

# why we get sick nesse

## Why We Get Sick Nesse

Understanding why we get sick is a question that has fascinated humanity for centuries. Our health is influenced by a complex interplay of biological, environmental, lifestyle, and genetic factors. Despite advances in medicine and science, the fundamental reasons behind our susceptibility to illness remain multi-faceted. The concept of sickness is not merely about the presence of pathogens but also involves how our bodies respond to various internal and external stressors. This article explores the underlying causes of sickness, emphasizing the biological mechanisms, environmental influences, lifestyle choices, and genetic predispositions that contribute to our health and vulnerability to disease.

## Biological Reasons for Getting Sick

### 1. Pathogens and Infectious Agents

One of the most direct causes of sickness is the invasion of harmful microorganisms, known as pathogens. These include bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. When these agents breach the body's defenses, they can cause infections that lead to symptoms like fever, fatigue, and inflammation.

- Bacteria: Single-celled organisms that can reproduce rapidly, causing illnesses such as strep throat, urinary tract infections, and tuberculosis.
- Viruses: Smaller than bacteria, viruses hijack host cells to replicate, leading to illnesses like the flu, COVID-19, and the common cold.
- Fungi: Organisms like yeasts and molds can cause infections, especially in immunocompromised individuals.
- Parasites: Organisms such as protozoa and worms can invade the body, leading to diseases like malaria and tapeworm infections.

### 2. Immune System Functionality

The immune system plays a crucial role in defending the body against pathogens. When the immune response is weakened or compromised, susceptibility to illness increases.

- Immunodeficiency: Conditions like HIV/AIDS impair immune function, making infections more severe and frequent.
- Autoimmune Diseases: The immune system mistakenly attacks healthy tissues, leading to chronic illness.
- Age-Related Decline: As we age, immune responses tend to weaken, increasing vulnerability to infections.

### **3. Genetic Predispositions**

Genetics can influence how susceptible an individual is to certain illnesses.

- Some people inherit genes that make them more prone to autoimmune diseases, allergies, or certain infections.
- Genetic mutations can affect immune responses, metabolism, and cell repair mechanisms, impacting overall health.

## **Environmental Factors Contributing to Sickness**

### **1. Exposure to Pollutants and Toxins**

Environmental pollutants are a significant factor in the development of various illnesses.

- Air Pollution: Particulate matter, ozone, and other pollutants can cause respiratory diseases like asthma, bronchitis, and even cardiovascular problems.
- Water Contaminants: Polluted water sources can transmit diseases such as cholera, dysentery, and hepatitis.
- Chemical Toxins: Exposure to pesticides, heavy metals, and industrial chemicals can lead to poisoning and long-term health issues like cancer.

### **2. Climate and Geographic Conditions**

Climate influences the spread and prevalence of certain diseases.

- Tropical regions often see higher rates of vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue due to favorable conditions for mosquitoes.
- Cold climates might suppress immune responses or increase risks of respiratory infections during winter.

### **3. Living Conditions and Sanitation**

Poor sanitation and crowded living spaces facilitate the spread of infectious diseases.

- Overcrowding can increase transmission of respiratory and gastrointestinal illnesses.
- Lack of access to clean water and sanitation promotes waterborne diseases.

# **Lifestyle Factors and Their Role in Getting Sick**

## **1. Nutrition and Diet**

A balanced diet is essential for maintaining a healthy immune system.

- Malnutrition weakens immune defenses, increasing vulnerability to infections.
- Excessive intake of processed foods, sugars, and unhealthy fats can promote chronic diseases like obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases.

## **2. Physical Activity**

Regular exercise promotes immune function but overexertion can have adverse effects.

- Moderate activity enhances immune response and reduces stress.
- Overtraining, especially in athletes, can suppress immunity temporarily, making one more prone to illness.

## **3. Stress and Mental Health**

Chronic stress negatively impacts immune function.

- Elevated stress hormones like cortisol suppress the activity of immune cells.
- Mental health issues, such as depression and anxiety, are linked to increased susceptibility to infections.

## **4. Sleep Patterns**

Adequate sleep is vital for immune health.

- Sleep deprivation impairs the production of cytokines, which are essential for immune responses.
- Chronic lack of sleep can increase the risk of respiratory infections and other illnesses.

