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COMM 311

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# Determinants of Health

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# Objectives

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By the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

1. Discuss the spectrum of health in relation to health and sickness
2. Define: health, disease, illness, sickness and wellbeing
3. Define “Determinants of Health”
4. List different types of determinants of health (biological, behavioral, socio and cultural, environmental, socioeconomic, health services, aging, and gender)
5. Discuss the concepts of “right to health “ and “health for all”

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**Spectrum of Health**

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- Health and disease lie along a continuum, and there is no single cut-off point
- The lowest point on the health-disease spectrum is death and the highest point corresponds to the WHO definition of positive health
- The health of an individual is not static; it is a dynamic phenomenon and a process of continuous change
- There are degrees or "levels of health" as there are degrees or severity of illness. As long as we are alive there is some degree of health in us.

# Spectrum of Health



# { 2 Definitions: Health, Disease, Illness, Sickness, Wellbeing }

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**Health is a relative concept!**

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## **It is relative to**

- Where on the spectrum of health the person is.
  - The health dimensions (physical, mental, social, spiritual, emotional, vocational dimensions)
  - Local conditions and health standards.
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# Definitions: Health

- The oldest definition is that health is the "absence of disease".

- World Health Organization (1948):

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

- In recent years, this statement has been amplified to include the **ability to lead a "socially and economically productive life"**

# Definitions: The trilogy of **Disease**, **Illness**, **Sickness**

Disease	Illness	Sickness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a condition that is <u>diagnosed by a physician</u> or other medical expert.</li></ul> <p>(Physician)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>ill health that the person identifies themselves with, often based on <u>self reported</u> mental or physical symptoms.</li><li>It can be Acute or Chronic</li></ul> <p>(Patient)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><u>social &amp; cultural conception</u> of a person's condition.</li></ul> <p>(Society)</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Example: Flu diagnosed by a physician</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Example: Flu reported by the patient</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Example: Missed class or work due to Flu</li></ul>

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**There is no satisfactory definition of  
the term well-being!**

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# Wellbeing

Objective Components

Standard  
of Living

Level of  
Living

Subjective Components

Quality of Life



PQLI

HDI

	Physical Quality of Life Index (PQLI)	Human Development Index (HDI)
Indicators used in calculating this index	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Infant mortality</li> <li>2. Life expectancy <u>at age one</u></li> <li>3. literacy</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Life expectancy <u>at birth</u> (longevity)</li> <li>2. Mean years of schooling (knowledge)</li> <li>3. Expected years of schooling (knowledge)</li> <li>4. GNI, gross national income, per capita (income/ decent standard of living)</li> </ol>
Scale	From 0-100 0 is worst performance and 100 is best performance	Values from 0 to 1
It measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The results of social, economic, and political policies.</li> <li>• Does NOT measure economic growth</li> </ul>	It reflects achievements in the most basic human capabilities

