

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: 30-40 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 are 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 (Who is Healthy?)
- Case Study Worksheet
- Case Studies Discussion Key for teachers
- Student Master
- Teacher Backgrounder “Do You Think You're Healthy?”

Procedure

Learning Activity 1: What affects health?

- a. Begin by asking the class: Do you worry about your health? Why or why not?
- b. Divide the class into six groups. Give each group a case study worksheet; 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 or role-playing it and assess whether the person described in the case study is healthy and why.

This activity allows the students to share their different opinions about health with their classmates. (Please refer to Case Studies Master and Case Study Worksheet)

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Lesson Plan (Grades 6 to 12)

- c. Use the answers to the case studies to make a list of factors affecting health on the student master provided. Ask students to add to the list. Refer to the section “Factors Affecting Health” in your teacher backgrounder for a more extensive list of factors. Emphasize nutrition as one important factor for achieving and maintaining health. (Please refer to Case Studies Discussion Key and Teacher Backgrounder)
- d. Summarize the activity by reading the WHO definition of health (Please refer to Key Concepts section)

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 masters 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” in your teacher backgrounder for additional factors. (Please refer to Student Master and Teacher Backgrounder)

Extension Activities

1. Prepare a written report or presentation on the following topics or a health topic of your choice:
 - Is healthy food more expensive? Research the cost of foods at school cafeteria, farmers’ market, grocery stores or convenience stores.
 - Healthy 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 community’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 advertising from TV, or a magazine. Prepare a critical analysis of the ad.
3. Prepare a survey of local foods available in your grocery store. Explore the BC Agriculture in the Classroom website: <http://www.aitc.ca/bc> and refer to Grow BC (available from AITC) as a resource.



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More information for Teachers

To offset food costs, find out about [mini food grants](#).

Refer to [Kitchen Equipment for your Classroom](#) for more preparation and food safety tips.

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.

Want to do more nutrition education with your class?

Explore our other [lesson plans](#) or book a [free 1-hour workshop](#).

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Case Studies Master

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

Case Study #1

Josh is very popular since he has been elected most handsome guy of the year. All the girls would die to go out with him. He goes out with a new girlfriend 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 eats a lot of high protein foods such as milk, eggs, fish, chicken and meat. He also drinks a lot of water. Josh goes 3 times a week to a sun-tanning salon. 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 one year ago. Since then, he has been paralyzed and needs a wheelchair. Although this accident has been 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 always been an overweight child. After so many failed diets, she finally stopped focusing on an ideal weight. All she wants is to feel good about herself and enjoy eating. She tries to eat a balanced diet every day but indulges in her favourite dessert, a chocolate sundae, from time to time. Since she only has it occasionally, she does not feel guilty about it.

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 she has been happy about her body shape, she has been able to be more outgoing and has met a lot of 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 six miles every day after supper to burn “extra” calories.

Do You Think You're Healthy?

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 does not need the extra fat and calories! So she 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 is a very good grade 10 student. He manages to organize his time in order to both study and enjoy different activities with his friends. He and four other boys 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 good nutrition. So he makes sure he eats a healthy balanced diet.

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 morale and he has not been able to sleep very well lately.

Case Study #6

Bob is a very successful businessman. He now owns three multi-million dollar companies. Since he doesn't trust anyone, he has to manage all three 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 get ready 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 Studies 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?

Do You Think You're Healthy?

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 each one's point of view.

Case Study #1

- Protective factors: being popular and good looking (improves self-esteem and confidence), physical activity, drinks a lot of water.
- Risk factors: Lots of sexual partners, excessive exposure to UV rays, drinking alcohol, substance abuse, lack of sleep on weekends.
- 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: physical disability that is not directly affecting his health.
- 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, despite his physical disability.

Case Study #3

- Protective factors: satisfied with her body shape, doing stress management, fit, very active, lots of friends, nutritional balance.
- Risk factors: overweight?
- Conclusion: Although she is overweight, Sarah is happy about her weight and is very fit. So she might be considered a healthy person. Ideal weight is not always a good indicator of health. Some people might be thin but unfit compared to overweight persons.

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Case Studies Discussion Key

Learning Activity 1: Who is Healthy?

Case Study #4

- Protective factors: ideal weight?
- Risk Factors: excessive exercise, focus on weight, socially isolated, and smoking to decrease hunger feeling.
- Conclusion: Pamela has an extremely distorted perception of health, with too much focus on weight and food choices. The key is balance. Too much of something is as bad as too little. There are other components affecting her well being such as decreased socialization, and lack of satisfaction with her body size. She is definitely 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, skipping breakfast and supper, 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 definitely lives a very stressful and unhealthy life.

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Student Masters

Learning Activity 1 Factors Affecting Health

Psychological	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors

Lifestyle	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors

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

Environmental	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors

Psycho-social	
Risk Factors	Protective Factors

Do You Think You're Healthy?

Student Masters

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)