

KNOWLEDGE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MEDICINE

- Knowledge Attitude Practice** After working through this lesson, participants will be able to:
1. Describe characteristics of healthy children.
 2. Define health as harmony with God, with oneself, with other people, and with the environment.
 3. List ways to find out about health and disease.
 4. Explain why knowledge is more important than medicine.
 5. Explain why prevention is better than cure.
- Overview** This series of lessons is based on the *Health Education Program for Developing Communities*, which is available from <http://hepfdc.info/>. These lessons are accompanied by a series of health teaching booklets on the individual topics. They are based on information and standards from the World Health Organization. The lessons can be used with adults or with older children and teens.
- Materials** *Collect these items before beginning the lesson:*
- Poster-size paper, markers, and masking tape
 - Role Play
 - Handouts:
 - *Children*
 - *Learning About Health and Disease*
 - *Preventing Illness*

LESSON

60 minutes

Role Play: (5 minutes)

Instructions: Two mothers are talking

- 1st: My son is sick again with a high fever. He is always getting sick!
2nd: Why does he get sick so often?
1st: I don't know. Maybe it is because I gave him that cold drink on a hot day.
2nd: Or maybe his uncle caused it. He is really angry with you.
1st: The doctor talks about "microbes" and "germs" but I have never seen a germ!
2nd: No, I think it was the evil spirits.

Ask SHO Questions:

What did you See?

What was Happening?

Does this happen in Our place?

Healthy Children (10 minutes)

Instructions: Work as a large group

- A.** Show the drawing of *Children*. What do you notice about these children?
1. They look happy.
 2. They are smiling.

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3. They look healthy.
 4. They look well-nourished.
- B.** What do we want for our children?
1. We want them to be strong and healthy.
 2. We want them to grow well.
 3. We want them to learn new things.
 4. We want them to have friends.
- C.** Read Luke 2:52. Describe Jesus as a child.
1. He grew in wisdom. He knew what to do.
 2. He grew in stature, or in height. So he grew and was healthy and strong.
 3. He grew in favor with God. He had a strong relationship with God.
 4. He grew in favor with men. He had good relationships with other people.

Knowledge Is Important (20 minutes)

Instructions: Think about your community. When a child gets sick (with a fever, or with diarrhea), what do the parents think is the cause? Work as a large group.

- A.** Why do children get sick?
1. Often, parents do not know.
 2. They think they have done something wrong.
 3. Maybe they gave the child a cold drink on a hot day.
 4. Maybe it is caused by an evil spirit.
 5. Maybe it is from a germ or a microbe.
 6. They may blame a neighbor.
- B.** Divide into small groups. How can we find out what causes illnesses? How can we learn ways to have good health? Give each group a copy of the drawing, *Learning about Health and Disease*. Report back. (You can think of other ways not shown in this drawing.)
1. Our ancestors knew many important things about health and disease.
 2. They knew that invisible things, things we cannot see, cause illnesses.
 3. We can also talk with our trainers and CHEs about health problems.
 4. We can look in books.
 5. We can search on a computer.
 6. Organizations like the World Health Organization know a lot about health and disease.
 7. We can go to a laboratory for tests.
 8. They can look under a microscope and sometimes see the germs (viruses, bacteria, worm eggs, and parasites) that cause disease.
 9. But all of these germs are too small to see without a microscope.
 10. The Bible also talks a lot about illnesses.
 11. Some illnesses are caused by problems in our life.
12. When we don't have harmony with God, or with another person, or when we are struggling within ourselves, that can cause illness.
 13. Strong emotions, like hate and anger, can cause illness like heart disease.

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Knowledge is More Important than Medicine (15 minutes)

Instructions: Discuss in large group

A. Why do we take medicines?

1. To treat our illnesses
2. To get better

B. Do we always need to take medicines? Listen to this story to help you decide:

Two parents living near a mountain village were worried because their young daughter had a cold. They gathered all their money and walked to the village. They went to a pharmacy where they were told to buy several cold medicines. They spent all their money and gave her all the medicines. In a few days, she got better, but they were not sure that the medicines had done any good. And now they had no money to buy food for her or their other children.

C. So what do you think? Do we always need to take medicines for every illness?

1. Medicines help to cure many serious diseases.
2. It is important to take medicine for these diseases.
3. But medicines do not cure many illnesses like colds.
4. No medicine works to cure a cold.
5. Since they spent money on cold medicines, the family did not have enough to buy food.
6. They wasted their money buying cold medicines.
7. Medicines may cause other side effects.

D. How is knowledge more important than medicine?

1. We can learn ways to prevent illnesses.
2. We can learn how to live healthy lifestyles.
3. We can learn ways to purify water. That way we won't get diarrhea from contaminated water.
4. We can learn to live at peace with our neighbors, and how to forgive them. That will prevent many other health problems.
5. We can learn to treat many illnesses at home without medicines.
6. For example, many children with diarrhea can be treated at home with ORS (oral rehydration solution).
7. We can also learn how to take care of colds and other minor illnesses at home.
8. But some people who are sick will still need to go to a clinic and take medicines.

