

The major causes of functional dependency -F.Forett-

All so-called age-related diseases, such as cardiovascular disease, dementia, cancer, osteoarthritis and osteoporosis, and sensory disorders can cause dependency, but they are linked to risk factors and, therefore, can be prevented. Reduction of these risk factors can, therefore, prevent a large amount of dependency and this prevention should be even more effective in the future thanks to current progress such as cellular therapy, DNA chips, and biotechnology. The inadequacy of prevention in most countries must be brought into question. Health promotion centres primarily on lifestyle improvement. Americans are extremely concerned by the increase in obesity in their country. Some consider that it will be responsible for a considerable decrease in the mean life expectancy in the US. Yet, it is clear that better health promotion of a wide range of lifestyle improvements would probably bring about a decrease in the incidence of a large number of diseases, notably obesity.

The most important factor for the reduction in mortality certainly is education throughout life. There is no doubt that a considerable injustice exists between educated and non-educated individuals. It has been clearly demonstrated that it is primarily the level of education of the mother, but also the father because young men today participate in the education of their children, which determines the health of their children when they become adults.