



UNIQUE JOURNAL OF AYURVEDIC AND HERBAL MEDICINES

Available online: www.ujconline.net

Review Article

REVIEW ARTICLE: UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT OF HEALTH

Bargale Sushant Sukumar^{1*}, Shashirekha HK²

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Swasthavritta, S.D.M. College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India

²Assistant Professor, Department of Basic Principles, S.D.M. College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India

Received 20-06-2014; Revised 15-07-2014; Accepted 11-08-2014

*Corresponding Author: **Dr. Bargale Sushant Sukumar**

Assistant Professor, Department of Swasthavritta S.D.M. College of Ayurveda and Hospital, Hassan, Karnataka, India-573201 Mobile number:09342138999

ABSTRACT

Health is a dynamic process because it is always changing. We all have times of good health, times of sickness, and maybe even times of serious illness. As our lifestyles change, so does our level of health. Those of us who participate in regular physical activity do so partly to improve the current and future level of our health. We strive toward an optimal state of well-being. As our lifestyle improves, our health also improves and we experience less disease and sickness. There are several benefits of a healthy life. Your body becomes free from various forms of disorders and thus, you get a longer life. You can live a life without suffering from any aches, pain, or discomfort. In every sphere of your life, you will be able to perform to the best of your ability.

Keywords: Health, Life Span, Life Style, Equilibrium, *Swastha*

INTRODUCTION

'Health' is a word widely used by us, but its meaning is very often misinterpreted. It is word which has meaning of depth. Health is not perceived in the same way by all the members of community. Traditionally 'health' has been viewed as a condition of absence of disease. As science advanced, various professional people viewed 'health' in their own way.

The Constitution of the World Health Organization, which came into force on April 7, 1948, defined health "as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being." The writers of the Constitution were clearly aware of the tendency of seeing health as a state dependent on the presence or absence of diseases: so they added to that definition that an individual, if he is to be considered healthy, should not suffer from any disease ("not merely the absence of disease or infirmity")¹.

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. (WHO) Spiritual, emotional and vocational dimensions have also been proposed in defining health².

Definitions of health³

1. "The condition of being sound in body, mind or spirit especially freedom from physical disease or pain." (Webster)
2. "Soundness of body or mind, that condition in which its functions are duly and efficiently discharged." (Oxford English dictionary)

3. "A condition or quality of the human organism expressing the adequate functioning of the organism in given conditions, genetic and environmental."
4. "A modus vivendi enabling imperfect men to achieve a rewarding and not too painful existence while they cope with an imperfect world"
5. "A state of relative equilibrium of body forms and function which results from its successful dynamic adjustment to forces tending to disturb it. It is not passive interplay between body substance and forces impinging upon it but an active response of body forces working toward readjustment." (Perkins)

Dimensions of Health

Health is multi-dimensional. The WHO definition envisages three specific dimensions- the physical, the mental and the social. Health dimensions are as follows,

1. Physical
2. Mental
3. Social
4. Spiritual
5. Emotional
6. Vocational

1. Physical Dimensions⁴

The physical dimension of health is easiest to understand. The sign of physical health care is good complexion, Clean skin, bright eyes, lustrous hairs, body with firm flush, not too fat, Sweet breath, Good appetite, Sound sleep, Regular activity of

bowel and bladder, Smooth easily coordinated bodily movements, All organs of normal size and functioning normally, Pulse rate, Blood pressure and exercise tolerance within normal ranges.

Evaluation of physical health⁵

1. Self-assessment of overall health
2. Inquiry into symptom of ill health risk factors
3. Inquiry into Medication
4. Inquiry into Fitness
5. Inquiry into Medical services
6. Standardized questionnaire for CVD, RD
7. Clinical examination
8. Nutrition & dietary assessment

2. Mental Dimensions

Mental health is not mere absence of mental illness; good health is the ability to respond to many varied experiences of life with flexibility and a sense of purpose. Mental health defined as “a state of balance between the individual and the surrounding world, a state of harmony between oneself and others, coexistence between the realities of self and that of other people and that of environment.”

Characteristics of Mentally healthy person⁶

1. Free from internal conflicts
2. Well adjusted
3. Searches for identity
4. Strong sense of self-esteem
5. Knows himself, his needs, problems and goals
6. Self-control- the person possess good self-control, not dominated by anger, fear and jealousy, worries etc. he is able to solve problem when confronted with.
7. Coping with stress and anxiety

3. Social Dimension

Quantity and quality of an individual's interpersonal ties and the extent of involvement with the community. Social wellbeing implies harmony and integrates within the individual, between each individual and other member of society, between individual and world in which they live Characteristics of social health Possession of social skills, social functioning, Ability to see oneself as a member of community, Focuses on social and economic conditions⁷.

4. Spiritual Dimension⁸

It is not at a religious concept it is a concept by which it exposes man to integrity, principles, ethics and helps to lead him a life with a purpose which elevate him to the higher planes of thought.

5. Emotional Dimension⁹

Emotionalis a feeling or forces that emerge suddenly in the mind, so emotional dimension includes his emotion, felling and ability to control them during various situations of life.

6. Vocational Dimension¹⁰

This dimension is concerned with the occupation. Occupations play an important role in promoting both physical and mental health. When work is fully adapted to human goals, capacities and limitations matches exactly to his occupation, the person is vocationally healthy if not the individual feels unhappy and frustrated.

