

# Medical Sociology

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DR. M. SIVA DURGAPRASAD NAYAK, MD, PHD

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

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1. Define social sciences
2. List branches relevant to medicine
3. Explain medical sociology
4. Describe illness behavior
5. Doctor patient relationship
6. Understand social determinants
7. Apply concepts in patient care

# Introduction

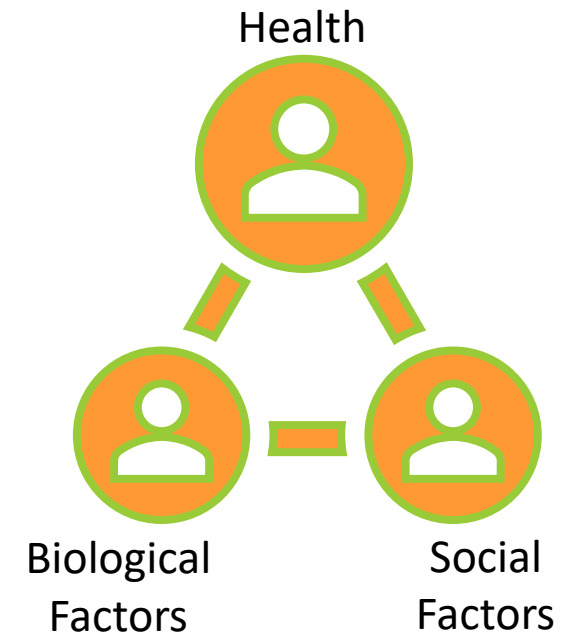
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- *“Why do two patients with the same disease have different outcomes?”*

# Introduction

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- Health is influenced by both biological and social factors.
- Social environment plays a major role in disease occurrence.
- Human behavior can alter disease outcomes significantly.
- Cultural practices affect health-related decisions.
- Access to healthcare depends on societal conditions.
- Therefore, social sciences are essential in medicine.



# Definition of Social Sciences

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**“Social sciences are a group of academic disciplines that study human behavior, social relationships, and the functioning of society.”**

- They examine how individuals interact with each other and within groups.
- They analyze social structures such as family, community, and institutions.
- They help understand patterns of behavior, culture, and social norms.
- They explore how social factors influence health, disease, and healthcare.

