

PREVENTION FOUNDATIONS—REFRESHER

CAUSES

Models of causation





PREVENTIONCOLLABORATIVE



In this topic, we will introduce two models of causation from the public health field and talk about why it's important to focus on the causes of violence.

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MODELS OF CAUSATION

<p>Necessary, direct cause Example: Malaria</p> 	<p>Multiple, overlapping causes Example: Heart disease</p> 
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When we think about causality, we know that different social and health problems have different types of causes.

We need to understand these various causes in order to develop effective prevention programmes.

For example, the screen shows two models of causation from the public health field, which can help us understand the causes of violence against women.

Let's look at each of these models.

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NECESSARY, DIRECT CAUSE

Example: Malaria



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The first model of causation is where a health problem has a necessary, direct cause.

In this example, imagine that a mosquito infected with malaria parasites bites you. The parasite is a direct cause, and it is necessary for you to be bitten by a mosquito carrying the parasite in order to get malaria. This is a necessary, direct cause.

Of course, how sick you get will depend on other factors including your general health, whether you have immunity, and whether you have access to timely and quality healthcare.

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MULTIPLE, OVERLAPPING CAUSES

Example: Heart disease



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A second and different model of causation is where a health condition is the result of multiple, overlapping factors.

In this example, let's look at heart disease. Obesity, hypertension, smoking, and eating fatty foods are all risk factors that increase the probability of having a heart attack. However, the presence of one factor alone does not necessarily result in heart disease.

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VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- ▶ Violence against women has multiple, inter-related causes
- ▶ Its prevention requires holistic strategies that address the different factors

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As with heart disease, no single factor is either necessary or sufficient to cause violence against women. Instead, violence against women has multiple, inter-related causes.

Therefore, prevention requires holistic strategies that address the different factors that contribute to violence.

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