

27. PERSONAL HYGIENE: HABITS OR PREVENTION



Author: Ciumac Anastasia

Scientific advisor: Ciobanu Elena, MD, MPH, Associate Professor, Discipline of Hygiene, Department of Preventive Medicine, *Nicolae Testemitanu* State University of Medicine and Pharmacy, Chisinau, Republic of Moldova

Introduction. Maintaining physical, moral, and social well-being involves adopting conduct habits known as personal hygiene. Thus, knowledge, attitude, and practices related to personal hygiene become essential as a primary intervention in preventing the onset of diseases, especially in the context of interaction with pathogens such as viruses, bacteria, and parasites.

Aim of study. This study investigated the association between personal hygiene habits as a method of preventing communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well as the level of implementation of these practices in everyday life.

Methods and materials. An analysis of specialized scientific sources in Romanian, English, and French was conducted using Google Scholar, PubMed, and Mendeley search engines, accessing a total of 50 sources. For a more detailed search, keywords such as "personal hygiene," "disease prevention," "hygiene," "correct hygiene habits," "communicable diseases," and "non-communicable diseases" were used. The reference period for this research covered the years 2013-2023.

Results. According to the World Health Organization, "Hygiene refers to conditions and practices that help maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases." For people to live in health and well-being, the development of healthy lifestyle habits is crucial. Primarily, the risk communication approach is considered relevant in the context of personal hygiene habits and in preventing communicable and non-communicable diseases. Secondly, personal hygiene practices and disease prevention are influenced by information provided by expert sources, and finally, proper education plays a crucial role in shaping correct thinking about preventive behaviors. The daily need to interact with different people, spaces, and living organisms has created hygiene habits that ensure protection against harmful factors. Among these, we enumerate basic practices such as handwashing, disinfection and care of surfaces, safe water supply and consumption, use of personal hygiene items, and daily cleaning of clothing and footwear.

Conclusion. We emphasize the importance of hygiene as a fundamental tool in preventing communicable and non-communicable diseases. It is not only an essential practice for maintaining health but also a crucial element for establishing a proper balance between the individual and the surrounding environment. Although there are multiple ways to reduce the risk of illness and disease transmission, there is no single solution that ensures 100% efficiency in prevention. Therefore, it is necessary to adopt and maintain various hygiene habits to minimize the risk and protect our health.