Prevention is Better than Cure (10 minutes)

A. Show the drawing, *Preventing Illness*. What are three main causes of death in the developing world today?

1. Unsafe drinking water. (The microscope shows microbes or germs in the water.)
2. Unclean houses and neighborhoods, leading to flies and germs and dirt.
3. Lack of hygiene/ not disposing of "poop" or excrement in the right way.
4. This can pass on illness and diarrhea.

B. How can other people make us sick?

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1. By contaminating our supply of water.
 2. By not keeping their homes and neighborhoods clean. This attracts flies and germs.
 3. By not using bathrooms or latrines.
- C.** Look at the coffin below. What problems result from this?
1. Every year more than 5 million people die from illnesses related to contaminated water, dirty homes, and poor hygiene.
 2. Every eight seconds a child dies.
 3. Nearly half of all people in the developing world have a disease related to contaminated water or poor hygiene.
 4. The tragedy is that these deaths could have been prevented.
- D.** How can we prevent these deaths?
1. By drinking clean water.
 2. By keeping our homes and neighborhoods clean.
 3. By using latrines or bathrooms.
- E.** Staying healthy and preventing illness
1. *Health Education Program for Developing Countries* has many excellent illustrations and teaching materials.
 2. They are based on World Health Organization standards.
 3. There are community health evangelism lessons on a wide variety of topics.
 4. Often CHE has picture books as well.
 5. Sometimes the CHEs visit our homes.
 6. We can learn through health storying as well.

References:

Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>

Health Topics. World Health Organization. Available from: <http://www.who.int/topics/en/>

KNOWLEDGE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN MEDICINE - STARTER

Role play:

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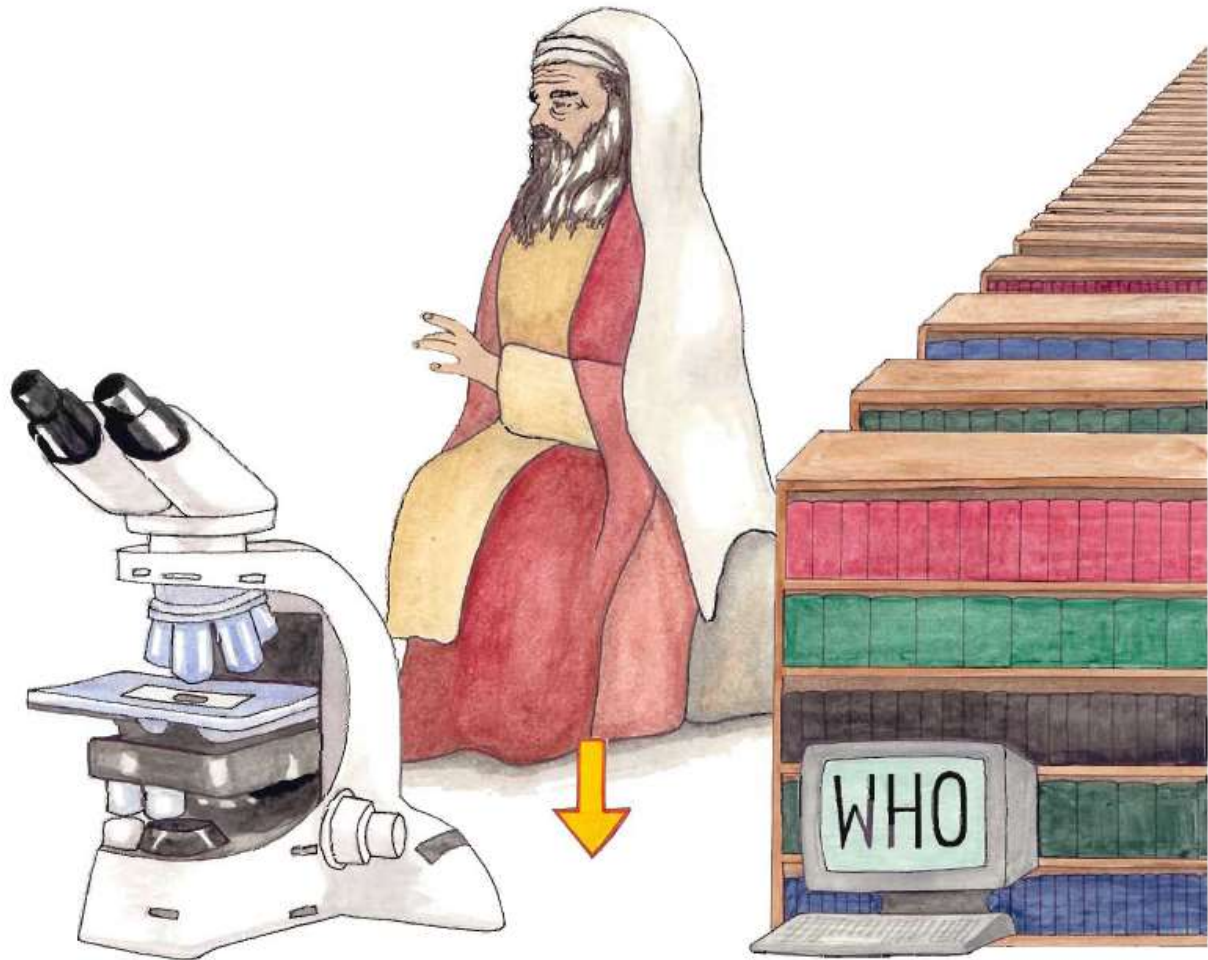
CHILDREN