# Branches of Social Sciences relevant to medicine

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Sociology



Psychology



Anthropology



Economics



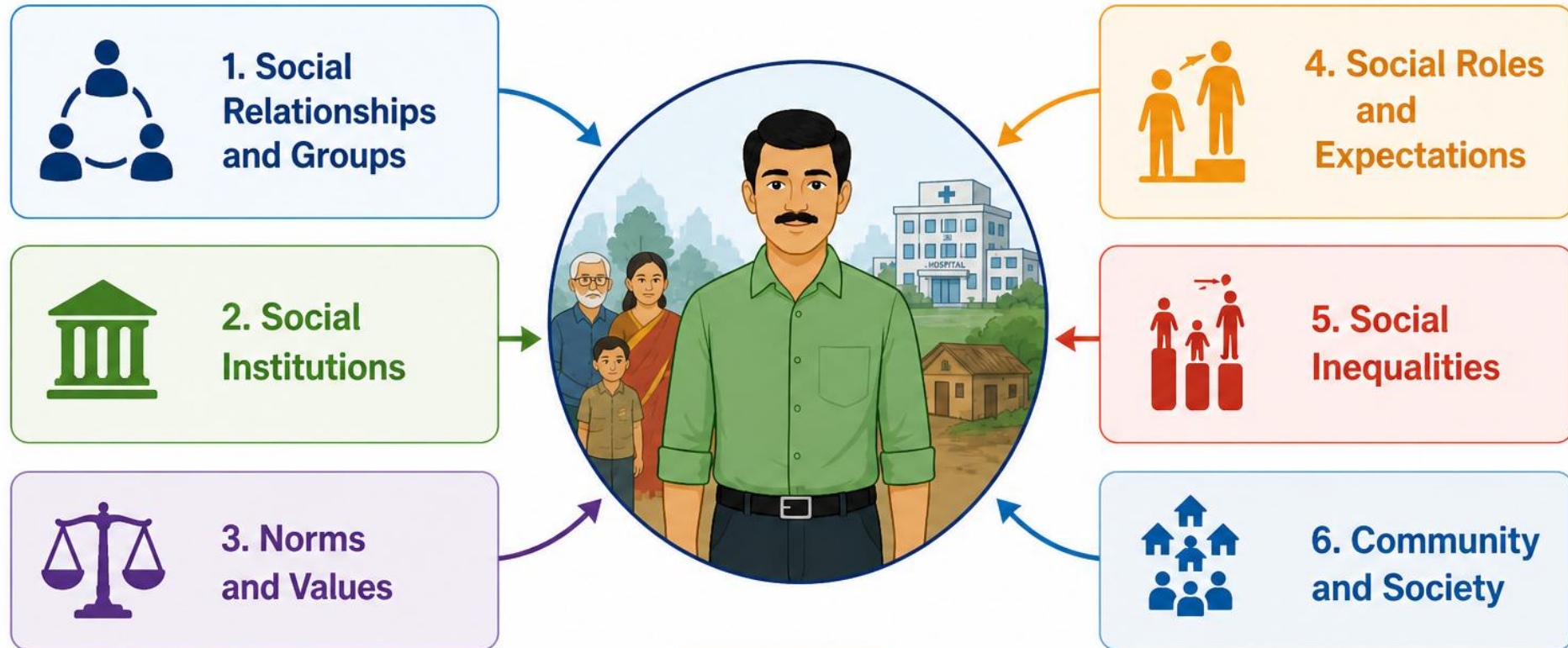
Political  
Science



Demography

# How Sociology Influences a Person's Health

The sociology studies how individuals interact within society. Through social relationships, norms, roles, institutions and inequalities, it shapes behavior, access to resources and health outcomes.



## Examples



Supportive family  
→ better recovery



Poverty →  
malnutrition,  
poor housing, illness



Social stigma →  
delay in seeking  
care (e.g., TB, HIV)



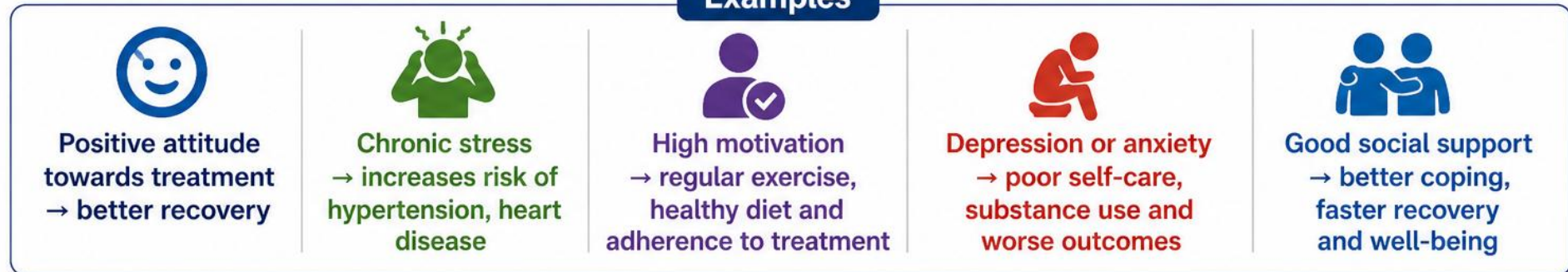
Strong community  
programs → better  
immunization,  
sanitation and  
health outcomes

# How Psychology Influences a Person's Health

Psychology studies how individuals think, feel and behave. Through emotions, attitudes, motivation and mental processes, it influences health behaviors, coping and overall well-being.