## **Behavioral and Societal Influences**

### **1. Personal Hygiene Practices**

Good hygiene reduces the risk of transmitting infections.

- Regular handwashing, proper food handling, and sanitation are critical in preventing disease spread.
- Neglecting hygiene can lead to gastrointestinal, respiratory, and skin infections.

## **2. Healthcare Access and Vaccination**

Access to medical services and immunizations plays a pivotal role.

- Vaccinations protect against many infectious diseases and outbreaks.
- Lack of healthcare access delays diagnosis and treatment, worsening health outcomes.

## **3. Substance Abuse**

Use of alcohol, tobacco, and recreational drugs can weaken immune defenses.

- Tobacco smoke damages lung tissue and impairs immune responses.
- Excessive alcohol intake hampers the body's ability to fight infections.

# **Age and Developmental Factors**

## **1. Infants and Children**

Developing immune systems make children more susceptible to certain illnesses.

- They are more vulnerable to respiratory infections and gastrointestinal diseases.
- Vaccination schedules are crucial in this stage to build immunity.

## **2. Elderly Population**

Aging causes immune senescence, reducing the body's ability to respond to pathogens.

- Increased risk of chronic diseases that compromise health.
- Higher susceptibility to influenza, pneumonia, and other infections.

## **Conclusion**

Understanding why we get sick encompasses an appreciation of the intricate network of biological, environmental, lifestyle, and societal factors involved. Our susceptibility to illness is not solely dictated by

the presence of pathogens but also by the robustness of our immune systems, our genetic makeup, environmental exposures, behavioral choices, and access to healthcare. Maintaining good hygiene, ensuring proper nutrition, managing stress, getting adequate sleep, and accessing preventive healthcare are all vital strategies to reduce our risk of falling ill. Recognizing these multifactorial causes empowers individuals and communities to adopt healthier behaviors and policies that promote resilience against diseases. Ultimately, health is a dynamic state influenced by a multitude of interconnected factors, and understanding these can help us lead healthier, longer lives.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why do we get sick from infections like the flu or cold?**

We get sick from infections like the flu or cold because viruses or bacteria invade our bodies, overwhelm our immune system, and disrupt normal body functions, leading to symptoms of illness.

### **What role does the immune system play in preventing sickness?**

The immune system acts as the body's defense mechanism, recognizing and attacking harmful pathogens like viruses and bacteria to prevent or limit illness.

### **How does poor hygiene contribute to getting sick?**

Poor hygiene practices, such as not washing hands regularly, increase the likelihood of transferring germs, making it easier for infections to enter the body and cause illness.

### **Can lifestyle choices influence how often we get sick?**

Yes, factors like inadequate sleep, poor nutrition, stress, and lack of exercise can weaken the immune system, making us more susceptible to illnesses.

### **Why are some people more prone to getting sick than others?**

Genetic factors, age, underlying health conditions, and immune system strength influence individual susceptibility to illness, causing some people to get sick more often.

### **How do vaccines help prevent getting sick?**

Vaccines stimulate the immune system to recognize and fight specific pathogens, providing immunity and reducing the risk of illness when exposed to those germs.

# Additional Resources

## **Why We Get Sick: An In-Depth Exploration of the Causes, Mechanisms, and Factors Behind Illness**

Understanding why we fall ill is a fundamental question that has intrigued humanity for centuries. Illnesses, or diseases, are complex phenomena resulting from an intricate interplay of biological, environmental, genetic, and lifestyle factors. This article delves into the multifaceted reasons behind sickness, examining the scientific principles, contributing factors, and societal implications that shape our health. By exploring these dimensions, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of why we get sick and how modern science is working to prevent and treat diseases.

## **Biological Foundations of Illness**

### **Pathogens: The Primary Culprits**

At the core of many illnesses are pathogens, microorganisms that invade and multiply within the human body. These include bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites. Each class of pathogen has unique mechanisms of causing disease:

- **Bacteria:** Single-celled organisms that can produce toxins, invade tissues, and trigger immune responses. Examples include *Streptococcus* (causing strep throat) and *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* (causing tuberculosis).
- **Viruses:** Not considered living organisms outside host cells, viruses hijack cellular machinery to replicate. Notable examples are influenza, HIV, and SARS-CoV-2.
- **Fungi:** Can cause infections such as athlete's foot or candidiasis, especially in immunocompromised individuals.
- **Parasites:** Organisms like protozoa and helminths (worms) that live at the expense of the host.

