

Health Organisations

Common Health Problems in India

Health, as we all know, is the state of physical, mental, and psychological well being.

The matter of health and disease not only belongs to an individual, rather the development of entire country is dependent on it.

The standard of public health in a country depends upon its people, its resources, and its government.

In India, the main cause of health problems can be poor living conditions, inadequate health care facilities, illiteracy, ignorance, etc.

Some of the major causes of health problems in India are:

- **Unsafe drinking water** – Many gastro-intestinal disorders and water borne diseases (cholera, jaundice, etc.) are due to the lack of safe drinking water. Water pollution is the cause of many deaths in our country.
- **Malnutrition** – The main cause of poor health in developing countries is malnutrition. In today's world, poor people are undernourished since they cannot afford nutritious food and rich people are undernourished since out of ignorance they eat fat rich, but unbalanced diet.

Adulteration is a major source of fatal diseases. Adulteration not only degrades the quality of food, but dangerous substances are added to the food, which proves to be a health hazard.

- **Poor housing** – The high population and the availability of less space in countries such as India leads to poor health of people. People living in congested areas do not get sufficient sunlight, fresh air, safe drinking water, etc.
- **Improper sewage disposal** – This problem is especially prevalent in village areas where sewage is not properly disposed off. Even the water is badly polluted. The village wells are contaminated and drinking water is not treated before drinking.
- **Lack of medical care** – A major part of Indian population lives in villages, but the part of medical facilities is least in villages. In remote villages, people die of ignorance and lack of proper medical aid, vaccines, family planning, diagnostic facilities, etc.

Common Diseases Among People of India		
Disease	Cause	Example
Communicable disease	Caused by pathogens such as	
	Virus	AIDS, jaundice
	Bacteria	Tuberculosis, cholera
	Fungi	Ringworm, Athletes foot
	Protozoa	Giardiasis, malaria
	Helminthes	Ascariasis
Nutrition deficiency	Caused by deficiency of nutrients	
	Protein	Kwashiorkor
	Protein and carbohydrates	Marasmus

	Vitamin A	Night blindness
	Vitamin B	Beri-beri
	Vitamin C	Scurvy
	Vitamin D	Rickets
	Iron	Anaemia
	Iodine	Goitre
Allergies	Hypersensitivity of body to foreign particles such as dust, pollen grains, etc.	Asthma
Degenerative diseases	Malfunctioning of vital organs	Heart attack, diabetes
Cancer	Abnormal and uncontrolled tumour-like growth of a part of body	Lung cancer, leukaemia, etc.
Congenital or genetic diseases	These are present right from the birth.	Colour blindness, haemophilia, autism, etc.

Health Organisations

Several kinds of health organisations work throughout our country. These health organisations can be divided into three main groups – local organisations, national organisations, and international organisations.

Local organisations – Municipal corporations, municipalities, town area committees, etc

Responsibilities of Local bodies :

- **Sanitation** - Proper disposal and removal of garbage, wastes, etc
- **Supply of safe drinking water**
- **Vaccination:** Immunisation of the infants to protect them from various infectious diseases. Organising immunisation programmes when there is a risk of epidemic
- **Keeping statistical records:** To keep and maintain the records of all kinds of information about health and diseases in the area

National organisations – Indian governmental organisations, research centres, NGOs, etc.

Example – Pulse polio programme

International organisations – WHO, Red Cross, UNICEF

National Health Programmes	
Health programme	Features
National Malaria Eradication programme (NMEP)	Indoor residual spraying with DDT twice a year Divided into four phases – preparatory, attack, consolidation, and maintenance
National AIDS Control Programme	Launched in 1987 by ministry of health and family welfare

	From September 1992 to September 1997, 5 AIDS control programmes were launched.	
Universal Immunisation Programme	In 1974, ‘Expanded programme on immunisation’ [EPI] was launched by WHO. It was launched against 6 diseases – diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, polio, TB, measles.	
Pulse Polio Programme	Children under five years of age are given additional oral polio drops in December and January every year on fixed days. Incidences of polio have indeed been reduced after implementation of this programme.	
DENGUE Fever Control	A ‘Guideline of preparation of contingency plan in case of outbreak of dengue/dengue hemorrhagic fever’ was prepared in 1996. It includes all aspects such as identification of outbreak management, vector control, dengue prevention, etc.	
International Health Organisations		
Organisation		Functions
WHO (World Health Organisation)	Found in 1948 It is a branch of UN. Headquarter – Geneva	Assists countries to improve health and sanitation services Issues epidemic warnings; sets up regulations to travel

	Member states – 199 Area of emphasis – third world countries In 1990, the goal to immunise children against six preventable diseases was achieved by WHO.	Promotes medical education and training Promotes R and D for pharmaceutical products Determines permissible levels for air, water, and noise pollution
UNICEF (United Nations International Children Emergency Fund)	It emphasises on eradication of 'silent emergencies' for children. 'Silent emergencies' is a combination of malnutrition and poverty that kills 35,000 children every day.	To help eliminate the health problems, which arise as a result of combination of malnutrition and poverty Elimination of neonatal tetanus Elimination of vitamin A deficiency and polio
Red Cross Society	Founded in 1864 It is a voluntary health organisation. Its symbol is painted on hospitals, ambulances, health workers' uniforms, and first-aid boxes for quick identification.	To provide help to the victim in case of calamity such as floods, famine, epidemic, etc. To help the wounded soldiers during war To extend the first aid in case of accidents To look after the mother and child welfare schemes To arrange for ambulances, blood donation camps, blood for needy persons, etc.