# ACTIVITY 7 IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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| ENGLISH: SKILLS FOR LEARNINGWeek 1: Reading skills for university study |  |

**ACTIVITY 7 IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Read **only** the introductory paragraph, the headings and the topic sentence of each paragraph. Then answer the questions that follow. I recommend printing out this text as you will refer to it again while working through the next few activities.

[P1] To stay healthy, the body’s needs for energy and nutrients must be met. This is particularly important in growing children as damage inflicted may not be reversible and can affect normal development. People whose diet lacks the necessary nutrients suffer from malnutrition, a condition that includes both over-nutrition and under-nutrition and is considered a risk factor for health.

**Under-nutrition**

[P2] Under-nutrition is in news reports of famines in poor countries, but it can also be found in developed countries. In industrialised countries, under-nutrition can be seen in young people who have eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia, where the amount of energy they consume in food is less than the needs of their body.

[P3] If children’s diets are too low in energy, they will stop growing and gaining weight. They will become lethargic, less active and be unable to concentrate. If the situation continues, they may develop life-threatening diseases. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (2012) reports that 100 million children under the age of five are underweight and 35% of all deaths of children under five are caused by malnutrition.

[P4] When people suffer from under-nutrition, they are often deficient in vitamins and minerals needed by the body. For example, they may not have enough Vitamin A. If this deficiency is not tackled, eyesight may be permanently damaged. Lack of iron is another very common form of deficiency. This helps to explain why about 50% of women in India suffer from some degree of anaemia.

**Over-nutrition**

[P5] Over-nutrition is usually associated with industrialised countries, although it is now also a problem among affluent people in developing countries. The main problem is that the amount of energy consumed in food is greater than the needs of the body and this can result in people becoming overweight or obese. As with under-nutrition, this may lead them to become lethargic, less active and less able to concentrate.

[P6] Further health problems will arise over time, particularly if the diet is high in saturated fat. Saturated fat is solid at room temperature; examples include animal fats, dairy products and coconut and palm oil. Eating a diet high in saturated fat raises blood cholesterol and the risk of heart disease. People who are overweight or obese are more likely to suffer from coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, gallstones, arthritis, high blood pressure and some types of cancer.

[P7] Type 2 diabetes is a metabolic disorder in which the body has trouble making its own insulin to control the level of sugar in the blood. Because it tends to develop in adults, it is also known as adult-onset diabetes. However, growing numbers of young adults and children are now developing it.

(The Open University (2014) ‘Science File’, KG004 *Improving health and wellbeing*)