Environmental health



The word 'health' brings many things to mind. Maintaining good health ……. eating right, exercising, vaccinations against …….., and visiting your doctor ……. Your health …….. how well your body is functioning and your …… of life.

We can also appreciate health in a broader sense. **Environmental health** involves understanding the ……. of environmental and human-made …… and protecting human health and …….. systems against these hazards. This includes studying the impacts of human-made …… on wildlife or human health, as well as how the environment influences the ……. of diseases.

Types of Environmental Hazards

We face countless environmental …… every day. To better understand them, we can think of them as falling into four …….. : physical, chemical, biological, and cultural.

…….. hazards are physical processes that occur naturally in the …… . These include natural disaster events such as ……, tornadoes, volcanoes, blizzards, landslides, and …… . Not all physical hazards are discrete events - some are ongoing, like ultraviolet ……. UV radiation is considered a hazard because it …….. DNA and can cause human health …….. like skin cancer and cataracts.

…….. hazards can be …… natural and human-made chemicals in the …… . Human-made chemical hazards include many of the synthetic chemicals we produce, like disinfectants, ……. and plastics. Some chemical hazards occur naturally in the environment, like the heavy metals lead and mercury. Some …….. even produce natural chemicals that are an environmental hazard, such as the compounds in peanuts and dairy that cause allergic reactions in humans.

…….. hazards come from ecological …… between organisms. Viruses, bacterial infections, malaria, and …… are all examples of biological hazards. When these pathogens and diseases are transferred between organisms, it's called an **…… disease**. We suffer from these diseases and pathogens because we're being parasitized by another ……, which, while hazardous, is also a natural …… .

…… hazards, also known as **social hazards**, result from your location, socioeconomic status, occupation, and behavioral choices. For ……., smoking cigarettes is hazardous to your health, and this is a behavioral …….. . If you live in a neighborhood with lots of ……., this is a hazard based on your …… . Similarly, your ……, exercise habits, and primary mode of …… all …….. your health and the health of the environment around you.

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