The invasion and proliferation of these pathogens disrupt normal bodily functions, eliciting immune responses that can sometimes cause symptoms like fever, inflammation, and tissue damage.

### **Immune System and Disease Resistance**

Our immune system serves as the body's defense mechanism against pathogens. It employs both innate (non-specific) and adaptive (specific) responses:

- **Innate immunity** provides immediate defense via physical barriers (skin, mucous membranes), immune cells (macrophages, neutrophils), and chemical mediators.
- **Adaptive immunity** involves lymphocytes (B and T cells) that generate targeted responses and immunological memory.

Failures or deficiencies in immune function—due to genetic factors, malnutrition, aging, or immunosuppressive treatments—can increase susceptibility to infections, making illnesses more likely or severe.

## **Genetic and Biological Predispositions**

### **Genetics and Disease Susceptibility**

Genetics play a significant role in determining individual vulnerability to certain diseases. Variations in genes can influence immune responses, metabolism, and cellular functions. For example:

- Inherited conditions like sickle cell anemia confer resistance to malaria.
- Genetic predispositions can increase risk for autoimmune diseases such as rheumatoid arthritis or type 1 diabetes.
- Gene-environment interactions determine how genetic traits manifest, influencing disease susceptibility.

Understanding genetic predispositions helps explain why some individuals are more prone to certain illnesses despite similar exposures.

### **Aging and Biological Changes**

Aging is associated with physiological changes that compromise health:

- Decline in immune function (immunosenescence) reduces pathogen defense.
- Accumulation of cellular damage and mutations increases cancer risk.
- Reduced regenerative capacity impairs tissue repair.

These age-related changes make older adults more susceptible to infections, chronic diseases, and degenerative conditions.

## **Environmental and Lifestyle Factors**

### **Environmental Exposures and Pollution**

The environment significantly influences disease risk. Factors include:

- Air pollution: Particulate matter and toxic gases can cause respiratory diseases, cardiovascular problems,

and exacerbate asthma.

- Water and food contamination: Pathogens and toxins in contaminated water or food can lead to gastrointestinal illnesses and other infections.
- Climate and weather: Temperature extremes and humidity influence the spread of vector-borne diseases like malaria and dengue.

Environmental hazards often create conditions conducive to disease transmission or directly cause physiological harm.

## **Lifestyle Choices and Behaviors**

Personal behaviors are critical determinants of health outcomes:

- Diet: Poor nutrition can weaken immune defenses, promote obesity, and increase risk for diabetes and cardiovascular diseases.
- Physical activity: Sedentary lifestyles contribute to obesity, metabolic syndrome, and mental health issues.
- Substance use: Tobacco, alcohol, and drug abuse damage organs, impair immunity, and elevate cancer risk.
- Sleep patterns: Chronic sleep deprivation suppresses immune function and increases vulnerability to illness.
- Stress management: Prolonged stress affects hormonal balance and immune responses, making individuals more prone to infections and chronic conditions.

Addressing these behaviors through public health initiatives and individual interventions can significantly reduce disease incidence.

## **Socioeconomic and Cultural Factors**

### **Access to Healthcare**

Limited access to quality healthcare services hampers disease prevention, early detection, and treatment. Populations lacking vaccination programs, screenings, or timely medical care experience higher disease burdens.

### **Education and Awareness**

Health literacy influences health behaviors. Lack of awareness about hygiene, vaccination, nutrition, and disease transmission facilitates the spread of illnesses.

## **Living Conditions**

Overcrowded housing, poor sanitation, and unsafe working environments increase exposure to pathogens and environmental hazards, elevating disease risk.

## **Emerging and Infectious Diseases**

### **Zoonotic Transmission and Globalization**

Many new diseases originate from animals (zoonoses), facilitated by human encroachment into wildlife habitats. Examples include COVID-19, avian influenza, and Ebola.

Global travel and trade accelerate the spread of infectious agents, challenging health systems worldwide and emphasizing the importance of surveillance and rapid response.

