

Guiding light for children

Mr Jim Bek is almost blind, but this primary school counsellor's enthusiasm at work makes him an inspiration to everyone.

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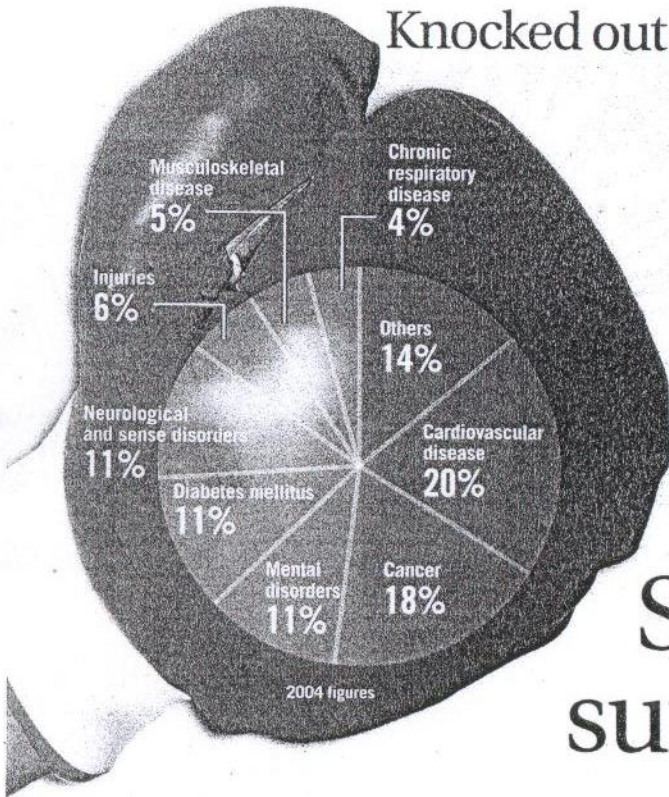
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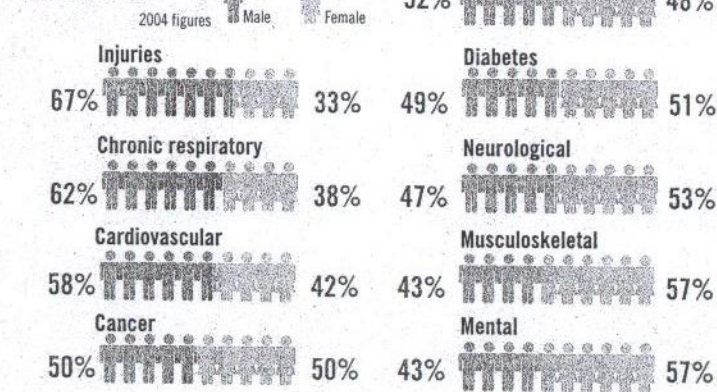


Knocked out by disease

Main causes of disability and premature deaths



THEY HIT MEN AND WOMEN IN SINGAPORE DIFFERENTLY



HEALTHIEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

Number of years they live in good health (2002)

Rank	Country	Women	Men
1	Japan	77.7	72.3
2	San Marino	75.9	70.9
3	Spain	75.3	69.9
4	Switzerland	75.3	71.1
5	Monaco	75.2	70.7
6	Sweden	74.8	71.9
7	France	74.7	69.3
8	Italy	74.7	70.7
9	Andorra	74.6	69.8
10	Australia	74.3	69.3
25	Singapore	71.3	68.8
29	United States	71.3	67.2

SOURCE: MOH & WHO

S'poreans live longer but suffer 8 years of poor health

MOH study shows main causes of sickness

too will spend eight of their 78 years in poor health. So while Singapore does well on life expectancy charts, a different picture

hopefully minimise illness and medical complications."

But health authorities can only do so much, argued unionist and Health GPC

the ministry puts in more effort to tackle them.

A surprise finding of the study

high blood pressure and stroke.

The intention is to treat those condi-

omen live an average of good health, compared to 77.7 years for women here. Japanese live 72.3 years of good health, compared to 68.8 years for Sin-

Health Organisation (WHO) attributes it to their smoking less, exercising more and being more health conscious than men. As for Japan, its explanation is the low rate of cardiovascular diseases comes from their high-in-fish diets.

Madam Halimah said: "We should also start eating more fish and less meat."

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The main culprits are heart disease and stroke, cancer, diabetes and even mental illness.

Now, the average Singapore woman should live to 81.8, but she will spend eight of those years ill or disabled. Men

suggests that more should be done to tell people what they can do to save themselves from becoming ill, said Dr Lam Pin Min, a member of the Government Parliamentary Committee for Health.

He called for more public education on how these ailments can be prevented, and screening to catch problems like diabetes and cancer early.

He added: "With early detection of diseases, prompt medical treatment can

Dr Derrick Tieng, deputy director of the Ministry of Health's non-communicable diseases branch said the study will guide the authorities on how to spend health resources.

But though it "shines the torch" on diseases that cause the most suffering, the ministry will have to see which actually benefit from preventive measures.

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lives.

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