## Examples



# How Anthropology Influences a Person's Health

Anthropology studies human culture, beliefs, traditions and practices. Through culture and lifestyle, it shapes health perceptions, behaviors and health outcomes.



## Examples



Believe in supernatural causes of illness → delay in seeking medical care



Use of traditional healers or herbal remedies



Cultural food habits affect nutrition and health



Cultural practices may influence childbirth and postnatal care



Traditional beliefs may affect immunization uptake

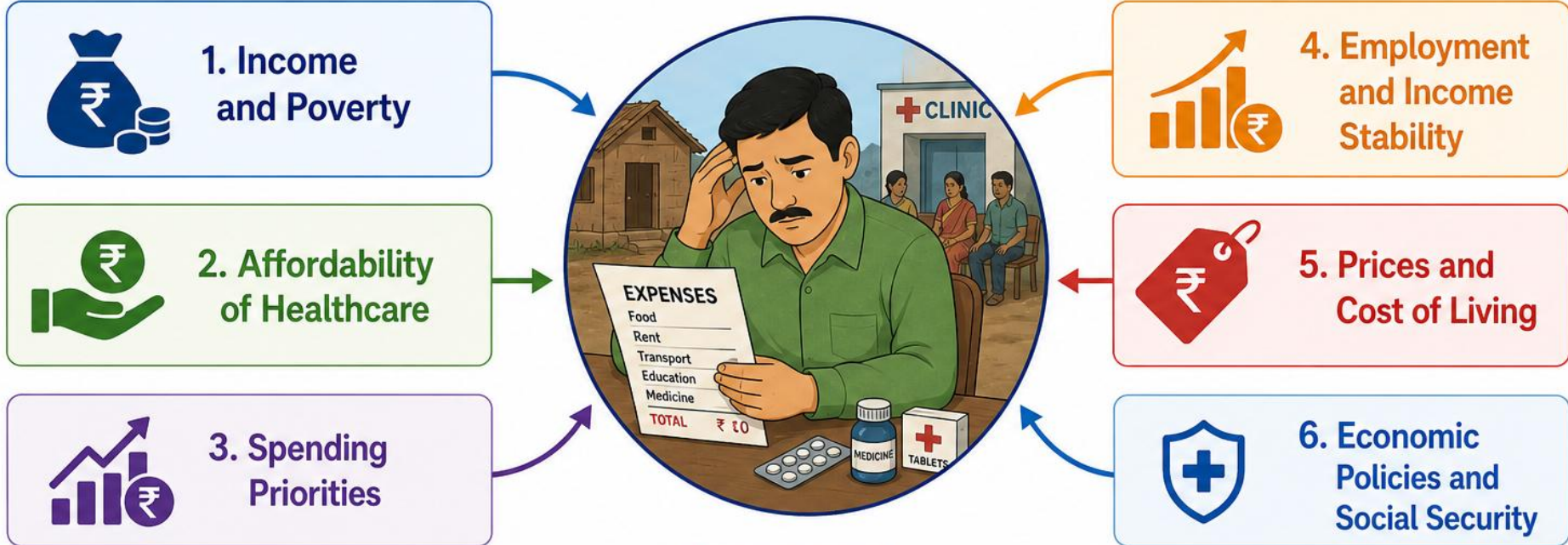


Migration and acculturation change lifestyle and disease risk

# How Economics Influences a Person's Health

Economics studies how individuals and societies use resources and money.

Through income, spending, prices and economic conditions, it affects access to healthcare and health outcomes.

