes of Death: Today



Source: National Center for Health Statistics, Washington, D.C.

Since 1900, the leading causes of death have changed. People are now more free of diseases that are spread by bacteria and viruses.

Mental and social well-being

When was the last time you felt good about yourself? Can you really enjoy another person? Are you able to handle normal disappointments? The answers to these and similar questions have to do with your mental and social well-being.

In the first part of the twentieth century, people had just begun serious research into the behavioral sciences of psychology and sociology. By the time of the World Health definition, health professionals and the public were taking psychological and sociological findings seriously. It seemed as if mental and social ills could be successfully prevented and treated. Well-being also could be called a state of mind, not just a state of the body.

Of course, mental health and physical health are closely connected. Can you experience mental and social well-being during a painful ear infection? Is your attitude about yourself any different during a period in your life when you have acne?

Or can you experience physical well-being when you are constantly undergoing mental or social tension—involved in an ongoing battle with someone who plays an important role in your life, for example? When you think about it, it is almost impossible to separate mental and social health from physical health.

Healthy people

Can you predict how healthy you will be in the year 2050? Do you know how healthy you will be when you reach 35? Can you tell how healthy you will be next year or even a week from now?

While you cannot predict the future with certainty, you can get an idea of what your chances are for good health. Is there a new, miracle method of diagnosis to tell you this? No. You can tell yourself by reviewing your own day-to-day health habits. If the health habits you practice *right now* are positive ones, you have a better chance of avoiding or postponing illness and injury. The U.S. Public Health Service believes in prevention. In 1979, the Surgeon General issued a report titled *Healthy People*. The report said that Americans are healthier now than they have ever been and that each one of us is responsible for our own health. The report established health goals. Many of the goals for healthy adolescents and young adults are in areas you will read about in *HEALTH AND SAFETY FOR YOU*.



Safety belts can help decrease your chances of being seriously injured in an automobile accident.



Good health in later life depends in part on your health behavior right now.

It seems so simple. Why doesn't everyone practice positive health habits? Medical research has linked lung cancer and heart disease to cigarette smoking. Why don't people stop smoking? Safety belts can prevent needless deaths during an automobile accident. And yet many people did not use seat belts until state laws made them mandatory. Care of teeth is another example. Flossing your teeth is an important habit, and yet many people don't take the time to clean their teeth thoroughly.

Flossing your teeth is part of a positive wellness program.



More than 25 years ago, the United States Public Health Service tried to find out why people do or do not adopt positive health measures. They found that people will take such measures if:

1. They see the health problem as one that has a good chance of affecting them.
2. They think that there would be serious consequences if the problem did affect them.
3. They believe there is a course of action that can reduce the threat.
4. They believe this course of action is reasonable.*

In other words, if you are convinced that:

- it is possible for you to have caries, or gum disease;
- it is possible for the dental problems to result in loss of teeth or need for painful surgery to the mouth area;
- flossing can remove plaque build-up and reduce caries;
- flossing is really not such a chore;

then you will probably get into the habit of flossing on a regular basis.

Health attitudes

You know, of course, that not everyone takes positive health measures. People's information, lack of information, and attitudes vary a great deal. Suppose that you interview five people. You tell each person that he or she is 25 pounds overweight. You also tell each person that overweight increases the chances of heart disease. Then you ask each person the four questions that decide wellness behavior. Their responses are on page 8. Take a look at them now.

Excuses for lack of wellness behavior

What does each person seem to be saying? If you look closely at these interviews, you will see some common excuses for not taking positive health measures:

- Ray believes it is all a matter of fate. He thinks there is nothing he can do to prevent disease and death.
- Anne feels she is too young to be concerned. She can't imagine a time when her health will show the effects of her long-term health habits.
- Cheryl thinks this is all someone else's problem. *She* doesn't have to worry about heart disease.

*Adapted from "What Research in Motivation Suggests for Public Health," by Irwin M. Rosenstock, in the *American Journal of Public Health*.