### **Antimicrobial Resistance**

Overuse and misuse of antibiotics have led to resistant strains of bacteria, rendering some infections difficult to treat and increasing the likelihood of prolonged illness or death.

## **Chronic Diseases and Lifestyle-Related Causes**

### **Diet and Obesity**

Unhealthy diets high in processed foods, sugars, and fats contribute to obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. These conditions weaken bodily systems and increase vulnerability to secondary illnesses.

### **Physical Inactivity**

Sedentary behavior is linked to metabolic disorders, osteoporosis, and mental health issues, which can predispose individuals to sickness.

### **Stress and Mental Health**

Chronic stress impacts hormonal balance and immune function, heightening susceptibility to infections and exacerbating existing health problems.

## Conclusion: An Interconnected Web of Factors

The question of why we get sick is answered by recognizing the complex web of factors that influence health. Pathogens are direct causes of many illnesses, but host susceptibility—shaped by genetics, age, immune competence, and lifestyle—is equally important. Environmental exposures, socioeconomic status, and behavioral choices create conditions that facilitate or hinder disease development.

Advances in medicine, public health, and science continue to unravel these complexities, offering hope for better prevention, early detection, and personalized treatments. Ultimately, understanding the multifactorial nature of illness empowers individuals and societies to adopt healthier behaviors, improve living conditions, and develop effective policies to reduce disease burden worldwide.

In essence, sickness arises from a confluence of biological vulnerabilities, environmental challenges, lifestyle choices, and societal factors. Recognizing these interconnected elements is vital for fostering a healthier future where preventable illnesses are minimized, and well-being is maximized.

## [Why We Get Sick Nesse](#)

**why we get sick nesse:** *Why We Get Sick* Randolph M. Nesse, MD, George C. Williams, 2012-02-08 The next time you get sick, consider this before picking up the aspirin: your body may be doing exactly what it's supposed to. In this ground-breaking book, two pioneers of the science of Darwinian medicine argue that illness as well as the factors that predispose us toward it are subject to the same laws of natural selection that otherwise make our bodies such miracles of design. Among the concerns they raise: When may a fever be beneficial? Why do pregnant women get morning sickness? How do certain viruses manipulate their hosts into infecting others? What evolutionary factors may be responsible for depression and panic disorder? Deftly summarizing research on disorders ranging from allergies to Alzheimer's, and from cancer to Huntington's chorea, *Why We Get Sick*, answers these questions and more. The result is a book that will revolutionize our attitudes toward illness and will intrigue and instruct lay person and medical practitioners alike.

**why we get sick nesse:** *Why We Get Sick* Randolph M. Nesse, 1995

**why we get sick nesse:** *George C. Williams and Evolutionary Literacy* Michael P. Cohen, 2022-09-28 In this book, a case study of a humanistic reading of an essential evolutionary theorist, George C. Williams (May 12, 1926–September 8, 2010), the author contends that certain classic works of evolutionary theory and history are the most important nature writing of recent times. What it means to be scientifically literate—is essential for humanistic scholars, who must ground themselves with literary reading of scientific texts. As the most influential American evolutionary theorist of the second half of the twentieth century, Williams masters critique, frames questions about adaptation and natural selection, and answers in a plain, aphoristic writing style. Williams aims for parsimony—to “recognize adaptation at the level necessitated by the facts and no higher”—through a minimalist writing style. This voice articulates a powerful process that operates at very low levels by blind and selfish chance at the expense of its designed products, using purely trial and error.

**why we get sick nesse:** *Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development* Robert G. Burgess, Kevin MacDonald, 2005 This new edition of *Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development* is obligatory reading for anyone interested in the integration of evolutionary theory into developmental

psychology. . . . It provides a valuable corrective to recent narrow approaches which argue that the human mind is constructed exclusively of domain-specific mechanisms and which deemphasize the importance of human psychological and behavioral plasticity. . . . Anyone who reads this book will come away with a richer understanding of our shared human nature.-Bill Irons, Northwestern University