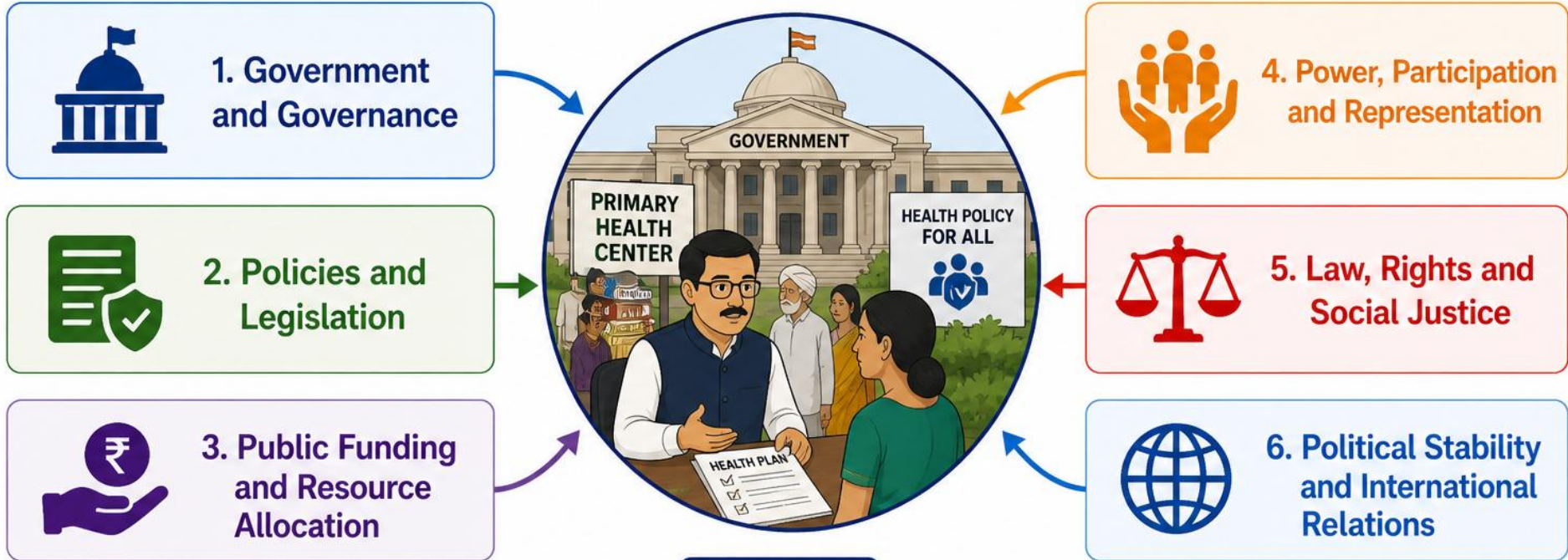


## Examples

<p>Low income → cannot afford nutritious food, safe housing and healthcare</p>	<p>High cost of medicines and treatments → delayed or incomplete care</p>	<p>Lack of health insurance → high out-of-pocket expenses</p>	<p>Unemployment or job insecurity → stress, poor mental health and illness</p>	<p>Inflation and high cost of living → reduced ability to afford care</p>	<p>Good economic policies and financial protection → better access to care and health outcomes</p>
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# How Political Science Influences a Person's Health

Political Science studies government, policies, laws and power structures. Through political systems and governance, it shapes health policies, services and equity in health.



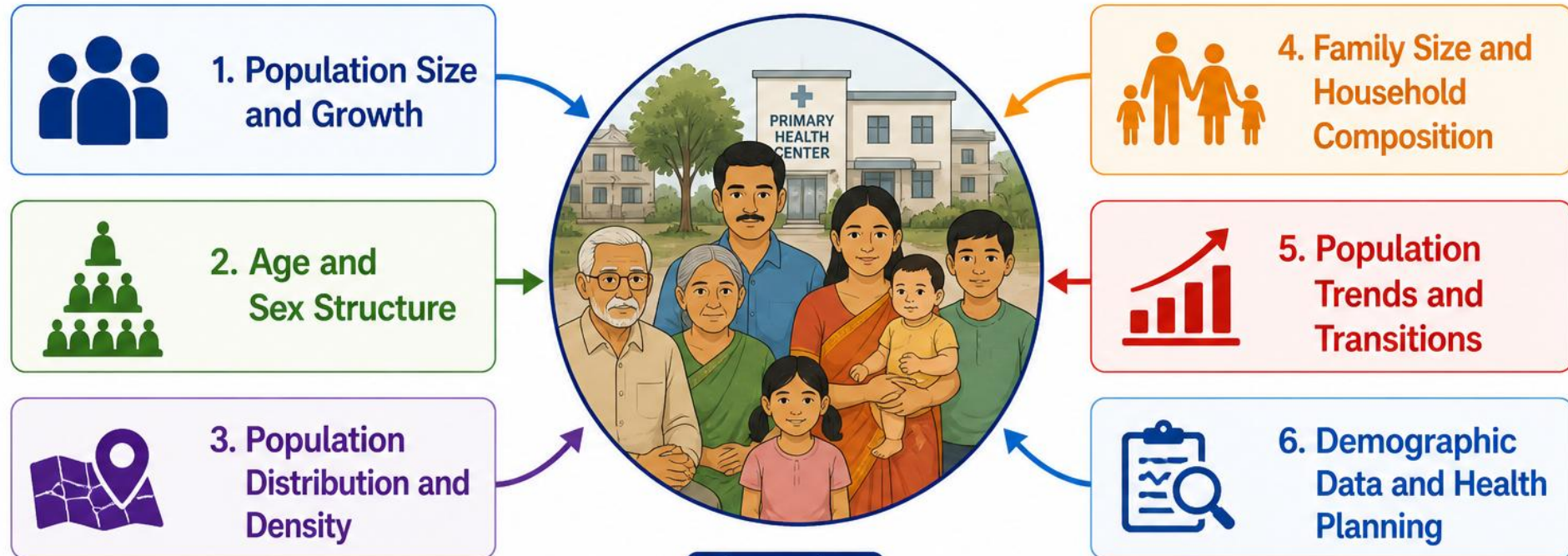
## Examples

 <p><b>Strong government systems</b> → efficient health services and better outcomes</p>	 <p><b>Health policies</b> (e.g., NHP, Ayushman Bharat) → improved access to care</p>	 <p><b>Adequate health budget</b> → more hospitals, staff, medicines and preventive services</p>	 <p><b>Community participation in decision-making</b> → programs meet real health needs</p>	 <p><b>Enforcement of rights</b> (e.g., right to health) → reduced inequality in healthcare</p>	 <p><b>Political stability and strong global cooperation</b> → better disease control and emergency response</p>
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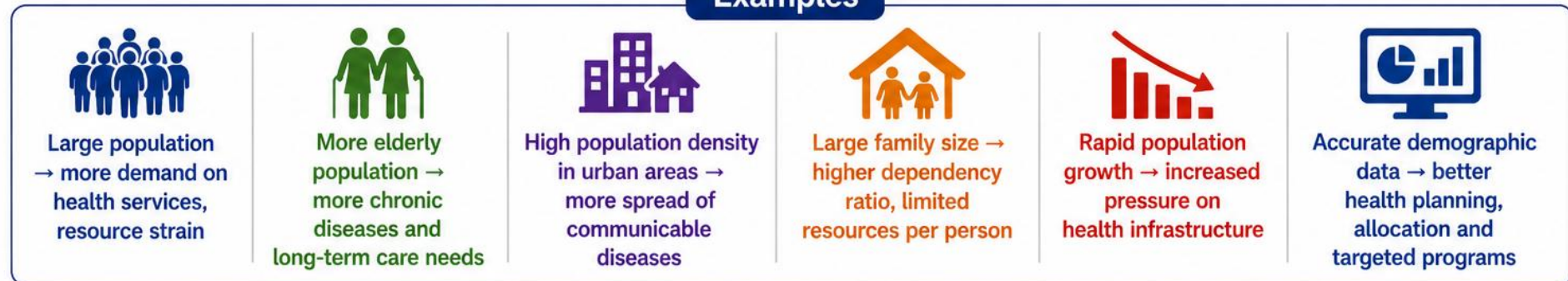
# How Demography Influences a Person's Health

Demography studies the statistical characteristics of populations.

