

## 25. Community Health and Hygiene

### Read and discuss

There was havoc as 150 people in the area where Radha lives were suddenly affected by food poisoning. Some of the residents made great efforts to secure emergency medical help immediately. Radha, too, stayed up late that night. She was so stressed that she could not take part in the story-telling competition in her school the next day. She did feel bad about missing the chance but she had the satisfaction of having helped the victims of food poisoning.

What do you think are the reasons for such emergencies?

Do you think that the incident of food poisoning occurred because people were careless about hygiene?

It is necessary to be alert about health and hygiene. Do you agree that the health of the entire community is as important as one's own health?

### Community health

Nutritious food, personal hygiene, exercise and pursuit of hobbies lead to excellent health and good personal development. Just as we take care of our own health, we must make efforts to ensure good health for all. Everyone in our society should be able to live the kind of tension-free and happy life that we wish for ourselves. Good community health and hygiene can be achieved through habits of cleanliness and good health on the part of all individuals in a community.

Pollution, squalor, epidemics of infectious diseases, addiction, insect-borne

diseases are all threats to community health. To nurture community health is to protect the general public from such diseases and to make a happy and healthy life possible for all.

### Importance of community health

The people of a country are the most important factor in a country's progress and development. Their health can be protected if they have a clean environment, nutritious food, safe drinking water and good medical facilities. Mass media are used under community welfare programmes to educate people about issues such as taking care of drinking water and food.



People are urged in every possible way to keep their surroundings clean. It is a legal offence to spit in public places. The aim of this ban is to prevent the spread of diseases.

### What are the threats to the health of the community?

There are several threats to community health. An important threat is carelessness regarding hygiene. From the actions given below, mark those that are harmful with a cross and write the explanation in your notebook.

1. Burning old tyres ☐
2. Spitting anywhere on the road ☐

3. Using public toilets ☐
4. Looking after domestic animals ☐
5. Following doctor's instructions in cases of infectious diseases ☐
6. Washing your hands before a meal or snack ☐
7. Throwing the garbage from your house on to the road ☐

### Speak and write.

Some important factors that are harmful for community health are mentioned below. For example, polluted water, malnutrition, etc. How each of these factors harms community health is given in the first box in front of it. Some suggested remedies are mentioned in the next box. Add other ill effects and remedies to the respective boxes.

Polluted water :

Cholera, -----

Safe water supply, -----

Malnutrition :

Higher numbers of child deaths, -----

Nutritious diet

Pollution :

Danger to the environment, ----

Protecting the environment, ----

Ignorance and Superstition :

Oppression, deception, ---

Scientific temper, -----

Addictions :

Unhappy family life, ----

Deaddiction programmes, --

## Wholesome living

If we take care of our health, it is possible for us to lead a wholesome life. Keeping ourselves happy and taking an interest in things, avoiding feelings of hatred and envy and doing what is necessary to maintain physical health helps us to achieve this end. If people of a society live a healthy and wholesome life, social tensions also decrease and feelings of friendship can be nurtured.

## Tobacco consumption

Names of tobacco products such as *gutka*, cigarettes, *bidis*, *masheri*, *mawa*, *panmasala*, etc. are often heard. We also see many people consuming tobacco in different ways. All these are harmful for our health. At first, a person may chew tobacco casually at someone's urging. But this may lead to addiction. The person becomes dependent on tobacco and cannot give up the habit.

When people develop this habit, they become restless if they do not get tobacco. They are not able to pay attention to anything else. They have to have tobacco in the mouth all the time. When the habit reaches this stage, it is called an addiction.

People addicted to tobacco spit here and there all the time and make their surroundings dirty.

## Ill effects of tobacco addiction

- Ulcers in the mouth.
- The ulcers develop into bigger wounds. The person may develop tumours.
- A lot of time and money has to be spent on treatment. If the wounds do not heal, the person has serious problems. This can eventually lead to cancer.
- Tobacco entering the digestive organs leads to complaints related to them. The constant presence of tobacco in the

digestive organs can cause cancer of any of those organs.