**Both allow for National and International Comparison**

**3 & Determinants of Health:**

**4 Definition, Types, and Levels**

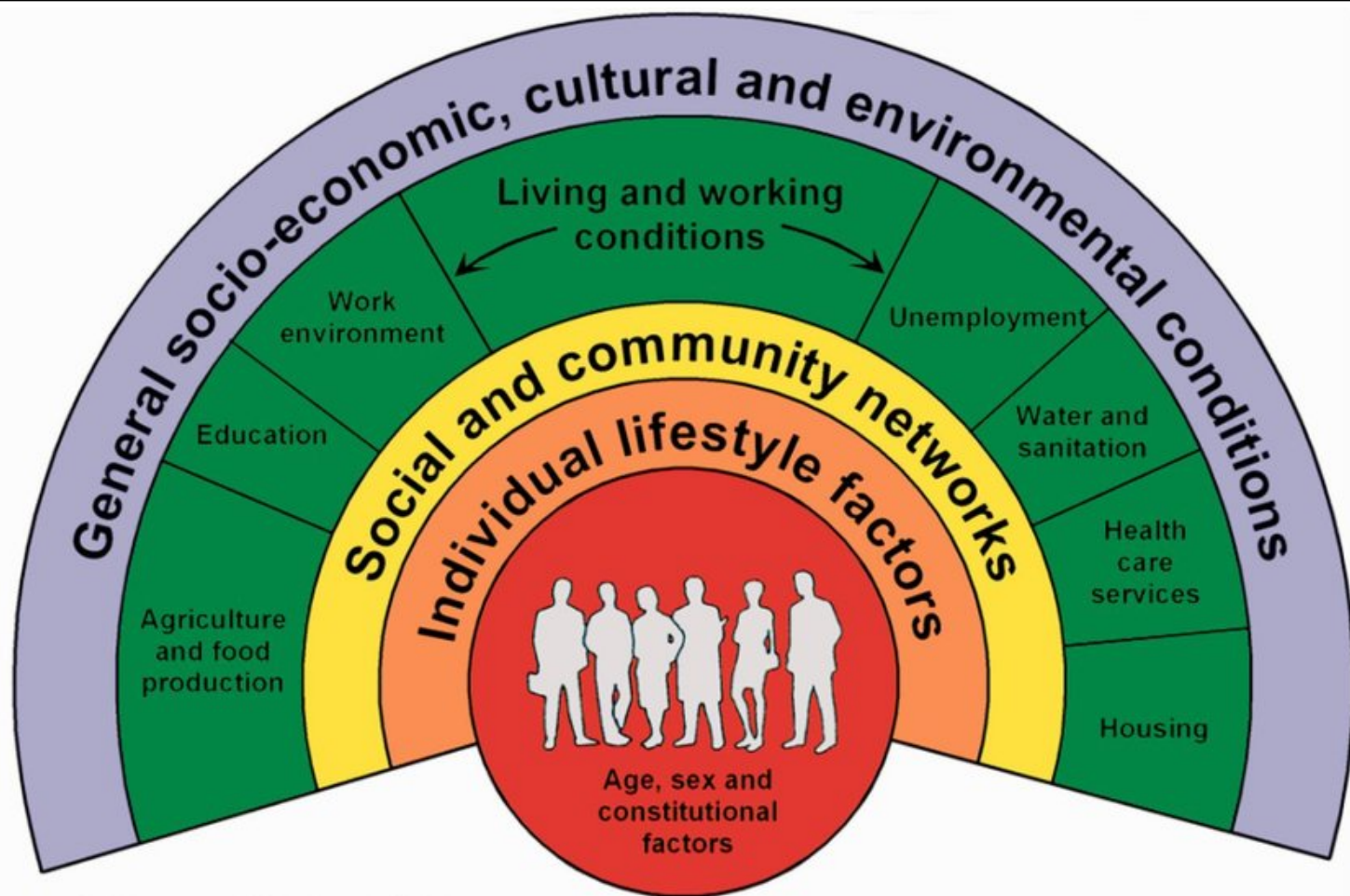
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“Many factors combine together to affect the health of individuals and communities.”

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Source: Dahlgren and Whitehead, 1991



### **1) Biological:**

Genetic predisposition

### **2) Behavioral and socio-cultural:**

Cultural and behavior patterns, life long habits developed from socialization (eg: smoking, staying up late!)

### **3) Environment:**

Internal – internal medicine! / external (macro-environment: things you're exposed to after conception)

### **4) Socio-economic:**

Economic status: Education, Employment, Housing

### **5) Health services:**

Services for treatment of disease, prevention, and promotion of health.

### **6) Aging population:**

Increased burden of chronic diseases

### **7) Gender:**

Women's health covering nutrition, reproductive health, the health consequences of violence, ageing, lifestyle related conditions and the occupational environment.

