

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Lesson Plan (Grades 6 to 12)

Overview

This lesson defines health and identifies factors affecting health, including nutrition. It also reviews factors influencing adolescents' food choices.

Estimated time: 30-45 minutes.

Key Concepts

- The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as “a state of complete physical, social and mental well-being and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity.”
- Several factors affect our health. Some of these factors include the lifestyle choices we make, the environment we live in, our physical activity level and our food choices.
- Some of the factors influencing food choices are taste, availability, cost, family, religion, emotions, society, and media (articles, advertisements)...

Materials

- Case Studies Master (pg. 4-5)
- Case Study Worksheet (pg. 6)
- Case Studies Discussion Key (for teachers) (pg. 7-8)
- Student Worksheet (pg. 9-10)
- Teacher Backgrounder “Do You Think You're Healthy?” (pg. 11-12)

Procedure

Learning Activity 1: What affects health?

- a. Begin by asking the class: Do you think you're healthy? Why or why not?
- b. Divide the class into 6 groups. Give each group a Case Study Worksheet (pg. 6); assign a case study to each group. Students will use the guidelines provided in the worksheet to discuss the case as a group. Students can present the case to the rest of the class by either reading it aloud or role-playing as a group. Students will also assess whether the person described in the case study is healthy or not and explain how they came to this conclusion.

This activity allows the students to share their different opinions about health with their classmates. [(Please refer to Case Studies Master (pg. 4-5) and Case Study Worksheet (pg. 6)].

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- c. Use the answers to the case studies to make a list of factors affecting health on the Student Worksheet (pg. 9-10) provided. Ask students to add to the list. Refer to the section “Factors Affecting Health” (pg. 11) in your Teacher Backgrounder for a more extensive list of factors. Emphasize nutrition as one important factor for achieving and maintaining health.
- d. Summarize the activity by reading the World Health Organization’s (WHO) definition of health: “a state of complete physical, social and mental well-being and not merely the absence of diseases or infirmity.”

Learning Activity 2: What influences your food choices?

- a. Ask students to think about what they eat and drink at home, at school, or when they go out. Then ask them about the factors that influenced their food choices.
- b. Have them list these factors in the Student Worksheet (pg. 10) provided.

The purpose of this activity is to help students become aware of all these factors in order to make realistic plans for change in their food choices. Refer to the section “Determinants of Healthy Eating in Youth” (pg. 12) in your Teacher Backgrounder for additional factors.

Extension Activities

1. Have students prepare a written report or presentation on 1 of the following topics or a health topic of your choice:
 - Is nutritious food more expensive? Research the cost of foods at school cafeterias, farmers’ markets, grocery stores or convenience stores.
 - Nutritious foods don’t taste good. Do you agree or disagree and why? Give specific examples supporting your opinion.
 - Use personal experience to support the WHO definition of health.
 - Survey/ map your school’s access to food. How easy is it for people to get the foods they need to meet their daily needs?
2. Select a food or beverage advertisement from TV, the internet, a magazine, or social media. Prepare a critical analysis of the ad.



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More information for Teachers

Curriculum Links

- Grades 6-9: This lesson supports the Big Ideas and Learning Standards in Physical and Health Education [BC curriculum](#) and can also link to other subject areas.
- Grades 10-12: This lesson supports Big Ideas, Competencies and Content in Applied Design, Skills and Technology, Physical and Health Education and other [BC curriculum](#) areas.

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Do You Think You're Healthy?

Case Studies Master

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

Case Study #1

Josh is very popular and was recently elected most handsome guy of the year. Many people are interested in dating Josh. He goes out with a new girl every week. Josh works out a lot to maintain his look. He spends 2 hours at the gym everyday and does a lot of weight lifting. To maintain his muscles, he fills up on protein foods such as eggs, yogurt, fish, and chicken, but often doesn't include many vegetables or fruit with his meals and snacks. He also drinks a lot of water. During weekends, he hangs out with his friends in nightclubs and pubs and drinks a lot. They spend all night dancing and drinking. They also occasionally smoke pot. On Sundays, Josh goes hiking or biking very early in the morning, having only slept a few hours. Then another week starts all over again!

Case Study #2

Ian is a 15-year-old boy who suffered injuries from a motor vehicle accident 1 year ago. Since then, his legs have been paralyzed and he uses a wheelchair to get around. Although this accident was very traumatizing, Ian has been able to adapt with the help and support of his family and friends. His parents have redesigned the house to make it wheelchair accessible. He went to physical rehabilitation sessions and has learned to rely on himself for his everyday tasks. Ian is very happy he is still alive and enjoys each day of his life.

