

## Primary care Fitness and Wellness

Hajara Bashari FSS\*

Wing Commander, CO Nursing, NAF Hospital Abuja, Nigeria.

**\*Correspondence:**

Hajara Bashari FSS, Lecturer, Department of Nursing, Wiyata Husada School of Health Sciences, Samarinda, Indonesia, E-mail: ririn.psik.aa@gmail.com.

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**ABSTRACT**

*Health is wealth as the saying goes. It is every ones joy to age gracefully without any diagnosed or undiagnosed ailment. Many health practitioners encourage healthy living which includes a holistic approach to ones' life style. As one is aging the body and mind is changing gradually as such the need for a Primary Care Giver. A primary care giver is a physician or trained medical personnel who is at any time with the client / patient whenever the need arises. The care giver is the clients' choice who gives health education as well as counsels him/her for life. Fitness and wellness combination cannot be separated because one has to be physically fit and healthy to enable one fulfil a particular role or task, while wellness is a dynamic process of change and growth. Generally, fitness and wellness is preventing illness by living a healthy life through physical activities and creating a balance life style.*

**Keywords**

Primary care, Fitness, Wellness, Healthcare.

**Introduction**

Primary care fitness and wellness is a topic that really should be a common feature of discussion as part of global healthcare. This is because as one grows older, one is faced with some health-related challenges by taking a look back to the younger years, to adulthood and then old age. As one is growing the body and mind is changing that is when one's primary care provider will be a partner for life through health education and counselling.

Ordinarily, primary care fitness and wellness appears to be an amalgam of three principles – primary care, fitness and wellness which can assume distinct identities. However, when combined it connotes, a state of health care that rely on mental, physical exercises with a modicum of assistance from trained medical professionals.

**Definition of Primary Care**

Primary care is the day to day health care given by a health / primary care provider being the first contact for the continuous care of any patient / client within the system. The care provider also coordinates further care as the need arises for other specialists and specialized clinics. The care is based on practical, is scientifically sound and socially acceptable and easily accessible to individuals and their families.

**Definition of Fitness**

Fitness is the condition of being physically fit and healthy or has the quality of being suitable to fulfil a particular role or task. Fitness can also be the state of health and wellbeing and the ability to perform aspects of one's daily activities, sports and occupation without any hindrance.

The components of fitness comprises of the following

- Cardio respiratory endurance
- Muscular endurance
- Muscular strength,
- Muscular power,
- Flexibility,
- Balance,
- Speed,
- Body composition

**Definition of Wellness**

Wellness is a dynamic process of change and growth. Wellness can also be described as a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

Essentially, fitness and wellness refers to utilizing primary care services that can make such a difference in a person's day to day life however, there are many parts of the world where primary care delivery is largely absent from the healthcare systems.

Primary care is that care provided by physicians/ medical team specifically trained for and skilled in comprehensive first contact and continuous care for persons with any undiagnosed signs, symptoms, or health concern. This is not limited by problem origin eg biological, behavioural, or social, organ system and diagnosis.

### Benefits of Fitness and Wellness

Benefits of Primary care includes

- Health promotion
- Disease prevention
- Health maintenance
- Counselling
- Patient education
- Diagnosis and treatment of acute and chronic illnesses in a variety of health care settings (e.g., office, inpatient, critical care, long-term care, home care, day care, etc.).

Primary care is performed and managed by a personal physician often collaborating with other health professionals and utilizing consultation or referral as appropriate. Primary care provides patient advocacy in the health care system to accomplish cost-effective care by coordination of health care services.

Primary care promotes effective communication with patients and encourages the role of the patient as a partner in health care. With primary care delivery, the client truly develops a close relationship with the primary care provider who, in most cases, will be a general practitioner, family physician, nurse practitioner, or paediatric doctor or nurse.

Usually, a primary care provider can even be a registered nurse, clinical officer or pharmacist, though this will likely be found in countries where General Practitioners are in short supply. Since the concept of Primary Health care was first published in 1978, various countries have attained different levels of progress in implementing the strategy of a grass-root management approach to providing health care services to communities and it has paid off in attaining various strategic development initiatives like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Primary care services compared to the type of care that is essential is acute care which is simply healthcare that addresses an existing ailment or condition. This means having a pressing injury or illness that needs to be addressed quickly and requires a purely reactive method of dispensing healthcare. Healthcare systems focusing on acute care means that medical staff will likely only interact with patients only after something is already wrong. On the other hand, primary care delivery seeks to address a patient's health even when they do not have any immediate treatment needs. By repeatedly seeing the same doctor over a long period of time, a primary care provider can better chart a patient's health history, provides a lifestyle, nutrition, and chronic disease management strategies designed to optimize health outcomes in the long term. Furthermore, all medical records can be shared with the primary care provider so that they are fully versed in a patient's current

medical standing at any point in time.

