Course Description

Studies the psychology of healthy behavior. Applies psychological principles to preventative health care. Covers topics such as exercise, nutrition, stress, life-styles, and habits. Lecture 3 hours per week.

General Course Purpose

This course is a one semester course in the practical application of psychological principles to health and health related problems.

Course Prerequisites/Corequisites

Prerequisite: PSY 200 or division approval.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:

➢ Define health psychology and recognize the elements of its historical background
➢ Differentiate between scientific research and non-scientific works in the study of health psychology
➢ Describe the effects of stress, and in this context, explain the role of cognition, emotion, and behavior in prevention, causation, maintenance, and treatment of physical illnesses
➢ Broadly compare and contrast the new approaches in the study and practice of health psychology with the traditional ones practiced in different cultures
➢ Point out the interactions between mental and physical health based on different models and approaches.
➢ List multiple biological, psychological, social, and spiritual factors that affect mental and physical health
➢ Criticize popular American myths on health psychology topics by drawing on scientific findings

Major Topics to be Included

• Stress and coping
• Mind-body relationship
• Psychological sequelae of illness (heart disease, hypertension, cancer, diabetes)
• Pain and pain management techniques
• Patients behavior (diet, adherence, compliance, learned helplessness)
• Chemical dependence and eating disorders
• Social and cultural differences in approaches to health; complementary and alternative medicine

Optional Topics

• Resilience and the hardy personality
• Positive psychology
• B. Psychological benefits of exercise
• C. Medical settings and the interaction of patients with physicians and nurses
• D. Research on Type A and Type B syndromes