In this volume, Burgess and MacDonald have brought together a distinguished group of psychologists and anthropologists to investigate how-given our evolutionary heritage, genetic make-up and salient environment-behavior, cognition, and emotion unfold from the human organism. They make clear that both evolutionary functional and proximate behavioral perspectives are essential to understanding the human mind and its products. Many of these essays should be required reading for sociobiologists, evolutionary psychologists, and evolutionary anthropologists and their ilk.-Jeffrey Kurland, Penn State

It's clear that evolutionary biology has a tremendous amount to offer when it comes to our understanding of human development, and yet, many experts in developmental psychology have remained impervious to these insights. At last, this may change: Burgess and MacDonald have compiled a rich array of theory and data, much of it contributed by the leading lights of evolutionary psychology (or, if you prefer, sociobiology). A very valuable collection and one that might help define a new and important field. -David P. Barash, University of Washington

*Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development*, Second Edition considers the role of evolutionary theory in the field of developmental psychology to examine key topics of individual human development. This unique book fills an important gap in the literature, applying evolutionary models to human development by focusing on central development issues. The book emphasizes both domain-general evolved psychological mechanisms and domain-specific processes. The text also integrates behavior-genetic research with evolutionary and developmental principles. In this contributed volume, editors Robert L. Burgess and Kevin MacDonald have brought together a distinguished group of social and behavioral scientists employing multiple levels of analysis drawn from a variety of academic disciplines. This diverse group of contributors illustrates the enormous power of evolutionary theory by elucidating human behavior and its development and the various ways it is manifested in different environments. *Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development* applies evolutionary theory to such topics as parent-child relationships, the maltreatment of children, psychopathology, cooperation and competition among siblings, and the acquisition of vital resources in different cultural settings from an evolutionary point of view.

**Key Features**

Comprehensive coverage of the impact of evolutionary theory on human development provides students with the most thorough foundation available in this area. Contributions by leading scholars and researchers expose readers to the exciting research and developments that have been occurring in the field. An introductory chapter written by the volume editors provides an accessible overview of the book. *Evolutionary Perspectives on Human Development* provides state-of-the-art groundwork in evolutionary theory as viewed by leading thinkers in the field. It is an excellent supplementary textbook for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses in evolutionary and developmental psychology.

**why we get sick nesse: The Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Medicine** Martin Brüne, Wulf Schiefenhövel, 2019-01-31

Medicine is grounded in the natural sciences, where biology stands out with regard to our understanding of human physiology and the conditions that cause dysfunction. Ironically though, evolutionary biology is a relatively disregarded field. One reason for this omission is that evolution is deemed a slow process. Indeed, the macroanatomical features of our species have changed very little in the last 300,000 years. A more detailed look, however, reveals that novel ecological contingencies, partly in relation to cultural evolution, have brought about subtle changes pertaining to metabolism and immunology, including adaptations to dietary innovations, as well as adaptations to the exposure to novel pathogens. Rapid pathogen evolution and evolution of cancer cells cause major problems for the immune system. Moreover, many adaptations to past ecologies have actually turned into risk factors for somatic disease and psychological disorder in our modern worlds (i.e. mismatch), among which epidemics of autoimmune diseases, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and obesity, as well as several forms of cancer stand out.

One could add depression, anxiety, and other psychiatric conditions to the list. The Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Medicine is a compilation of up-to-date insights into the evolutionary history of ourselves as a species, exploring how and why our evolved design may convey vulnerability to disease. Written in a classic textbook style emphasising physiology and pathophysiology of all major organ systems, the Oxford Handbook of Evolutionary Medicine is valuable reading for students as well as scholars in the fields of medicine, biology, anthropology and psychology.