Another benefit of primary care delivery is that the patient gets to become more comfortable with their primary care provider over time. Rather than utilizing a different medical professional each time they seek treatment, those that have primary care providers get to build trust over time with their doctors. Thus, making them more comfortable to share intimate details that can be awkward to discuss with a total stranger even if they are doctors.

Anyone who has used the healthcare system, to some extent, should be familiar with the lack of primary care services in some of the cities. Sometimes, people avail themselves to doctor's office or small clinics when they feel under the weather and there may not be any consistency in which office they choose. In most cases, patients simply use a doctor's office closer to them or within their residential areas. This may be effective for obtaining a doctor's note and a prescription but it certainly will not foster an ongoing preventive care strategy.

For many people, going straight to the hospital may be the first option when it comes to seeking medical treatment, if for no other reason than it being the cheapest option. This is because public hospitals are highly subsidized despite the long wait times.

It has been proven that health systems that focus on primary care delivery, as opposed to specialist care, produce better health outcomes for patients by improving access to care, upgrading continuity between patients and doctors, and reducing preventable mortality. Primary care approach can mean cost reductions in the long run, as preventive care ends up reducing the workload that hospitals take on over the long term due to the client/patient improved health.

Preventive care is a big part of primary care services by taking a holistic approach to health and managing lifestyles, emotional and psychological health, nutrition, environmental factors, and hereditary risk factors. Doctors and patients can prevent serious illnesses before they even start. Millions of people around the world die of preventable diseases every year. The proliferation of preventive care that primary care physicians provide could theoretically help avoid or reduce these deaths. Speaking of heredity risk factors, sometimes a disease is going to develop in a patient no matter what they do to try to prevent it. In these cases, primary care delivery can help patients focus on chronic disease management, as opposed to crisis management, which is what occurs when a chronic disease becomes a (possibly life threatening) emergency.

Primary care fitness and wellness combined suggests a cost-effective mechanism for preventing illness which includes exercises, good diet/ nutrition and knowledge about potential health issues. Fitness does not only refer to being physically fit, but also refers to a person's mental state as well. If a person is physically fit, but mentally unwell or troubled, he or she will not be able to function optimally. Mental fitness can only be achieved if

ones' body is functioning well. Physical activities help relaxes the mind and eliminate stress by exercising regularly and eating right.

Most people have one or more health issues that are not normal and may feel frustrated to give up on finding a solution thus getting a care provider becomes very necessary. This is aimed at improving health, fitness, and quality of life through daily physical activity and creating life balance which is an important part of living a healthy lifestyle. These routine exercises improve a lot of things in the human body such as the brain performance, sharpens the memory, burns out the calories as well as helping in the prevention of cardiovascular diseases by improving the efficiency of the cardiovascular system.

For those experiencing stress, exercises comes in handy in better management of precarious conditions – human and psycho-social or economic in nature that lead to stress, tension at work, family life and economic circumstances. People who are physically fit are also healthier, able to maintain their most optimum weight, and are also not prone to cardiac or other health problems. In order to maintain a relaxed state of mind, a person should be physically active. A person who is fit both physically and mentally is strong enough to face the ups and downs of life and is not affected by drastic changes if they take place.

Becoming physically fit requires a change in life style as well by incorporating regular exercise routine in ones' life, eating healthier and getting adequate rest. It is very important to avoid junk foods, fizzy drinks, bad habits like drinking alcohol and smoking. Furthermore, eliminating these foods/habits from ones' life no matter how temporarily, will allow the body to detox and become stronger. It is necessary to spend more time outdoors in the sun, fresh air and taking part in more healthy activities like fishing, bicycling, swimming, hiking, playing football and dancing can give a positive change in the aging body.

By becoming more active it can increase body's fitness levels and

avoid health problems like diabetes and high blood pressure from developing.

- Furthermore, exercise is also good for the joints and it makes the body even stronger.
- This delays the aging process and helps in harmonious growth and development.
- It helps in the quick recovery of the body after illness or injury and faster recovery of fatigue, maintains good shape, size, and control weight.
- Improving the motor ability that is the strength, flexibility, endurance, and coordination of the body system.

## Conclusion

Primary care fitness and wellness is very important to enable prevention of health-related challenges as one is growing and also to keep up with the day to day activities. The health care provider becomes an important part of the individual by ensuring the client/patient is counselled and educated on how to prevent illness. Fitness and wellness plays an important role in the lives of people by exercising regularly, maintaining a good diet/ nutrition and creating a balance life style. It is important for one to be happy and by remaining healthy as health is wealth.

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