Positive Health¹¹

It is a state of physical, mental, social and spiritual wellbeing, when a person enjoys an equilibrium state with his

environment. It is an important component of improving the quality of life. It implies the ability to lead a socially and economically productive life.

Factors favoring positive health-

1. Proper genetic endowment
2. Proper nutrition
3. Conducive physical, biological and psycho-social environment
4. Good socio-economic status
5. Proper education including knowledge of healthful ways of living.
6. Promotive, preventive and restorative health services.

Concept of Health in Ayurveda

Ayurveda, which means science of long life, is at least at 5,000-year-old system of Indian medicine (1500–1000 BC) designed to promote good health and longevity rather than to fight disease and was practiced by physicians and surgeons (called bhesaja or vaidya). Until 700 BC, this science was orally discussed between sages and physicians Thereafter, two different textbooks were assembled: one by “*Charaka*” is called *CharakaSamhita* and the other by “*Sushruta*” is called *Sushruta Samhita*. Whereas *CharakaSamhita* deals with the etiology, symptomatology, pathology, prognosis, and medical management of disease, *SushrutaSamhita* deals with various surgical instruments and procedures. The feature of healthy person is the *doshas* must be equilibrium state, the digestive fire must be in balanced state and the tissue and waste must work in normal condition. The sensory motor organs and mind spiritual pleasantness. Such person is called *swastha*¹². The person without any abnormality or any disease is known as healthy or *swastha*¹³. Abnormal state of *Dhatus* which produces *Dukha* is *Vikar* or disease. Balance or normal state of *Dhatus* which produces *Sukha* is *Prakruti* or Healthor *Arogya*¹⁴. *Ayurveda* being a stream of treatment can no way ignore the importance of psychic condition of a patient to effectively diagnosis and treat disorders. Medical science admits that the root cause of multiple disorders lies in psychic tensions. *Ayurveda* too has a well-developed branch of psychiatry, which has clinically proven practices of treating mental ailments and also physical problems associated with psychological imbalances.

Arogya Laxana

Desire for the intake of food, proper and easy digestion of the ingested food, evacuation of faeces, urine and flatus properly, lightness in the body, pleasantness in sense organs, proper timely sleep and awakening, gain of strength, life and pleasant mind and normal Agni are the features of the health and opposite state its illness¹⁵.

Aninditapurusha

Person endowed with well-formed muscles, compactness and strong sense organs will not be afflicted with strong diseases, he can with stand hunger, thirst, heat, cold and exercise. The food gets digested and gets assimilated properly, resulting in proper nourishment of *Mamsa* and all *Dhatus*.¹⁶

CONCLUSION

Overall, this review provides a glimpse of the approach to health quite similar. Good health can be maintained until

death. For this one should intelligently follow all the rules laid down according to the science. Individual person will enjoy the optimum life span in very comfortable manner. He will also gain recognition in society; health is a sort of energy and ability to achieve all goals in life.

REFERENCES

1. Prof. Dr. E.Vijay- Community Medicine published by Beacon Zen publishers Chennai 1st edition 2004 PP-7
2. K. Park- Preventive and Social Medicine published by M/s Banarsidas Bhanot 21th edition PP-12
3. K. Park- Preventive and Social Medicine published by M/s Banarsidas Bhanot 21th edition PP-13
4. K. Park- Preventive and Social Medicine published by M/s Banarsidas Bhanot 21th edition PP-14
5. A H Suryakantha – Community Medicine With Recent Advances published by Jaypee Brothers medical publishers Ltd. 2nd edition 2010 PP-6-7
6. K. Park- Preventive and Social Medicine published by M/s Banarsidas Bhanot 21th edition PP-14
7. K. Park- Preventive and Social Medicine published by M/s Banarsidas Bhanot 21th edition PP-14
8. Prof. Dr. E.Vijay- Community Medicine published by Beacon Zen publishers Chennai 1st edition 2004 PP-7
9. T. Bhaskara Rao Textbook of Community Medicine 1st edition published by Paras Medical publisher, Hyderabad PP-7
10. T. Bhaskara Rao Textbook of Community Medicine 1st edition published by Paras Medical publisher, Hyderabad PP-7
11. K. Park- Preventive and Social Medicine published by M/s Banarsidas Bhanot 21th edition PP-15
12. Vaidya Jadvaji Trikamji Acharya Sushruta Samhita with Nibandha sangraha commentary, Reprint 2013 Chaukhambha Sanskrita Sansthana Varanasi PP-75
13. Vaidya Jadvaji Trikamji Acharya Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Dipika commentary, Reprint 2013 Chaukhambha Prakashana, Varanasi reprint 2013 PP-38
14. Vaidya Jadvaji Trikamji Acharya Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Dipika commentary, Reprint 2013 Chaukhambha Prakashana, Varanasi reprint 2013 PP-62
15. Pandit Hemaraja Sarma Kasyapa Samhita with Vidyitini Hindi commentery reprint 2011, Chaukhambha Sanskrita Sansthana Varanasi PP-256
16. Vaidya Jadvaji Trikamji Acharya Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Dipika commentary, Reprint 2013 Chaukhambha Prakashana, Varanasi reprint 2013 PP-117

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared