**21.1 School Health Program**

Generally speaking, there is lack of medical facility in our schools. This is a highly neglected area which usually fails to attract the attention of management, principal, teachers, parents and other stake holders.

* It takes only one adverse incident that may ruin all the reputation of the school.
* In the wake of recent spurt in child abuse cases, parents, school and the government have a collective responsibility of making sure that the children are provided with a safe learning environment.
* Accidents during play and medical problems in children are inevitable part of childhood.
* Often schools do not stock first-aid equipment or basic medicine.
* In most cases schools are not attached to a medical establishment of any sort.
* There is a tacit understanding that the parents are responsible for all medical issues, while the school is only concerned with imparting education.
* If and when there is an adverse incident/accident, there is an unfortunate tendency on the part of the school authorities to hush it up. This is a sorry state of affair.
* A school is a place where parents send their children with the hope that they would receive quality education in a safe environment. It is the school’s responsibility to ensure such a safe environment.
* Schools should ensure that the sports and games equipments are regularly checked and first-aid items/ medicines are updated.
* Staff members should be given responsibility to ensure that the medical help is given right in time when there arises a need.
* At least there should be a health-care facility within the school intended to provide basic healthcare for students.
* The school clinic should also have necessary equipment needed for the optimum medical service for students including the oxygen nebulizer.

**Components of school health program**

* Screening of general health of students; twice in a year.
* Assessment of anemia/nutritional status.
* Visual acuity (sharpness).
* Hearing problems.
* Dental check up.
* Skin conditions.
* Heart defects.
* Physical disabilities.
* Learning disorders.
* Behavior problems.
* Basic medicine kit made available to take care of common ailments prevalent among young school going children.
* Serious cases referred to hospitals. Information of such cases should immediately be given to the concerned parents.
* Supervision of different activities related to food and health.
* *Food festival,* an event held at least once a year.
* Handling of medical emergencies such as
* Cases of fainting during assembly or standing for long duration in an event especially held in summer.
* Student suffering from any ailment, noticed during school hours.
* Different kinds of injuries and remedial measures.
* Case of medical emergency such as contusion, cut and laceration, sprain, epistaxis (bleeding from the nose), epilepsy, skin injury or abrasion etc.
* Awareness programs like drive against malaria, dengue (awareness and its prophylaxis) and the most recent **Covid-19.**
* Holding of workshops for health programs etc.