- A person who develops cancer in this way has to take very painful treatment. Even after that, one cannot be sure that the cancer will be cured.

## Alcoholism

Drinking alcohol also has adverse effects on the body. Addiction to alcohol is called alcoholism.

- Alcohol makes a person drowsy and confused. One loses control over one's actions.
- Alcoholism causes diseases of the liver, intestines and urinary bladder.
- Addiction to tobacco or alcohol are both very bad habits. It is best to stay away from these vices. Never be negligent about health.
- The condition of the addict becomes pathetic, and the addict's family too has to suffer with them. There is no telling how much money will be required for treatment. Besides, everyone is put to great trouble and a lot of time and efforts are wasted. The family gets deprived of health and happiness and is ruined.
- We must be aware that an addict destroys the entire family.



Stay away from these habits

### Beware !

Chewing tobacco, smoking cigarettes or *bidis*, taking snuff, rubbing *masheri*

on the teeth, smoking tobacco through a *chillum*, *hookah*, cigar, pipe or cheroot are all extremely harmful.

Besides alcohol and tobacco, people also fall prey to some other addictions such as the addiction to drugs like cocaine, brown sugar, etc. These addictions can totally devastate your life.

## Drugs, tobacco and alcohol use – an invitation to death

Tobacco, drugs and alcohol produce a state of intoxication. Addiction to any of them eventually kills you. Every person should beware of the ill effects of these addictions and strictly stay away from them. There are people who lure others into smoking, drinking or trying out drugs. On no account should we give in to their pressure.

If a person starts getting addicted to smoking or drinking or taking drugs, the help of counsellors or doctors should be sought immediately to rid the person of the habit.

One should eat regularly and take up sports and other hobbies. One should be firm in avoiding any addiction.



Pursuing hobbies

### Try this.

All of us have certain habits. Some such habits are mentioned below. Put them into three groups – good habits, bad habits and pointless habits.

1. Informing your family members where you are going and when you will be back.
2. Telling the truth.
3. Fiddling with one's hair, a pencil, etc. all the time.
4. Biting one's nails.
5. Making the school bag ready the night before.
6. Frequently forgetting one's umbrella, raincoat, pencil, pen, etc.
7. Putting a limit on TV time and sticking to it.

### Use your brain power !



What bad habits will you guard against while trying to achieve your aim or interest in life?

### Always remember –



Learn to say 'No!' firmly in order to avoid bad habits.

### What we have learnt –



- Each person should put in efforts to maintain the community's health.
- We must be alert with respect to matters of public health.
- Wholesome living leads to good personal and social health.
- One needs to be firm with oneself to avoid bad habits.

### Exercises

#### 1. Fill in the blanks.

- (a) A healthy and wholesome life leads to feelings of ..... .
- (b) Constant presence of tobacco in the digestive organs can lead to cancer of ..... .
- (c) ..... leads to diseases of the liver, intestines and urinary bladder.
- (d) The most important factor in the country's progress and development are its ..... .
- (e) Good community ..... can be achieved through habits of hygiene and good health.

#### 2. True or false? Correct the wrong statements.

- (a) Pollution, squalor, epidemics, addictions and insect-borne diseases are all beneficial for community health. (–)

- (b) There is a ban on spitting in public places. (–)
- (c) A nutritious diet, personal hygiene, exercise and pursuit of hobbies lead to excellent health. (–)
- (d) We cannot live a wholesome life if we take care of our health. (–)

#### 3. Answer the following questions.

- (a) How can you achieve excellent health?
- (b) What factors are a threat to community health?
- (c) What are the ill effects of chewing tobacco?
- (d) What are the ill effects of alcoholism?

#### Activity

Write and present a short play on preventing addictions in society.

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