

MODULE 3 – KEY TERMS

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There are a number of key terms to learn in this field. Probably the most commonly-used terms are incidence and prevalence. Incidence and prevalence measure disease frequency. Incidence refers to the rate of occurrence of new cases of a disease or disorder in a given period of time in a specific population. Prevalence refers to the frequency of existing cases in a defined population at a given point in time.

We also use two additional terms to address how populations are affected by a disease. These terms include the terms burden of disease and disability-adjusted life expectancy. The burden of disease addresses the total significance of disease on society beyond the immediate cost of treatment. It is measured in years of life lost to ill health, or the difference between total life expectancy and disability-adjusted life expectancy.

The Disability-Adjusted Life Year-- D-A-L-Y-- is a summary measure of the health of a population. One DALY represents one lost year of healthy life. It is used to estimate the gap between the current health of a population and the state of a population if that disease was not present.

We have developed flash cards for this class with additional terms and concepts that will be used throughout this lecture, as well as throughout the course.