**why we get sick nesse: Evolution's Empress** Maryanne L. Fisher, Justin R. Garcia, Rosemarie Sokol Chang, 2013-01-30 Over the last decade, there has been increasing debate as to whether feminism and evolutionary psychology can co-exist. Such debates often conclude with a resounding no, often on the grounds that the former is a political movement while the latter is a field of scientific inquiry. In the midst of these debates, there has been growing dissatisfaction within the field of evolutionary psychology about the way the discipline (and others) have repeatedly shown women to be in passive roles when it comes to survival and reproduction. Evolutionary behavioral research has made significant strides in the past few decades, but continues to take for granted many theoretical assumption that are perhaps, in light of the most recent evidence, misguided. As a result, the research community has missed important areas of research, and in some cases, will likely come to inaccurate conclusions based on existing dogma, rather than rigorous, theoretically driven research. Bias in the field of evolutionary psychology echoes the complaints against the political movement attached to academic feminisms. This is an intellectual squabble where much is at stake, including a fundamental understanding of the evolutionary significance of women's roles in culture, mothering, reproductive health and physiology, mating, female alliances, female aggression, and female intrasexual competition. Evolution's Empress identifies women as active agents within the evolutionary process. The chapters in this volume focus on topics as diverse as female social interactions, mate competition and mating strategies, motherhood, women's health, sex differences in communication and motivation, sex discrimination, and women in literature. The volume editors bring together a diverse range of perspectives to demonstrate ways in which evolutionary approaches to human behavior have thus far been too limited. By reconsidering the role of women in evolution, this volume furthers the goal of generating dialogue between the realms of women's studies and evolutionary psychology.

**why we get sick nesse: Developmental Psychopathology, Developmental Neuroscience** Dante Cicchetti, 2016-02-01 The complete reference of biological bases for psychopathology at any age Developmental Psychopathology is a four-volume compendium of the most complete and current research on every aspect of the field. Volume Two: Developmental Neuroscience focuses on the biological basis of psychopathology at each life stage, from nutritional deficiencies to genetics to functional brain development to evolutionary perspectives and more. Now in its third edition, this comprehensive reference has been fully updated to better reflect the current state of the field, and detail the newest findings made possible by advances in technology and neuroscience. Contributions from expert researchers and clinicians provide insight into brain development, molecular genetics methods, neurogenics approaches to pathway mapping, structural neuroimaging, and much more, including targeted discussions of specific disorders. Advances in developmental psychopathology have burgeoned since the 2006 publication of the second edition, and keeping up on the latest findings in multiple avenues of investigation can be burdensome to the busy professional. This series solves the problem by collecting the information into one place, with a logical organization designed for easy reference. Consider evolutionary perspectives in developmental psychopathology Explore typical and atypical brain development across the life span Examine the latest findings on stress, schizophrenia, anxiety, and more Learn how genetics are related to psychopathology at different life stages The complexity of a field as diverse as developmental psychopathology deepens with each emerging theory, especially with consideration of the rapid pace of neuroscience advancement and genetic discovery. Developmental Psychopathology Volume Two: Developmental Neuroscience provides an invaluable resource by compiling the latest information into a cohesive, broad-reaching reference.

**why we get sick nesse: The Evolution of Psychopathology** Todd K. Shackelford, Virgil Zeigler-Hill, 2017-08-01 This review of recent evolutionary theories on psychopathology takes on controversies and contradictions both with established psychological thought and within the evolutionary field itself. Opening with the ancestral origins of the familiar biopsychosocial model of psychological conditions, the book traces distinctive biological and cultural pathways shaping human development and their critical impact on psychiatric and medical disorders. Analyses of disparate phenomena such as jealousy, social anxiety, depressive symptoms, and antisocial behavior describe adaptive functions that have far outlasted their usefulness, or that require further study and perhaps new directions for treatment. In addition, the book's compelling explorations of violence, greed, addiction, and suicide challenge us to revisit many of our assumptions regarding what it means to be human. Included in the coverage: · Evolutionary foundations of psychiatric compared to non-psychiatric disorders. · Evolutionary psychopathology, uncomplicated depression, and the distinction between normal and disordered sadness. · Depression: is rumination really adaptive? · A CBT approach to coping with sexual betrayal and the green-eyed monster. · Criminology's modern synthesis: remaking the science of crime with Darwinian insight. · Anthro-pathology: the abiding malady of the species. With its wealth of interdisciplinary viewpoints, *The Evolution of Psychopathology* makes an appropriate supplementary text for advanced graduate courses in the evolutionary sciences, particularly in psychology, biology, anthropology, sociology, and philosophy.

