

# Should couples have health screenings before marriage health essay

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Should Couples Have Health Screening Before Marriage? Health screening before marriage can be defined as "premarital screening". Premarital screening, known as 'a test which offer to couples who are getting married in order to check for genetic, infectious and blood transmitted diseases to prevent transmitted diseases or viruses to their future children' (Eartern Biotech, n. d.). It was started getting more attention at the beginning of 20th century. One of the first example of modern screening is urine and blood glucose test which has been widely used since 1940's. (Morabia and Zhang, 2004). In fact, up to 1 billion people have lack access to the health care system (Shah, 2011). Due to this, premarital screening as an important issue for couples to consider before getting into marriages. There are several types of screening that couples can run before marriages, for instance, screening for genetic or inherit diseases, screening for communicable diseases, screening for infertility, and screening for blood group incompatibility. The ideas of having a health screening before marriages are being encouraged by many parties, however there are still controversies about this issue. Although some opponents are against making health screening before marriage, there is strong evidence that having a health test before marriage brings positive results. Having a health screening before marriage provided a premarital preparation for couples. Despite the result of screening is positive or negative, it provides couples a detail about their health condition. When there is a sudden illness intrudes into couple relationship, couple will find themselves unprepared or overwhelmed. (Well and Beyond, n. d.). Statistics has shown that couples who have premarital preparation results in 30% increase in successful marriage when compare to

those who are not undergo preparation (Boyle, n. d.). In spite of that, many young couples have a wrong expectation and false belief on marriage life that love will get them through a rough time. However, they do not realize that looking after for a sick spouse can be stressful, challenging, and painful for them which may put pressure on family life. So, through health screening, there is a chance for couples to have a preparation before they start a family. Besides, going for a premarital screening acts as a prevention for couples from feeling infidelity. It is a proper way for them to check for their spouses' HIV status before enter into a marital bond especially for couples who have premarital sex without protection with their partners. It is not startling that sexually transmitted diseases are common as generation today take a relationship faster than before (Kumari, 2013). Moreover, it is a matter to debate that couples should undergo a health check before marriage as an unfaithful partner will brings the virus home after marriage (Women Of India, 2010). If couples take action earlier before they get into marriage, it certainly will helps to lower the risk of HIV transmission to partners or future children. Another reasons for couples to undergo a health screening is that they can be well understand about their future financial conditions. As we know, holding a marriage costs a lot of money. Undergoing health screening provides a better money management for couples as couples will deepen their understanding about their health problems. According to statistics, population of Malaysia is up to 28, 401, 000. And that, total expenditure on health as percentage of GDP is around 4. 4 (World Health Organization, 2013). This figure shown that there are a higher percentage of people in Malaysia spend their money in health care.

Therefore, having health screening helps couples to plan their money effectively according to their health problems. Not only that, even a couple experienced a long relationship, it is almost guarantee that couples will have money fight. So, with a better money management, less wrangle will be existing between couples. Couple never know how healthy are they before they run for a health screening. Having a health screening helps couples get a better understanding of their future fertility chance in another way. Many experts recommend that women or men should start make an appointment with an obstetrician before marriage which called as pre-conception care as it is crucial for couples to understand about their fertility status (WedMD, 2012). Not only that, if couples who have an existing health problems such as high blood pressure or diabetes, undergoing such screening is especially important for them to seek for a better medical care before decided to get pregnant. So, both partners are encouraged to undergo several further tests, for instances, semen analysis, blood test, endometrial biopsy, and hysterosalpingogram as it helps to find out the existing problems between both partners. Moreover, undergoing premarital screening also is a protection for their future child. Genetic testing is another types of screening for couples to test before marriage. When couples are planning to start a family, such screening allows them to test for genetic disorders and thus prevent it from transfer the genetic disease to their offspring. There are some common genetic disorders such as Down Syndrome, blindness, Parkinson disease, and many other diseases which will have affects the development of a children if couples do not have a well genetic testing before. Giving new born baby a better start of life is crucial before couples

pregnant (Baby Center Medical Advisory Board, 2012). This is due to have a disability children may put pressure on their family. Therefore, have a premarital screening can actually lower the risk of having children with genetic disorder and it is important to keep their future children a healthy future. Improvement in terms of quality of life is another reasons for couples to have a health screening before marriages. The concept of quality of life usually main refers to one's health condition. By doing such screening, couples will be guarantee to improve their quality of life and maintain their healthy lifestyle as they are getting aware of their body status. So, what means a healthy lifestyle? A healthy lifestyle helps improve one's health condition and well-being (Wikipedia, n. d.). Running a screening before marriage make couples feel comfortable and relax especially for those who may have mentally illness. After knowing about their body status, it helps couples to get rid of their bad habits. What we do is driven by habit and so it is very difficult to change the old habits (Sane Australia, 2011). However, in order to have a healthy life and thus brings a healthy marriage, it is necessary for couples to establish a good health habit earlier especially for those who are smokers or drinkers to undergo a premarital screening. Apart from improvement of their quality of life, premarital screening might reduce the mortality rate of couples. There is a reason for couples to spend their valuable times to undergo such screening before marriages as it acts as a form of preventive measure for them. Based on existing evidence, preventive health care is important for people to achieve a healthy lifestyle who with or with not disability (DDS, 2010). Besides that, a complete health screening for couples also is useful for early detection of diseases. Early

