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# Precision Medicine

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# Enhancing Precision Health with Personalised Wellbeing

The transformative potential of personalised wellbeing within the framework of precision health. Practical strategies for optimising individual health.

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## key points

- Precision wellbeing shares similarities with precision medicine while presenting distinct challenges and opportunities.
- Precision wellbeing recognises the interconnectedness of multidimensional aspects of wellbeing.
- Factors such as physical health, mental wellbeing, social support, environmental context, cultural beliefs, personal preferences, and past experiences must be considered to implement precision wellbeing.
- While precision medicine typically focuses on acute interventions delivered at specific points in time, precision wellness emphasises the importance of precision wellness emphasises the importance of continual adaptation and refinement of wellness practices integrated into daily life.
- Fostering a culture that values and prioritises precision wellbeing involves promoting awareness, education, and advocacy regarding the significance of personalised wellbeing practices and their positive impact on individual health.

## Introduction

You would easily agree with me when I tell you that you are unique. There is no second human being, even if you have an identical twin that is just like you. Yet, when it comes to health and wellness, why do we often settle for one-size-fits-all solutions that fail to recognise our individuality? In today's ever-evolving landscape of wellbeing, a new concept is gaining traction—a concept that challenges the status quo and dares to ask: What if your wellbeing was as unique as your fingerprint?

Much like its counterpart in medicine, precision medicine, which meticulously tailors treatment to the specific genetic makeup and characteristics of each patient, precision wellbeing applies a similar rationale. Just as precision medicine recognises that what works for one patient may not work for another due to genetic variations, precision wellbeing acknowledges that individuals have unique physical, mental, emotional, and social characteristics that require personalised approaches.

At its core, precision wellbeing challenges the status quo and dares to ask the question: Why settle for generic solutions? It's time to move beyond the outdated notion of one-size-fits-all wellbeing programmes and embrace a new era of tailored interventions.

## Understanding Precision Wellbeing

Have you ever noticed how the little choices you make each day can have a ripple effect, sometimes positive and sometimes negative, on your overall sense of wellbeing? Perhaps you've felt recharged and uplifted after engaging in a heartfelt conversation with a friend or spending quality time with loved ones. Conversely, you may have experienced a sense of loneliness or disconnection after engaging in negative social interactions.

Have you ever felt empowered and strong after completing a challenging workout session? On the flip side, have you ever experienced aches and pains after neglecting your **body's** need for movement and exercise?

Reflect on your **mental** wellbeing as well. Have you ever found peace and clarity of mind through mindfulness practices or engaging in activities that bring you joy? Conversely, have you ever felt overwhelmed and stressed from constantly juggling work and personal responsibilities without taking time to rest and recharge?

Think about your **emotional** wellbeing too. Have you ever felt uplifted and supported after opening up to a friend about your feelings? On the other hand, have you ever felt drained and emotionally exhausted from suppressing your emotions or maintaining toxic relationships?

Consider your **social** connections as well. Have you ever experienced a sense of belonging after participating

This is not just the case for you. It is the case for each and every one of us. And these dimensions of wellbeing are not silos but interconnected aspects of the human experience. Changes in one dimension can have ripple effects across others, highlighting the need for a holistic approach.

### Factors Influencing Personalised Wellbeing:

So, what are the factors influencing precision wellbeing? As we explore the multifaceted concept of personalised wellbeing, it's crucial to acknowledge the factors that influence our individual experiences and also outcomes. From cultural beliefs to past experiences, access to resources, and personal preferences, each aspect plays a role in shaping our unique paths to wellbeing.

## Precision wellbeing encompasses not only physical health but also mental, emotional, social, and environmental dimensions

in group activities? Alternatively, have you ever felt isolated and disconnected from others due to social conflicts or feelings of loneliness?

And don't forget about your **environment**. Have you ever felt refreshed and rejuvenated after spending time in nature or tidying up a few drawers? Conversely, have you ever felt stressed and overwhelmed by a messy room or by a lack of access to green spaces?

Finally, reflect on your overall **sense of purpose** and spirituality. Have you ever felt a deep sense of fulfilment and meaning in life from aligning with your values and beliefs? On the other hand, have you ever experienced feelings of existential emptiness or disconnection from your sense of purpose?

Now that you've taken a moment to reflect on your own experiences in these different areas of wellbeing, consider how they compare to those of other people around you. Have you noticed similar patterns of positive and negative impacts on their wellbeing with similar activities? Or perhaps you observe differences in how certain activities affect them compared to you. These differences highlight the unique nature of individual wellbeing and the importance of personalised approaches.

Firstly, consider the influence of **cultural beliefs and values**. Different cultural backgrounds and traditions may dictate varying approaches to wellbeing. For instance, practices such as meditation or herbal remedies may be deeply rooted in certain cultures. Individuals who resonate with these cultural practices may find comfort and efficacy in traditions passed down through generations. However, for those whose cultural backgrounds diverge from these norms, accessing culturally specific wellness strategies may pose challenges.