Case Study #3

Sarah has had a larger body for as long she can remember. After so many failed diets, she finally stopped focusing on losing weight and changing her body shape. Now, all she wants is to feel good about herself and enjoy eating. She tries to eat a balanced diet every day and occasionally indulges in her favourite dessert, a chocolate sundae.

Sarah attends yoga classes twice a week and goes roller-blading in the neighbourhood everyday after school. She also goes to the swimming pool on weekends.

Ever since Sarah decided to accept her body shape, she has been more outgoing and has made several new friends.

Case Study #4

Pamela is so afraid of gaining weight that she weighs herself every morning. If she has gained a few ounces, she starts a diet to lose the "extra" weight. Pamela also runs 6 miles every day after supper to burn "extra calories" and finds that running helps her sleep well at night.

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Case Studies Master

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

Lately, Pamela has become so worried about her food intake that she has stopped eating out with her friends on weekends. She thinks she does not need the extra fat and calories so Pamela stays home and listens to music instead. Recently, she started smoking. It makes her feel less hungry and at least this is something she can still do with her friends.

Case Study #5

Sean, a grade 10 student, manages to organize his time in order to both study and enjoy different activities with his friends. Sean and 4 of his friends play basketball every day in his backyard. On Saturdays, they all go skateboarding. On Sundays, he goes hiking or biking with his family. Sean knows that keeping in good shape requires balanced nutrition so he makes sure he eats a variety of foods that provide him with the energy he needs to be active.

Lately, Sean has started thinking about his future and about what he wants to be. His father is a very successful lawyer. He wants him to go to law school. Sean is not sure about that. He has other plans in mind but does not feel he can discuss them with his parents. This has been affecting his mood and he has not been able to sleep well lately.

Case Study #6

Bob is a very successful businessman. He now owns 3 multi-million dollar companies. Since he doesn't trust anyone, he has to manage all 3 by himself. He wakes up every day at 5 am to exercise in his personal gym. Then he takes a shower, grabs a cup of coffee and heads to his first company by 7 am. He spends the whole morning there, and then has a quick lunch in a near-by restaurant on his way to the second company. He spends another 5 to 6 hours there and then heads to the third company in the late afternoon. By that time, Bob is having his sixth cup of coffee to keep awake during the evening, which he spends reviewing documents with his personal assistant. He also schedules board meetings every Monday that go very late at night.

When he gets back home, it is already 11 pm. His kids have gone to bed. His wife is still out at a dinner or another social event. Bob goes directly to bed at midnight to rest up for the next day.

Bob only spends time with his family on weekends, if he's not gone on a business trip. Bob's wife is feeling very lonely and unhappy. Although she knows Bob works really hard to make more money and provide for the family's needs, she cannot take it anymore and is considering divorce.



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Case Study Worksheet

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

Case Study

Discuss with your group about the health practices of the character featured in your case study. Assign a person to report on the answers to the following questions:

What are the factors that affect your character's health?

Protective Factors

Risk Factors

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Is your character healthy? Why or why not?

What are the physical, social, mental, and/or financial implications of your character's health-related decisions on self, family, and community?

What would you advise your character to do to improve his/her health?

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Case Studies Discussion Key

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

These case studies are designed to trigger discussions on several aspects of health such as balanced life, body image, lifestyle and social support. Answers to the case studies are by no means comprehensive and are only the beginning of a long list that can be expanded on in the classroom. Answers may vary depending on different perspectives.

Case Study #1

- Protective factors: lots of friends, confident, high self-esteem, physically active, drinks lots of water.
- Risk factors: lots of sexual partners, drinking alcohol, substance abuse, lack of sleep on weekends, lack of vegetables and fruit and overall variety in diet.
- Conclusion: despite a very active lifestyle and a high self-esteem, Josh has a lot of unhealthy behaviours and would not be considered a healthy person.

Case Study #2

- Protective factors: strong family and friends' support, independent for activities of daily life, safe physical environment, happy and thankful for being alive.
- Risk factors: his physical disability is not directly affecting his health, but he may experience teasing and discrimination because of it.
- Conclusion: Ian is a very happy person who managed to adapt to a very traumatic experience, thanks to the help of his friends and his family. He can be considered healthy.

Case Study #3

- Protective factors: satisfied with her body shape, very active, involved in stress management activities, has lots of friends, eats a balanced diet.
- Risk factors: may be a target for weight-based bullying because her healthy body size doesn't align with society's idea of a healthy body.
- Conclusion: Sarah naturally has a larger body but weight alone is not a good indicator of health. Body weight is determined by several factors and many of these factors are beyond our control. For example, genetics alone can contribute up to 80% of our body weight¹. Healthy people come in all shapes and sizes, which is why it's important not to confuse weight with health. Lifestyle plays an important role in health and Sarah lives a healthy lifestyle (e.g. participates in regular physical activity, eats a balanced diet, practices stress management, etc.).

1. rontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fendo.2012.00029/full

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Case Studies Discussion Key

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

Case Study #4

- Protective factors: gets adequate sleep
- Risk Factors: excessive exercise, focus on weight, socially isolated and smoking to decrease feelings of hunger.
- Conclusion: Pamela has an extremely distorted perception of health, with too much focus on weight and food choices. The key is balance. There are other components affecting her well being, such as decreased socialization, and lack of satisfaction with her body size. Pamela has symptoms of an eating disorder and should seek support from a health professional. She is not a healthy person.

Case Study #5

- Protective factors: good time management, lots of friends, active lifestyle, balanced nutrition, good school achievement.
- Risk factors: lack of communication with his parents, stress regarding future education & career choices.
- Conclusion: Sean is a healthy teenager who knows how to balance things. However, unless he confronts his parents regarding his personal interests, he might start feeling mentally stressed.

Case Study #6

- Protective factors: successful businessman, physically active, wealthy.
- Risk factors: lack of sleep, skips meals, lots of coffee, very high stress level, very little family time.
- Conclusion: Despite being successful in his professional life and keeping physically active, Bob is not a very healthy person. He is doing much more than his body and mind can handle. He is missing quality time with his family, which he will never be able to make up for. Bob is not getting enough sleep either. Bob definitely lives a very stressful and unhealthy life.

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Student Worksheet

Learning Activity 1: Factors Affecting Health

Psychological

Risk Factors Protective Factors

Lifestyle

Risk Factors Protective Factors

Health

(-) Mortality, morbidity
(+) Quality of life, well being

Environmental

Risk Factors Protective Factors

Psycho-social

Risk Factors Protective Factors

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Student Worksheet

Learning Activity 2: Factors Influencing my Food Choices

Environmental

Individual

Lifestyle

Physiological

Psychological

Knowledge / Attitudes / Beliefs

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Teacher Backgrounder

Learning Activity 1: Factors Affecting Health

Protective Factors

(Associated with quality of life, wellbeing)

- A. Healthy conditions and environment
 - a. Safe physical environment
 - b. Steady income
 - c. Regular supply of nutritious food and water
 - d. Restricted access to tobacco and drugs
 - e. Provision of affordable housing
- B. Psychosocial factors
 - a. Volunteering
 - b. Friends
 - c. Feeling of trust
 - d. Supportive family structure
 - e. Positive self-esteem
 - f. Positive mental health
- C. Effective community services
 - a. Access to health services
 - b. Strong social services
- D. Healthy lifestyles
 - a. Decreased use of tobacco and drugs
 - b. Regular physical activity
 - c. Balanced eating
 - d. Safe sexual activity

Risk Factors

(Associated with increased mortality, morbidity, disability)

- A. Unhealthy conditions and environment
 - a. Poverty
 - b. Polluted environment
 - c. Discrimination (age, sex, race, disability)
 - d. Natural resource depletion
- B. Psychosocial risk factors
 - a. Isolation
 - b. Lack of family support
 - c. Low self-esteem
 - d. High self-blame
 - e. Loss of meaning or purpose
 - f. Abuse
- C. Lifestyle risk factors
 - a. Smoking
 - b. Drinking
 - c. Poor eating habits
 - d. Physical inactivity
 - e. Substance abuse
 - f. Poor hygiene
 - g. Unsafe sexual activity
- D. Physiological risk factors
 - a. Genetic risk factors
 - b. Release of stress hormone

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Teacher Backgrounder

Learning Activity 2: Determinants of Healthy Eating in Youth

A. Environmental factors

Family:

- Parental role modelling
- Food exposure
- Food availability
- Meal structures
- Family meals

Income/ Food Cost

Culture

Social events

School environment:

- Food availability in vending machines and cafeterias
- Nutrition policy
- Teacher role modelling
- Peer influence

Food supply

Packaging of food products

Portion sizes

Media, marketing and advertising

Positive influences: educational messages and awareness campaigns

Negative influences: TV commercials of foods with low nutritional value

B. Individual (personal) factors

Taste and food preferences

Religion

Appeal of food

Body image

C. Physiological and Biological factors

Hunger and food cravings

Age and sex

Specific conditions (lactose intolerance, food allergies)

D. Lifestyle factors

Time constraints of adolescent and working parents and reliance on convenience foods

Stress

E. Knowledge, Attitudes, and Beliefs

Nutrition knowledge and attitudes about health and food

Health concern about fat intake and body weight

Belief that "healthy foods don't taste as good" or that "healthy foods taste good"

Vegetarian beliefs

F. Psychological factors

Mood (happy, sad)