

Prevention is better than cure

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Received: 07.05.2012; Accepted: 02.11.2012

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■ **ABSTRACT** : The adage "Prevention is better than cure" is particularly appropriate for chronic diseases since the cost of treatment far outweighs the cost of disease prevention. Good health is not distributed evenly across the society. Proper diet, healthy environment, good hygienic practises is the key to good health. A healthy diet, exercise, proper nutrition, cleanliness and stress can all minimize the chance of developing many diseases like diabetes, hypertension, thyroid, CVD and alcoholism. In this paper an effort has been made to highlight the importance of good dietary habits, healthy living environment, good hygienic practices and related aspects of various diseases. If the community is enlightened, it is not difficult to achieve a productive life free from chronic ailment and diseases.

■ **KEY WORDS** : Public health, Preventive medicines, Living environment, Hygiene

■ **HOW TO CITE THIS PAPER** : Srivastava, Sangita and Fatima, Ammatul (2012). Prevention is better than cure. *Asian J. Home Sci.*, 7 (2): 592-596.

In the 20th century the concept of health promotion has begun to take shape. It has been realized that public health has neglected a citizen as an individual. Public health has been defined as "the science and art of preventing disease, prolonging life and promoting health efficiencies through organised community's efforts". And from the Indian Vedic system we always believed in the theory of "servey santu sukhina sarvey santu niramaya". Meaning thereby" let everyone be free from disease and lead a happy and contended life". Preventive medicine is applied to "Healthy" humans, customarily by action affecting a large number of medicine did not effectively only confine itself to vaccination but discoveries in the field of nutrition have added a new dimension of preventive medicine.

New strategies have been developed for combating specific deficiencies as for nutritional blindness and iodine deficiency disorder. The nutritional component of vitamins, minerals, proteins and other nutrients has its place in preventing many a disease. Researchers are being done to find more nutritional supplements like Spirulina, Aloe vera and various other herbs which can meet the body's requirements for adequate nutrition.

With the advances of preventive medicines and practice of public health the pattern of disease has begun to change.

Many of the acute illness problems have been brought under control, however as old problems are solved new health problems in the form of chronic diseases are emerging for example diabetes, cardio vascular diseases, alcoholism, drug addiction, thyroidism, chronic urinary tract infection, hypertension, sleep disorders in our society.

A new concepts of risk factor as determinants of these diseases came into existence. These problems have brought new challenges to public health, which need new orientation towards social objectives.

Cholera which is often called the father of public health appeared first time and again in the western world during the 19th century. An English epidemiologist John Snow studied the epidemiology of cholera in London in 1854 and established the role of polluted drinking water in the spread of cholera. Then came a demand from people for clean drinking water. At that time the Thames was both a source of drinking water and a depository of sewage. Quiet like the current situation of our rivers. A Comprehensive piece of legislations was brought into force in England, the public health act of 1875 for the control of man's physical environment.

The early phase of public health is often called the "disease control phase". Effects were directed entirely toward general cleanliness, garbage disposal and quarantine