Through population size, structure, distribution and trends, it affects health needs, services and outcomes.



## Examples



# Identify the different social sciences related

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Mr. ABC is a 52-year-old daily wage worker living in an overcrowded urban slum with diabetes. He does not take medicines regularly and sometimes visits a traditional healer due to his beliefs. He experiences financial stress and consumes alcohol, which affects his treatment adherence. Government hospital services are available nearby, but he rarely utilizes them. He lives in a large family with irregular income and limited healthcare resources.

**--Identify how different social science branches influence his health condition.**

# Different social sciences related to health

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## **Sociology:**

His overcrowded housing and family environment influence his health behavior.

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## **Psychology:**

His stress and alcohol use reduce his motivation for regular treatment.

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## **Anthropology:**

His belief in fate and preference for traditional healer.

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## **Economics:**

His low and irregular income demonstrates economic barriers to continuous care.

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## **Politics:**

Underutilization of available government services reflects gaps related to political and health systems.

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## **Demography:**

His age, large family size, and slum population density represent demographic influences on health.

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# Social sciences influence on community health

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## **Sociology:**

Social structure, urbanization, and population density influence disease spread and health inequalities at community level.

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## **Psychology:**

Population behaviors like stress, addiction, and health attitudes affect prevalence of lifestyle diseases and treatment compliance.

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## **Anthropology:**

Cultural beliefs and practices influence acceptance of immunization, institutional delivery, and public health programs.

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## **Economics:**

National income, poverty levels, and resource allocation determine access to healthcare services and overall health outcomes.

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## **Politics:**

Government policies, health programs, and governance affect availability, accessibility, and quality of healthcare services.

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## **Demography:**

Population size, age distribution, and migration patterns influence disease burden and planning of health services.

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# Medical Sociology

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**“Medical sociology is a branch of sociology that studies health, illness, and healthcare systems”**

- It examines how social factors influence the occurrence and distribution of diseases.
- It helps understand illness behavior and health-seeking behavior in individuals.
- It explains the role of doctor–patient relationship in treatment outcomes.

# Key Concepts in Medical Sociology

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Health Seeking  
Behaviour

Doctor patient  
relationship

Social  
determinants of  
Health

# Health-Seeking Behavior

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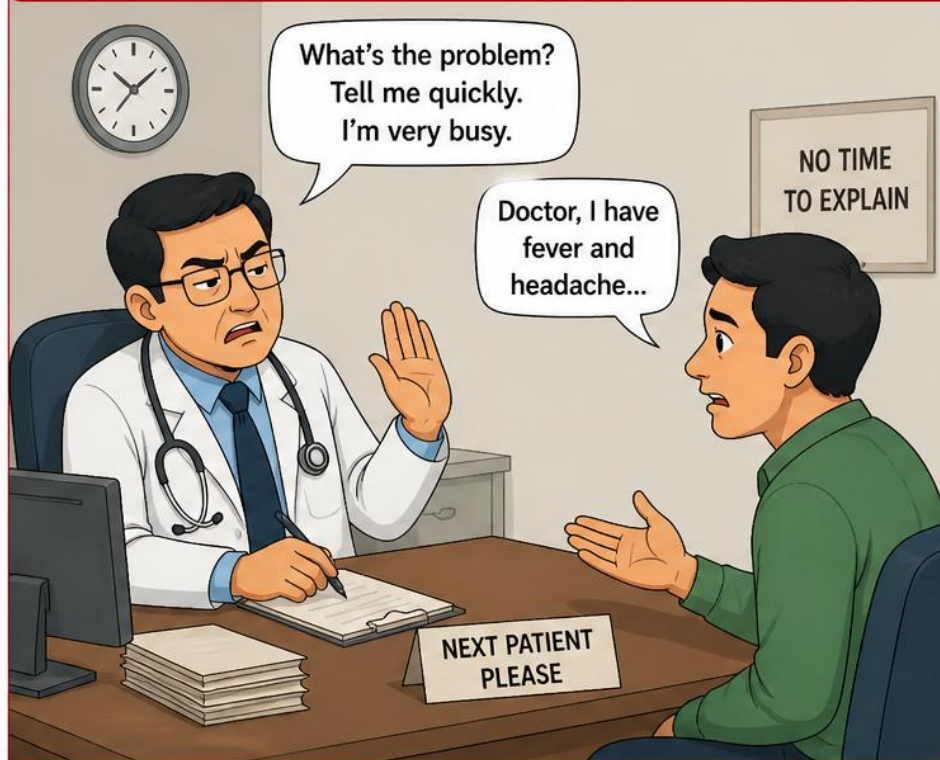
- **Illness behavior** refers to how a person perceives symptoms and decides whether they are sick.
- For example, ignoring fever or taking home remedies reflects illness behavior.
- **Health-seeking behavior** refers to actions taken to obtain care after recognizing illness.
- For example, Visiting a doctor, hospital, or traditional healer reflects health-seeking behavior.