disease detection is a test which helps to detect physical or mental problems before the symptoms appear. If couples get ready to undergo health screening before marriages, the more likely the diseases can be cured and manages to control the diseases when the diseases were found out earlier (WebMD, 2011). Consequently, managing a disease could minimize the risk of getting serious complication and it also prevent couples from losing their ways in the marriage life. It can be said that, having a health screening before marriage can actually lower the mortality rate of couples. In addition, having a medical check-ups before marriage acts as a prevention of marital dysfunction. Marriage considered as a legal contract between two couples which build their relationship faithfulness and shape their own family together. In order to have a happy and healthy marriage, it is necessary for couples to reduce unnecessary squabble between couple in the future. Since knowing about their partner's health condition, it allows them to improve their communication and problem-solving skill. Based on the statistics of The Nation, 'number of marital discord and divorce increased 13 per cent between year 2002 and 2004, pushing 12, 974 in annual figure.' (Safdar, 2009). This figure mentioned that family is at the edge of exigency. So, by undergoing such screening before marriage, it certainly will decrease the rate of divorce among couples. However, there are still group of people are against with the premarital screening. The most common argument lifted by opponents is that health screening before marriage create situation of human right violation who mainly focus on HIV testing before marriage. Opponents argue that having such screening encroach on a person's right to privacy. The right which under menaced is right to non-discrimination which

had been lead to a big concern. Post-test, an infected person may be discriminated by society or their partners (Olivera and Tahseen, 2012). Since there is a fear of social or couple discrimination, couples will be flee rather than confront with the screening. Actually, couples should undergo premarital screening as they have their own right to be protected from diseases. Checking for a health test is essential for couples to closer their relationship as a closer relationship is based on intimacy and trust. Although there is a fundamental of human right to privacy, people cannot diminishes other's life (Olivera and Tahseen, 2012). The right to live better is particularly important than the right to privacy. Besides, couples should treat their future partners faithfully instead of keeping secret from their spouses. There is not the reason for them to escape from premarital screening due to the fear of abolishment of engagement by their spouses. At the same time, opponents also mention that it is awkwardness to discuss about health issue with their couples or healthcare providers especially sexual problems and sexual history. Starting discussion about sexuality and sexual problems is difficult for health care providers and patients (ARHP, 2010). Due to this, couples will undergo a rough time when discussing about such sensitivity issue. Besides, it is also considered a shame for couples to talk about their sexual history as it is causing both partners distress. The most greatest and the most painful challenges is that to deal with their partners' sexual part (Mike, 2011). Therefore, it is crucial to learn about the communication skill between spouses rather than keep it as a secret. On the other hand, couples should have positive views on their partners' health condition particularly their sexual history or sexual problems. The problem of sexual dysfunction is

increasingly getting more concern nowadays. Therefore, it is important for couples to know about their partners' sexual history or problems as it is crucial to have a healthy marriage. Couples should have a conversation or discussion with their partners about their sexual history no matter how embarrassing the conversation is (Garden, T, 2010). Intervention of couple in sexual history may reduce the risk of unhealthy sexual behavior and unintended pregnant. By eliciting couples' sexual history , it may explain current health problems (AAFP, 2002). It can be said that, having a premarital screening can actually have a better understanding about their partners' sexual history and discover their sexual problems. Other opponents argue that premarital screening is an unnecessary procedure for couples. If couples have a health test before marriage, it cannot ensure that what will happen tomorrow to their partners. It means that there is still has probability for their couples to get diseases after marriage. This argument is lifted due to some incorrect health diagnosis in health screening. According to statistics of Bottom Line, between 40, 000 and 80, 000 of people were death by wrong diagnoses (Forsloff, 2010). This figure shows that a medical errors can lead to improper treatment or even death. One of the sources had claimed that wrong diagnosis can occur during interaction and testing in the survey of doctors. On the other side, there is a point to deny the argument which is being lifted by opponents. Actually, having a premarital screening is a necessary procedure for couples as it disseminates the awareness of couples on health issue. This screening not only beneficial for couple, it also beneficial public on health concern regard to the concept of quality life. One of the global health service company which is Cigna, it assists in educating



young people, improving of health and creating a sense of security (Cigna, n. d.). Consequently, through promoting by such company, it will creates a national awareness about health care condition in our society. By getting the public awareness of health issue, it will definitely promote health and decline the health inequality among society. All in all, premarital screening is encouraged to couple to run through before get into marriage as it provides a premarital preparation for couples, as a prevention of feeling infidelity, be aware of their future financial conditions, get a better understanding about their future fertility chance, as a protection of future child, an improvement of quality of life, reduction of mortality rate, and a prevention of marital dysfunction. In additional to that, government should put their afford and start take action in order to reduce the burden on couple themselves, family and community. In a nutshell, health screening should be encouraged and widely promoted by relevant authorities such as Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC). It is especially important for both parties involved as it helps protect their offspring and their personal health condition. Since modern medical had been advanced, it is possibility for couples to discover potential diseases and confront with the result of health testing. It acts as a part of couples' intelligence and wisdom wedding plan as it provides a chance for prevention, management, and treatment of disease. In consequently, knowledge of premarital screening helps couples get a premarital guidance before marriage. It has been clearly stated that having a health screening before marriage actually brings more benefits rather than harms. Therefore, couples should be encouraged to undergo premarital screening to ensure a healthy and happy marriage life.(2, 331 words)