

Chapter 28

Community and Environmental Health

1. Community and Public Health
2. Air Quality and Health
3. Protecting Land and Water

#OnedayIwokeup #Doppitup

Lesson 1 — Community and Public Health

The **health care system** includes all the medical care available to a nation's people, the way they receive care, and the way they pay for it. Your **primary care physician** provides physical checkups and general care. **Specialists** focus on particular kinds of patients or conditions — allergists, dermatologists, gynecologists, pediatricians.

Types of Health Care Facilities

■ Hospitals	Provide both outpatient and inpatient care; emergency rooms for urgent injuries or illnesses
■ Urgent Care Centers	Open evenings and weekends; no appointment needed; for non-life-threatening problems
■ Birthing Centers	Deliver babies in homelike settings staffed by nurse-midwives
■ Assisted-Living Facilities	Care for people needing some help with daily activities
■ Drug Treatment Centers	Help people recover from drug and alcohol abuse

■■ Hospices	Care for terminally ill patients
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Health Insurance — Your Rights

Health insurance includes private and government programs that pay for part or all of a person's medical costs. **Public health** — a community's effort to protect the health of all its people — is promoted by government agencies, community organizations, and individuals acting together.

Lesson 2 — Air Quality and Health

Both outdoor and indoor air quality can significantly affect your health. **Air pollution** contains harmful substances including carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide, lead, and particulate matter.

■■ Smog	Ground-level ozone formed when sunlight reacts with vehicle and industrial emissions. Irritates respiratory system, worsens asthma.
■ Acid rain	Forms when sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides mix with moisture in air. Damages ecosystems, buildings, and water supplies.
■ Indoor air quality	Often worse than outdoor. Sources: radon (from soil), carbon monoxide (fuel-burning appliances), mold, tobacco smoke, VOCs from paints/cleaners.
■■ Radon	A colorless, odorless radioactive gas that seeps from soil and rock. Second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. Test your home — mitigation is simple if levels are high.

Climate change is expanding the geographic range of disease-carrying insects, intensifying wildfire smoke seasons, and affecting air quality in ways the original textbook couldn't anticipate. Environmental health is deeply connected to community health.

Lesson 3 — Protecting Land and Water

Human actions can either damage or protect land and water. The **EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)** was established in 1970 to develop and enforce environmental regulations designed to protect air, water, and land from pollution.

■ Water pollution	Can result from industrial waste, agricultural runoff (fertilizers, pesticides), and sewage. Clean drinking water is a basic human right.
■ ■ Solid waste	Americans generate enormous amounts of waste. Reduce, reuse, and recycle — in that order of priority.
■ ■ Hazardous waste	Toxic, corrosive, or flammable materials that require special disposal. Never dump household chemicals down drains.
■ Land conservation	Protected natural areas, responsible farming, and urban green spaces all support community health.

What You Can Do

- Conserve water — fix leaks, take shorter showers, don't run the tap while brushing
- Reduce energy use — turn off lights and electronics when not in use
- Choose products with less packaging; bring reusable bags and containers
- Participate in community cleanups and advocacy efforts
- Learn about local environmental issues and support informed policies

Your choices matter. Every person who reduces waste, conserves energy, and advocates for clean air and water makes a real difference. Environmental health and human health are inseparable.

Chapter Vocabulary

Lesson 1

Health care system	All the medical care available to a nation's people, the way they receive care, and the way they pay for it
Primary care physician	A medical doctor who provides physical checkups and general care
Specialists	Medical doctors who focus on particular kinds of patients or particular medical conditions
Medical history	Complete and comprehensive information about your immunizations and any health problems you have had
Health insurance	Private and government programs that pay for part or all of a person's medical costs
Public health	A community's effort to protect the health of all its people

Lesson 2

Air pollution	Contamination of the atmosphere by harmful substances including gases and particulate matter
Smog	A form of air pollution created when sunlight reacts with vehicle and industrial emissions
Radon	A colorless, odorless radioactive gas from soil; second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S.

Lesson 3

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	The U.S. government agency responsible for developing and enforcing environmental regulations
Water pollution	Contamination of water supplies by industrial waste, agricultural runoff, or sewage
Hazardous waste	Toxic, corrosive, or flammable materials that require special disposal to protect human health and the environment