# Doctor Patient Relationship

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## 1. BAD DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP



- ✗ Does not listen to the patient
- ✗ Shows impatience and disrespect
- ✗ Does not explain or involve patient
- ✗ Ignores patient's concerns
- ✗ Creates fear and dissatisfaction
- ✗ Leads to poor compliance and outcome

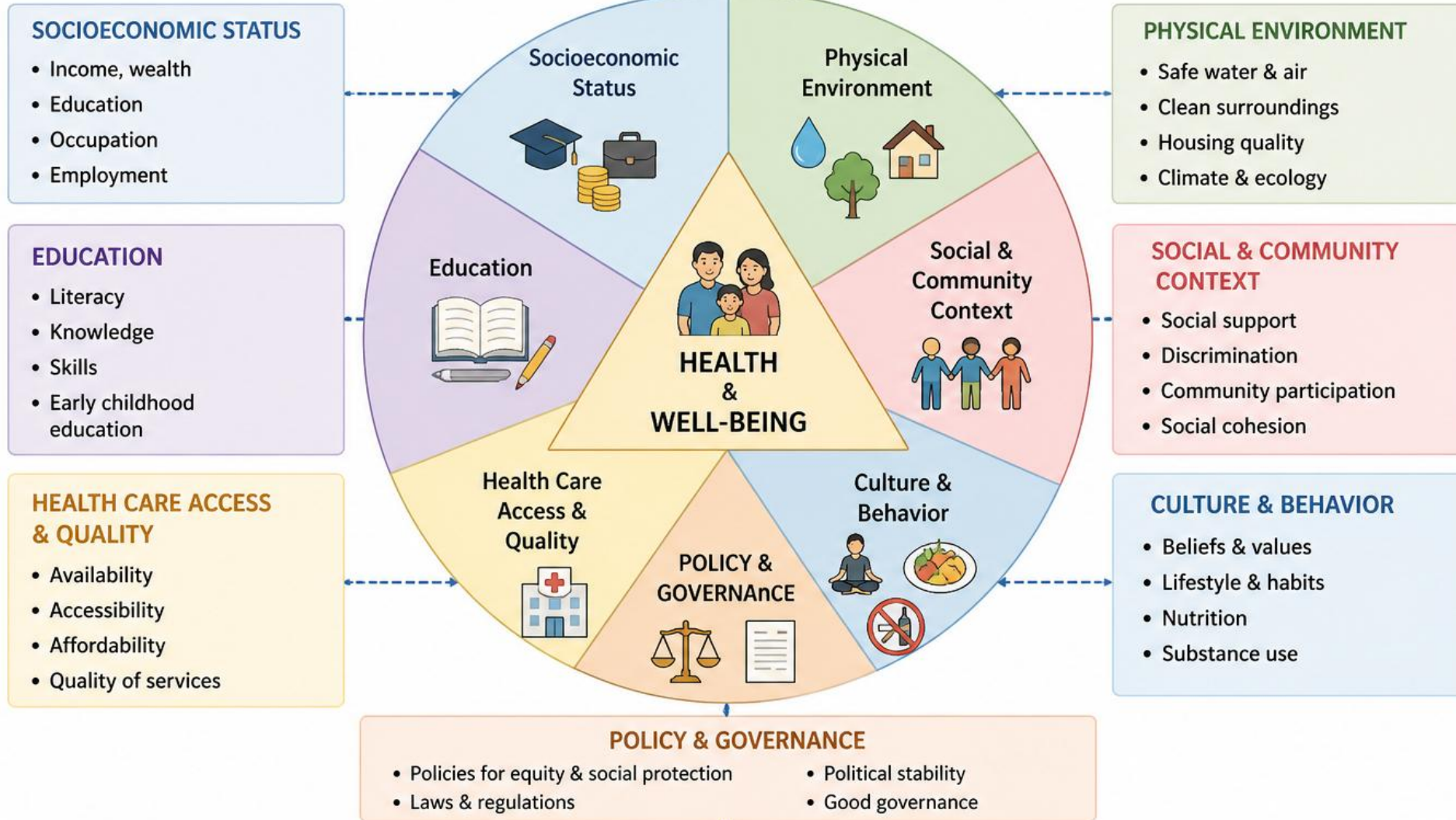
## 2. GOOD DOCTOR-PATIENT RELATIONSHIP



- ✓ Listens actively and shows empathy
- ✓ Respects patient and builds trust
- ✓ Explains condition and treatment clearly
- ✓ Involves patient in decisions
- ✓ Encourages questions and provides support
- ✓ Leads to better satisfaction and recovery

# SOCIAL DETERMINANTS INFLUENCE HEALTH

Health of individuals and communities is determined by the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age



# Social factors Protecting Health

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Aspect	Protect Health
Education	High education, awareness
Economic Status	Employment, stable income
Family & Social Support	Supportive family, social support
Family Stability	Stable family
Living Conditions	Clean water, sanitation, housing
Healthcare Access	Affordable care, early treatment
Environment	Safe environment, low pollution
Social Norms	Healthy habits, positive norms
Community	Community support, participation

# Social factors Damaging Health

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Aspect	Damage Health
Education	Low education, poor awareness
Economic Status	Poverty, unemployment
Family & Social Support	Isolation, loneliness
Family Stability	Family conflict
Living Conditions	Overcrowding, poor sanitation
