

# Changes in Biological, Psychosocial and Sociological Aspects in Aging



# Intended Learning Outcomes

**At the end of the lecture students should be able to define and explain:**

- Biological and psychological changes in elderly
- Physical and social changes in elderly
- Physical, social, psychological and spiritual wellbeing of elderly
- Healthy ageing

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# Content

- Biological and psychological changes in elderly
- Physical and social changes in elderly
- Physical, social, psychological and spiritual wellbeing of elderly
- Healthy ageing

# Ageing

- The process of growing old
- Biological process
- Has its own dynamics
- Beyond human control
- There is no general agreement on the age at which a person becomes old
- “elderly” has been defined as a chronological age of 65 years old or older:
  - 65 - 74 : “early elderly”
  - Over 75 years : “late elderly”

# Theories on Ageing Process

## Biological theories

- Wear-and-tear
- Cellular
- Genetic mutation
- Autoimmune

## Psychosocial theories

- Activity theory
- The disengagement theory
- The continuity theory

# Biological Changes in Aging

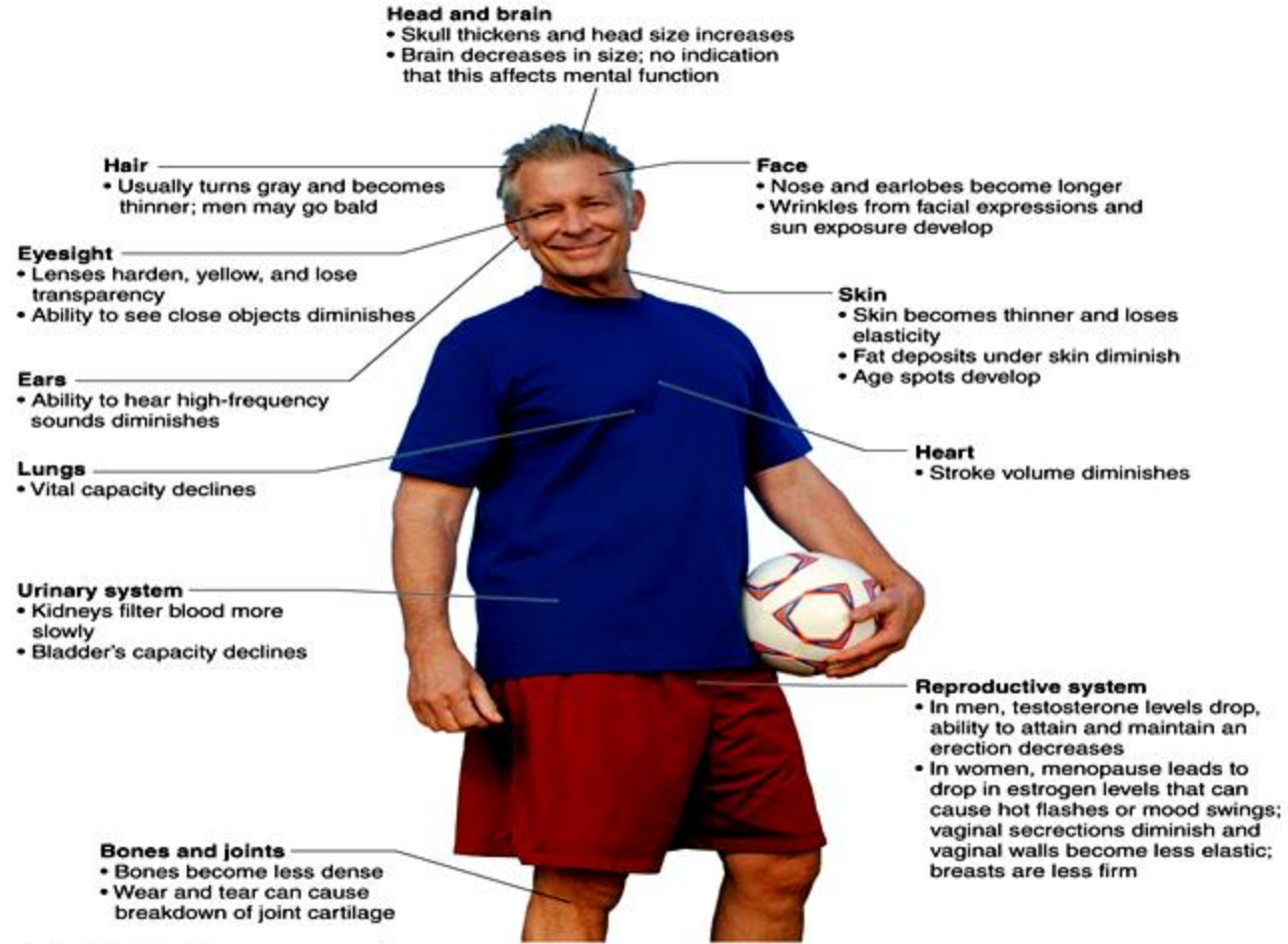
- Decreased cellular function
- Slower metabolism
- Weakened immune system
- Loss of bone density and muscle mass
- Changes in skin elasticity and appearance
- Decline in sensory functions (vision, hearing, taste)

