

During the last few years awareness about Physical Fitness and Wellness has increased tremendously. More and more people are participating in these programmes. Most important reason behind this is that people are giving emphasis on looking good, feeling good, and living longer.

In its most general meaning physical fitness is a general state of good physical health. Fitness brings many advantages and benefits to various aspects of a person's life.

### **1.1 Meaning and Importance of Physical Fitness, Wellness and Lifestyle**

#### **Meaning of Physical Fitness**

Physical fitness is defined as the general capacity to adapt and respond favourably to physical efforts. Physical fitness is the function of the heart, blood vessels, lungs and muscles at optimum efficiency. It was earlier defined as "the capacity to carry out the days' activities without undue fatigue".

In the modern era physical fitness is defined as "the body's ability to function efficiently and effectively in work and other activities".

Nixon has defined physical fitness as "the organic capacity of the individual to perform the normal task of daily living without undue tiredness or fatigue having reserves of strength and energy available to meet satisfactorily any emergencies and demands suddenly placed upon him".

Every one performs physical activity in order to sustain life. However, the amount varies from one individual to another based on his personal lifestyle and other factors.

Physical fitness is the capacity to carry out reasonably well various forms of physical activities without being unduly tired and includes developing qualities important to the individual health and well-being.

One can easily understand the physical fitness through the following definitions:

"Physical fitness is the capacity to meet the present and potential physical challenges of life with success".  
—David R. Lamb

"Successful adaptation to the stresses of one's lifestyle".  
—Kroles

Hoskins has defined, "The human body's ability to move with the desired speed, balance, agility and strength gained through proper exercise and nutrition".

Some one has rightly said, "Physical fitness is one's richest possessions, they can not be purchased, they are to be earned through regular systematic fitness programme and positive lifestyle habits".

The most comprehensive definition defines "physical fitness as the measure of body strength, endurance and flexibility".

### Importance of Physical Fitness

Physical fitness combines good health and physical development. The object of any programme of physical fitness is to maximise an individual's health, strength, endurance and skills related to age, sex, body build and physiology.

Obtaining and maintaining physical fitness is a result of physical activity, proper diet and nutrition, and rest for physical recovery.

Physically and mentally fit individuals are stronger in enduring the conditions for existence essential for survival. Physical fitness is nothing but healthfulness, strength, soundness, vigour, power and capability to work efficiently. Fitness makes life worth living.

### Meaning of Wellness

Wellness is an interactive process of becoming aware of and practicing healthy choices to create a more successful and balanced lifestyle. The aspects of health are inter-related to physical health, mental health and social health. The broader view of health with the combination of physical, mental and social health is known as wellness. These aspects are of equal importance to their overall well-being and wellness is regarded as an important goal for which a person aims for or concentrates on and works hard to achieve wellness.

Wellness is the integration of mind, body and spirit. Optimal wellness allows us to achieve our goals and combines several dimensions of well-being into a quality way of living i.e., to live life to the fullest and to maximise personal potential in a variety of ways. Wellness involves continuum and making changes to enhance your state of wellness. When we balance the physical, intellectual, emotional, occupational, spiritual and environmental aspects of life, we achieve true wellness. Wellness is a term that has become extremely popular in recent years. Some say it is a state of mind that is experienced as tranquility; others define wellness as a luxury lifestyle concept associated with fitness and spas. Most define wellness as simply "being physically well" most of the time. All inclusive, the meaning of wellness is to stay in good condition physically, mentally and spiritually, especially through healthy choices in those areas.

The following definitions may be helpful to understand the meaning of wellness:

...a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity—**The World Health Organisation.**

Wellness is an active process of becoming aware of and making choices towards a healthy and fulfilling life.

...the quality or state of being healthy in body and mind, especially as the result of deliberate effort.

...an approach to health care that emphasizes preventing illness and prolonging life, as opposed to emphasizing treating diseases.

The condition of good physical and mental health, especially when maintained by proper diet, exercise and habits.

Wellness involves a healthy balance of mind, body and spirit which results in overall feeling of well-being.

Wellness is defined as the optimal functioning of body and creative adaptation to environment that involves the whole person. It is a state of being described as positive health. It is more than just physical fitness. It includes physical fitness but is multi-dimensional. The dimensions of wellness spell SPICE which stands for:

- S - Spiritual aspects (Values and Ethics)
- P - Physical (Fitness, Nutrition, Sleep)
- I - Intellectual (Quest for continuous learning)
- C - Community (Family, Fitness, Environment)
- E - Emotional aspects (Self-esteem, Positive outlook, Mental health)

Thus, the term wellness can also be defined as the constant and deliberate effort to remain healthy and attain highest potential for well-being which can be achieved through participation in regular physical activity and by following positive lifestyle habits. It aims to recognise those lifestyle habits that are detrimental to health of an individual and guide him to follow those guidelines that improve quality of life and achieve total well-being.

### **Importance of Wellness**

Research findings, literature on health and fitness and medical experts reveal that majority of the deaths are caused by lifestyle related diseases. People all over the world have formed habits of consuming high salt, high fat, high sugar