### **8) Other:**

Information technology, health related systems like agriculture and food

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Type of Determinant	Analysis
1) <b>Biological:</b>	Genetic predisposition / Obese parents
2) <b>Behavioral and socio-cultural:</b>	High TV, computer, electronic entertainment use Sedentary lifestyle Car-only mode of transportation
3) <b>Environment:</b>	<b>Internal:</b> Hypothyroidism, Syndromic / <b>External:</b> High consumption of fatty takeaway foods / Low consumption of fruits, vegetables and fiber rich foods / Poor walkable environment / Easy access to convenience stores / Extensive unhealthy food marketing
4) <b>Socio-economic:</b>	Unemployment / Low disposable income / Rural area
5) <b>Health services:</b>	Limited preventive services / Delayed access to treatment
6) <b>Gender</b>	Male obesity is more prevalent than females in Saudi Arabia
7) <b>Others</b>	Weak food policy & pricing High Cost of organized physical activity programs/sport

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“Right to Health”

“Health for All”

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# Right to Health

- Historically, the right to health was one of the last to be proclaimed in the Constitutions of most countries.
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948):  
"Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family ..... "
- WHO Constitution introduction affirms that it is one of the fundamental rights of every human being to enjoy "the highest attainable standard of health".

# Health for all

- Decided by the 30<sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly in year 1977.
- They decided that the main social target of governments and WHO in the coming decades should be "the attainment by all citizens of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life"

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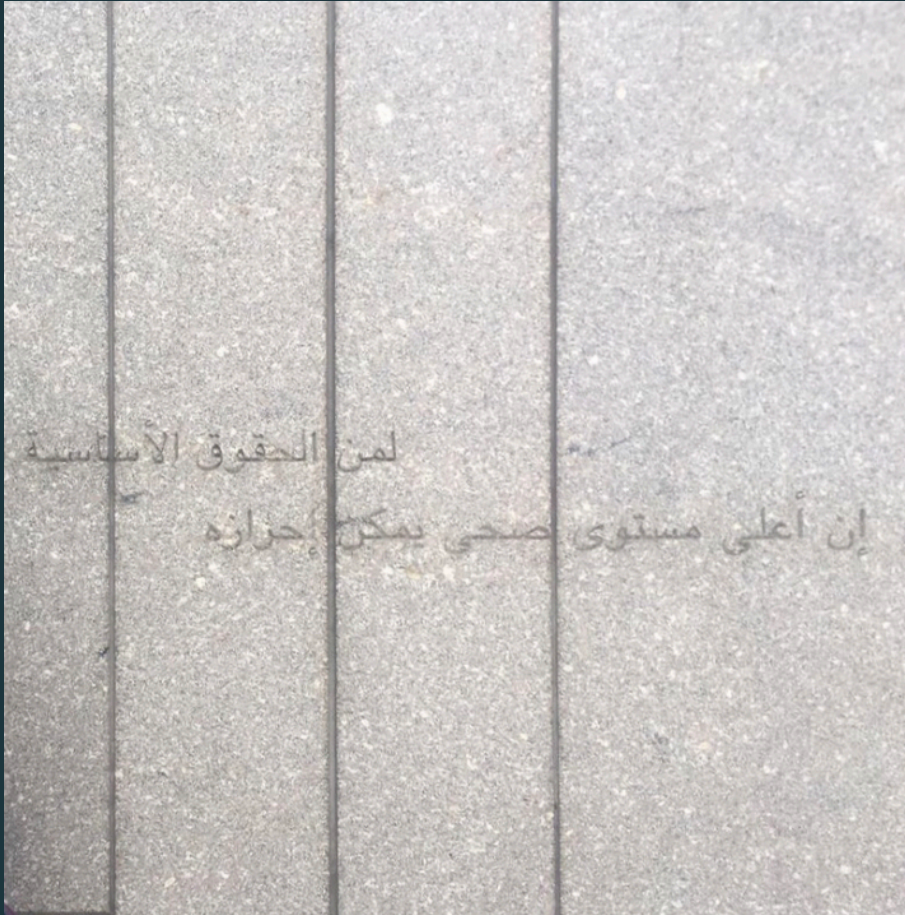
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**THANK YOU**

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# Thank you!

**Office Hours (by appointment  
via email):**

Mondays & Wednesdays

11 AM – 1 PM

Via Zoom

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