**Past encounters** with wellness practices, whether positive or negative, can inform our choices and preferences moving forward. These experiences shape our perceptions and attitudes towards different interventions, guiding us towards strategies that align with our needs and goals. For instance, imagine someone who had a challenging experience with arts and crafts during childhood, perhaps feeling pressured to excel in artistic endeavours or facing criticism for their creations. As a result, they may develop an aversion to engaging in creative activities later in life, associating them with stress or inadequacy. Conversely, another individual may have fond memories of crafting with loved ones, finding joy in the process. These contrasting

experiences significantly shape their attitudes towards creative outlets as adults, with one person feeling hesitant to explore artistic pursuits while the other embraces them as a source of comfort and expression.

**Access to resources** is another critical factor that can drive interpersonal differences in wellbeing. Considerations such as geographic location, socioeconomic status, and availability of support networks can significantly impact the options available to individuals. For instance, someone living in a busy urban area may have access to a diverse range of activities, including fitness centres, cultural events, and social gatherings, which cater to different aspects of wellbeing. Conversely, individuals in rural areas may have fewer options for structured activities but may benefit from abundant outdoor spaces for activities like hiking or gardening, which promote physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing.

physical health but also mental, emotional, social, and environmental dimensions. It acknowledges that each individual is unique, reinforcing the need for personalised strategies to optimise overall health and wellbeing.

Precision medicine often involves diagnosing and treating illnesses based on genetic markers, biomarkers, and other measurable factors. In contrast, precision wellbeing aims to prevent illness and promote health by understanding and addressing the diverse range of factors influencing an individual's wellbeing.

While precision medicine typically focuses on acute interventions delivered at specific points in time, precision wellness emphasises the importance of continual adaptation and refinement of wellness practices. It recognises that wellbeing is dynamic and subject to change based on life circumstances, experiences, and evolving goals.

## The key to taking precision wellbeing forward lies in empowering individuals with insights and personalised strategies

Furthermore, factors such as **personality traits**, temperament, and lifestyle choices can influence our wellbeing preferences but also outcomes. Introvert individuals, for example, may find peace in solitary activities like reading or journaling, while extroverts may thrive in social settings and group activities.

Lastly, consider the role of **societal norms, expectations, and cultural trends** in shaping our perceptions of wellbeing. Societal pressures to conform to certain standards of beauty, success, or achievement can impact our self-esteem and overall sense of wellbeing. For example, cultural norms that prioritise productivity and busyness may contribute to feelings of stress and burnout as individuals strive to meet these expectations.

### Contrasting Approaches: Precision Medicine vs Precision Wellbeing

While precision medicine focuses on treating specific diseases or conditions using targeted interventions tailored to individual genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors, precision wellness takes a broader approach. Precision wellbeing encompasses not only

In summary, while precision medicine targets specific diseases, precision wellbeing takes a holistic approach by considering the interplay of various factors and promoting personalised strategies.

As we've explored the intricacies of personalising wellbeing, it's become evident that achieving optimal health and happiness requires a tailored approach that considers a multitude of factors unique to each individual. In our comparison with precision medicine, we've seen how precision wellbeing extends beyond targeting specific diseases or conditions at a particular moment in time. Instead, it involves continuous adjustment and refinement of practices to align with evolving personal needs, circumstances, and goals.

This understanding underscores the importance of the way forward in implementing precision wellbeing. By carefully examining each element of individual wellbeing and incorporating sustainable practices into daily routines, individuals can navigate the complexities of personal wellbeing with precision -thus the name- and efficacy. Let us look now into practical strategies for incorporating precision wellbeing into our lives and ensuring the sustainability of our wellbeing practices over the long term.



### The Way Forward in Precision Wellbeing

The key to taking precision wellbeing forward lies in empowering individuals with insights and personalised strategies. By leveraging data from various sources such as their past experiences, their social context and norms, but also wearable devices, health apps, and genetic testing, individuals can gain valuable insights into their unique health profile, identify areas for improvement, and track progress over time.

Additionally, promoting collaboration between individuals and healthcare professionals is essential. Professionals can offer personalised guidance, support, and interventions tailored to everyone's specific needs and circumstances. This approach enables healthcare professionals to identify trends, patterns, and potential risk factors more effectively, leading to more targeted and efficient interventions.

Furthermore, integrating precision wellbeing practices into various aspects of life is crucial for sustainability and long-term success. Encouraging individuals to

incorporate wellbeing into their daily routines, habits, and lifestyles ensures that these practices become ingrained and enduring. This integration also promotes consistency and continuity, allowing individuals to maintain their wellbeing efforts over time and adapt them as needed in response to changing circumstances.

Ultimately, fostering a culture that values and prioritises precision wellbeing is key. By promoting awareness, education, and advocacy around the importance of personalised wellbeing practices and their positive impact on individual health, happiness, and overall quality of life, we can collectively advance the cause of precision wellbeing and empower people to live their best lives.

### Conflict of Interest

None.