

Middle Adulthood

Chap. 12

- Physical Characteristics.
 - Height & weight.
 - Gradually lose 1-4 inches.
 - Contour changes due to an increases in fat deposits on the trunk.
- Muscle & Bone Development
 - Muscle strength decreases, connective tissue loses elasticity resulting in a flabby, less firm appearance in the skin.
 - Bones start to demineralize and lose mass resulting in porous brittle bones

Middle Adulthood

- Dentition:
 - Wisdom teeth grow in or become impacted, surgery may be needed to relieve problems or pain.
 - Regular visits to the dentist and good oral hygiene prevent tooth decay.
- Development of other body systems:
 - All muscles show a decreased capacity to perform work.
 - Muscles of the heart & lungs lose elasticity resulting in a slight increase of blood pressure & decrease in air exchange efficiency.
 - Skin elasticity decreases resulting in wrinkles.
 - Melanin production decreases resulting in

Psychosocial Development

- Erikson – primary task is generativity.
 - Desire & ability to serve the larger community.
 - Positive influence on their own children.
 - Middle-aged adults are more self-confident about their skills they have acquired.
 - Expand their nurturing beyond immediate family.
 - Concern for community, making improvements.
 - Volunteer in community.
 - Failure to achieve generativity results in stagnation and self-absorption may led to depression.

Psychosocial Development cont'd

- Establishing & Adjusting to New Family Roles
 - Roles change from child-centered activities to couple-centered activities.
 - Reacquaint with each other and new roles.
 - Fewer divorces take place among middle age couples.
 - Empty-nest, more stressful for individuals whose identity revolves around parenting. Less common now with women with dual roles in home & workplace.
 - Postponing marriage & child bearing until this stage cuts down on # of children.

Psychosocial Development cont'd

- Parenting at this stage may cause added stress because the parents energy levels may be lower.
- For some, young children may bring youthfulness & energy back into their life.
- Grandparents are no longer associated w/advanced age & infirmity. Today's grandparents are youthful in their outlook & appearance.
- Middle-aged adults may have to adjust to role of parenting their parents.
- Caring for elderly parents can cause added stress – more often the daughter assumes this role. Caregivers need t arrange for outside support.

Sleep & Rest

- Stress, poor health or lack of exercise may contribute to sleep problems.
- They may tire more easily & need rest periods following strenuous exercises.

Exercise 4 Leisure

- Leisure activities may center around the home, travel, gardening, art and music for example.
- Filling leisure time with pleasurable activities is important for preparing or retirement.

Safety

- Identifying safety issues in the work place help to decrease job-related injuries & accidents.
- OSHA (occupational safety & health act) of 1970 was passed to increase health & safety of all working men & women.

Health Promotion

- Weight control, health lifestyles & avoidance of accident helps to promote wellness.
- Middle-aged adult must have yearly physical examination.
- Eye-screening tests can detect glaucoma & cataracts.
- Glaucoma – build up of fluid in chambers of the eye.
- Cataracts – cloudy formation on the lens of the eye.
- Colon cancer more frequent in middle adulthood, therefore it is suggested both men and women have periodic proctoscopic examinations after age of 50.

Health Promotion cont'd

- Diet high in fiber & low in fat is recommended.
- Fibrocystic breast disease – benign condition characterized by large uncomfortable cysts in the breasts.
- Women over 50 should have annual mammograms & pap screenings.
- Men over 50 frequently develop benign prostatic hypertrophy (BPH). Early signs are difficulty voiding, diminished urine stream, dribbling, and frequent need to urinate.

Health Promotion cont'd

- A yearly rectal exam after age 40 can detect an increase in size of the gland.
- Men leading chronic conditions: heart disease, back problems, visual impairments, & asthma.
- Women leading chronic conditions: arthritis, hypertension without heart involvement & depression.

Cognitive Development

- Mental ability and memory remain at peak performance.
- Display of unique potential to integrate objective and rational modes of thinking.
- More time to learn and complete tasks but are accomplished with more accuracy.
- Motivation to learn is greater and enhanced by life experiences.

Moral Development

- Introspection & spirituality becomes more important.
- Improving welfare of others enhances their own moral growth.

Nutrition

- Similar dieting needs to those in 20 and 30's.
- Must decrease caloric intake and increase physical activity to compensate weight redistribution.
- Advocate calcium intake needed.

Psychosocial Development

- At this age most people are at their peak earning capabilities and job status's.
- Economic security maybe strained when middle-aged parents are paying or helping to pay for their children's education.
- There is also a financial strain for middle-aged adults who need to help their own parents financially.

Psychosocial Development cont'd

- The development of true intimacy's is critical to the survival of close relationships.
- Intimacy promotes trust and mutual caring.
- Middle-ages adults need to accept the visual age-related change of the this stage without losing self-esteem.
- Many resort to surgery, cosmetics, dieting & exercise to preserve youthful appearance.

Psychosocial Development cont'd

- A balance of mental & physical health & positive social interactions will allow the individual to maintain a healthy sexuality as well as general positive self-esteem.
- Adults hope to reach their peak career goals by middle-age.
- This might result in the decision to change careers or go back to school.
- Job loss, retaining & relocation all have an impact on today's middle-aged workers.