Healthcare Access	Poor access, delayed care
Environment	Pollution, unsafe environment
Social Norms	Smoking, alcohol, risky behavior
Community	Lack of support

# Applying Social Science Concepts in Patient Care

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- ❖ Doctors should assess social background such as income, education, and family support.
- ❖ should understand patient beliefs and cultural practices affecting treatment.
- ❖ should identify illness behavior and reasons for delay in seeking care.
- ❖ should consider psychological factors like stress, fear, and motivation.
- ❖ should communicate effectively and build trust with patients.
- ❖ should provide patient-centered care based on individual needs.

# MCQs

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A 45-year-old man ignores his persistent cough for 2 months and uses home remedies before visiting a doctor.

This behavior is best described as:

- A. Health-seeking behavior
- B. Illness behavior
- C. Preventive behavior
- D. Risk behavior

# MCQs

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A patient follows treatment strictly because the doctor explained clearly and showed empathy.

Which factor improved compliance?

- A. Hospital infrastructure
- B. Doctor–patient relationship
- C. Laboratory diagnosis
- D. Availability of drugs

# MCQs

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A family discourages hospital delivery and prefers home delivery due to traditional beliefs.

This reflects influence of:

- A. Economics
- B. Anthropology
- C. Political science
- D. Demography

# Thank You...

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