# Changes in Normal Aging

- Physical changes
- Psychological changes
- Social changes

# Physical Changes

- Skin
- Bones and joints
- Head and brain
- Heart and lungs
- Eyesight
- Hearing
- Sexual changes
- Urinary tract
- Body comfort



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# Physical Changes

- Physical changes seen in brain;
  - Weight of the brain decreases
  - Quantity of the nerve processes declines
  - Minor & selective loss of brain cells
  - Senile plaques
  - Ischemic lesions

# Psychological Changes

- Decline in intellectual functions
- Deterioration of short-term memory
- Mental slowness
- Alterations in personality
- Cautiousness
- Rigidity

# Social Changes

- Lower incomes
- Poor accommodations
- Social isolation
- Use of medical services

# Health

- “A state of complete physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity”
- Wellbeing in old age
  - Physical
  - Psychological
  - Social
  - Spiritual

# Physical Well Being

- Physical illness
- Energy
- Fitness
- Active life

# Psychological Well Being

- Happiness
- Ability to make decisions
- Ability to solve problems
- Self esteem
- Independence
- Responsibility
- Ability to enjoy life

# Social Well Being

- Love
- Social company
- Ability to adjust to different social roles
- Peace

# Spiritual Well Being

- Opportunity to engage in religious activities

# Common Mental Disorders in Old Age

- Depression
- Dementia
- Delusional disorder
- Delirium

# Healthy Aging

- WHO defines *Healthy Ageing* “as the process of developing and maintaining the **functional ability** that enables **wellbeing** in older age” (WHO, 2020)

# Healthy Aging

- **Functional ability** is about having the capabilities that enable all people to be and do what they have reason to value. This includes a person's ability to:
  - meet their basic needs to learn, grow and make decisions
  - to be mobile
  - to build and maintain relationships
  - to contribute to society

(WHO, 2020)

# Functional Ability

- **Intrinsic capacity**

- Comprises all the mental and physical capacities that a person can draw on and includes their ability to walk, think, see, hear and remember.
- The level of intrinsic capacity is influenced by a number of factors such as the presence of diseases, injuries and age-related changes.

- **Environments**

- Include the home, community and broader society, and all the factors within them such as the built environment, people and their relationships, attitudes and values, health and social policies, the systems that support them and the services that they implement.
- Being able to live in environments that support and maintain the intrinsic capacity and functional ability is key to Healthy Ageing

(WHO, 2020)

# Geropsychology

- A specialty in professional **psychology** that applies the knowledge and methods of **psychology** to understanding and helping older persons and their families to maintain well-being, overcome problems and achieve maximum potential during later life.
- Geropsychologists

# References

- Johnson, M.L., 2005. *The Cambridge Handbook of Age and Ageing*. Cambridge University Press.
- WHO | What is Healthy Ageing? [WWW Document], 2020. WHO. URL <http://www.who.int/ageing/healthy-ageing/en/> (accessed 4.5.20).

# Thank You !