**why we get sick nesse: Pragmatic Evolution** Aldo Poiani, 2011-11-10 Of what use is evolutionary science to society? Can evolutionary thinking provide us with the tools to better understand and even make positive changes to the world? Addressing key questions about the development of evolutionary thinking, this book explores the interaction between evolutionary theory and its practical applications. Featuring contributions from leading specialists, *Pragmatic Evolution* highlights the diverse and interdisciplinary applications of evolutionary thinking: their potential and limitations. The fields covered range from palaeontology, genetics, ecology, agriculture, fisheries, medicine, neurobiology, psychology and animal behaviour; to information technology, education, anthropology and philosophy. Detailed examples of useful and current evolutionary applications are provided throughout. An ideal source of information to promote a better understanding of contemporary evolutionary science and its applications, this book also encourages the continued development of new opportunities for constructive evolutionary applications across a range of fields.

**why we get sick nesse: Genetic Determinants of Human Longevity** Giuseppina Rose, Mette Sørensen, Serena Dato, 2019-10-28 In the last two decades, due to the continuous increase of lifespans in Western societies, and the consequent growing of the elderly population, have witnessed an increase in the number of studies on biological and molecular factors able to promote healthy aging and reach longevity. The study of the genetic component of human longevity demonstrated that it accounts for 25% of intra population phenotype variance. The efforts made to characterize the genetic determinants suggested that the maintenance of cellular integrity, inflammation, oxidative stress response, DNA repair, as well as the use of nutrients, represent the most important pathways correlated with a longer lifespan. However, although a plethora of variants were indicated to be associated with human longevity, only very few were successfully replicated in different populations, probably because of population specificity, missing heritability as well as a complex interaction among genetic factors with lifestyle and cultural factors, which modulate the individual chance of living longer. Thus, many challenges remain to be addressed in the search for the genetic components of human longevity. This Special Issue is aimed to unify the progress in the analysis of the genetic determinants of human longevity, to take stock of the situation and point to future directions of the field. We invite submissions for reviews, research articles, short-communications dealing with genetic association studies in human longevity, including all types of genetic variation, as well as the characterization of longevity-related genes.

**why we get sick nesse: Your Body** Matthew MacDonald, 2009-07-28 Presents an easy-to-read guide on the human body, its major organs and their functions, and common illnesses and diseases.

**why we get sick nesse:** The Quest for Immortality: Science at the Frontiers of Aging Stuart Jay Olshansky, S. Jay Olshansky, Bruce A. Carnes, 2002-07-17 For readers interested in longevity, the authors explain the real science of aging and show which treatments offer real hope and which are a waste of money and time.

**why we get sick nesse:** Evolutionary Thinking in Medicine Alexandra Alvergne, Crispin Jenkinson, Charlotte Faurie, 2016-05-13 The aim of this edited book is to provide health professionals, across a wide variety of specialisms, with a targeted access to evolutionary medicine. Throughout the book, the views of both medical and evolutionary scientists on the latest relevant research is presented with a focus on practical implications. The inclusion of boxes explaining the theoretical background as well as both a glossary for technical terms and a lay summary for non-specialists enable medical researchers, public health professionals, policy makers, physicians, students, scholars and the public alike to quickly and easily access appropriate information. This edited volume is thus relevant to anyone keen on finding out how evolutionary medicine can improve the health and well-being of people.

**why we get sick nesse:** *The SAGE Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology* Todd K. Shackelford, 2020-11-25 Evolutionary psychology is an important and rapidly expanding area in the life, social, and behavioral sciences, and this Handbook represents the most comprehensive and up-to-date reference text in the field today. Chapters in this Handbook address real-world and practical applications of evolutionary psychology such as applications to medicine, psychiatry, law, and technology. The SAGE Handbook of Evolutionary Psychology is an essential resource for researchers, graduate students, and advanced undergraduate students in all areas of psychology, and in related disciplines across the life, social, and behavioral sciences. Part 1: Applications to Health and Well-Being Part 2: Applications to Law and Order Part 3: Applications to Technology, Communications, and the Future

**why we get sick nesse:** The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Medicine Miriam Solomon, Jeremy R. Simon, Harold Kincaid, 2016-10-04 The Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Medicine is a comprehensive guide to topics in the fields of epistemology and metaphysics of medicine. It examines traditional topics such as the concept of disease, causality in medicine, the epistemology of the randomized controlled trial, the biopsychosocial model, explanation, clinical judgment and phenomenology of medicine and emerging topics, such as philosophy of epidemiology, measuring harms, the concept of disability, nursing perspectives, race and gender, the metaphysics of Chinese medicine, and narrative medicine. Each of the 48 chapters is written especially for this volume and with a student audience in mind. For pedagogy and clarity, each chapter contains an extended example illustrating the ideas discussed. This text is intended for use as a reference for students in courses in philosophy of medicine and philosophy of science, and pairs well with The Routledge Companion to Bioethics for use in medical humanities and social science courses.