Source: Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>

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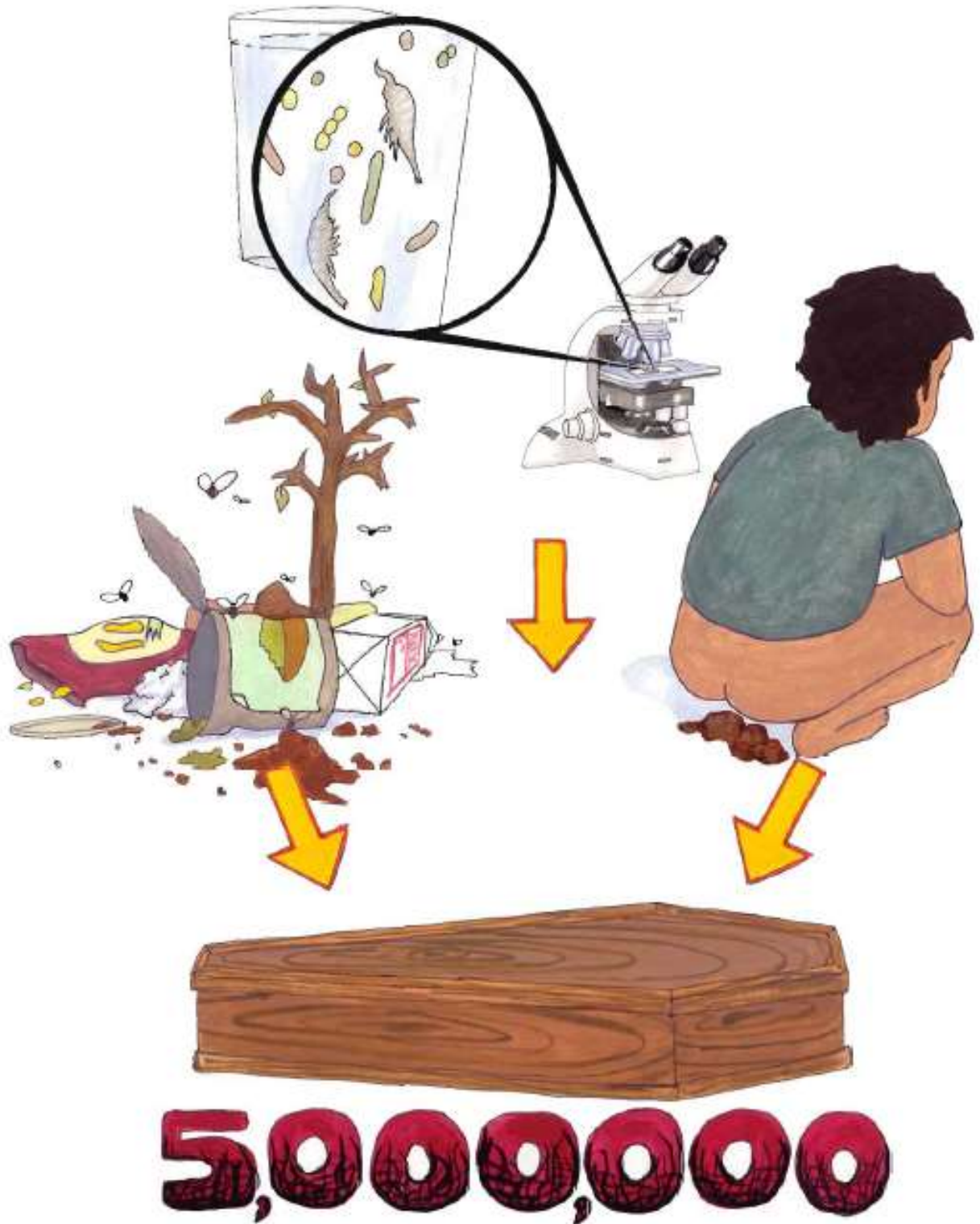
LEARNING ABOUT HEALTH AND DISEASE



Source: *Illustrations*, Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>

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PREVENTING ILLNESS



Source: *Illustrations*, Health Education Program for Developing Communities. Available from: <https://hepfdc.org/>