**why we get sick nesse:** The ^ALoss of Sadness Allan V. Horwitz, Jerome C. Wakefield, 2007-06-18 The Loss of Sadness argues that the increased prevalence of major depressive disorder- 10% of all American adults are said to be afflicted with it, according to recent estimates- is due not to a genuine rise in mental disease, as many claim, but to the way that normal human sadness has been pathologized since 1980. In that year, the field of psychiatry published its landmark third edition of The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-III), which has since become a dominant force behind our current understanding of mental illness overall. The result: in the past 25 years since the DSM-III's appearance, virtually all research and all clinical approaches to depression have been based on an invalid definition of the condition, resulting in far-reaching scientific, social, and political implications that affect us all.

**why we get sick nesse:** *The Foundations of Organizational Evil* Carole L. Jurkiewicz, 2015-02-24 Numerous reprehensible corporate, governmental, and nonprofit activities over recent years have highlighted the existence of organizational evil. Unlike other works on the topic, this book fully develops the concept of organizational evil, conceptually weaving the interchange between evil individuals (microlevel) who ultimately create the organizational environment that is

evil, and the macrolevel elements of policy, culture, and manipulations of the social environment.

**why we get sick nesse: Community in the Digital Age** Andrew Feenberg, Darin Barney, 2004-07-26 Is the Internet the key to a reinvigorated public life? Or will it fragment society by enabling citizens to associate only with like-minded others? Online community has provided social researchers with insights into our evolving social life. As suburbanization and the breakdown of the extended family and neighborhood isolate individuals more and more, the Internet appears as a possible source for reconnection. Are virtual communities 'real' enough to support the kind of personal commitment and growth we associate with community life, or are they fragile and ultimately unsatisfying substitutes for human interaction? Community in the Digital Age features the latest, most challenging work in an important and fast-changing field, providing a forum for some of the leading North American social scientists and philosophers concerned with the social and political implications of this new technology. Their provocative arguments touch on all sides of the debate surrounding the Internet, community, and democracy.

**why we get sick nesse: In Defense of an Evolutionary Concept of Health** Mahesh Ananth, 2017-11-30 One of the most controversial contemporary debates on the concept of health is the clash between the views of naturalists and normativists. Naturalists argue that, although health can be valued or disvalued, the concept of health is itself objective and value-free. In contrast, normativists argue that health is a contextual and value-laden concept, and that there is no possibility of a value-free understanding of health. This debate has fueled many of the, often very acrimonious, disputations arising from the claims of health, disease and disability activists and charities and the public policy responses to them. In responding to this debate, Ananth both surveys the existing literature, with special focus on the work of Christopher Boorse, and argues that a naturalistic concept of health, drawing on evolutionary considerations associated with biological function, homeostasis, and species-design, is defensible without jettisoning norms in their entirety.

**why we get sick nesse: Wild Health** Cindy Engel, 2003-03 As Dr. Engel emphasizes in this enticing, well-referenced, [and] entertaining book (Science), we can learn a lot about human health by studying animal behavior in the wild. Indeed, some of the natural, holistic, and alternative human medicine being practiced today arose through the observation of wild animals. In this groundbreaking work, Dr. Engel points out fascinating parallels between animal and human medicine. She offers intriguing examples of how animals prevent and cure sickness and poisonings, heal open wounds, balance their diets, and regulate fertility. For instance, \*chimpanzees carefully eat bitter-tasting plant medicines that counter intestinal parasites \*elephants roam miles to find the clay they ingest to counter dietary toxins \*broken-legged chicks have been known to eat analgesic foods that alleviate pain. By observing wild health we may discover (or rediscover) ways to benefit our own health. As Craig Stoltz of the Washington Post noted, this highly readable assessment . . . triggers more outside-the-double-helix thoughts about human health than anything I've read recently.

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