

# Social Epidemiology and Behavioral Economics

- **Epidemiology:** To clarify frequency and distribution of health events in the specified population, and of conducting causal inference on the causes of the health events.
  - Classic epidemiology mostly focused on disease as health events, on controllable environmental exposure as causes.
  - **Social epidemiology** expanded those to all health events including prevention and health promotion, and to any kinds of **social determinants of health** as causes.
- **Social determinants of health** such as social gap, poverty, gender, ethnic group, and social capital are often difficult to control. However, social epidemiology researches developed in Harvard University and other groups clarified many things based on community intervention trials to address the possibility of improvement in health promotion or health status.
  - Community intervention trials require political decision and huge budget and thus reliable evidences are necessary.
  - Human-being rarely behaves rationally in health and medicine related matters, conventional economics, which presumes rational economic human, cannot analyze cost-benefit of community intervention trials. The methodology of **behavioral economics** by Daniel Kahneman and others should be applied.
- This class integrates those two relatively new disciplines.

# Tentative schedule

- 1. 6 Oct 2026 (Minato NAKAKZAWA) Overviews on social epidemiology
- 2. 13 Oct 2026 (Daisuke NISHIOKA) Poverty, social gap, social exclusion and health
- 3. 20 Oct 2026 (Masakazu SHINOHARA) Social capital and health
- 4. 27 Oct 2026 (Minato NAKAZAWA) Community intervention trials
- 5. 10 Nov 2026 (Minato NAKAZAWA) Overviews on behavioral economics
- 6. 17 Nov 2026 (Minato NAKAZAWA) Game theory
- 7. 24 Nov 2026 (Minato NAKAZAWA) Contingent valuation methods
- 8. 1 Dec 2026 (Daisuke NISHIOKA) Nudge theory and prospect theory

# Evaluation

- Please answer to the mini-report (as assignment) in BEEF+
- In addition, end-of-term report must be submitted from BEEF+ (The theme is given later)

# Social Epidemiology

- References

- (Book) Ichiro Kawachi and Lisa F. Berkman [Eds.] (2003) *Neighborhoods and Health*. Oxford University Press.
- (Book) Lisa F. Berkman and Ichiro Kawachi [Eds.] (2000) *Social Epidemiology*. Oxford University Press.
- (Review paper) Honjo K (2004) Social epidemiology: Definition, history, and research examples. *Environ Health Prev Med*, 9(5): 193-9.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/bf02898100>
- (Journal) *Social Science and Medicine*  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/journal/social-science-and-medicine>
- (Book in Japanese) イチロー・カワチ (2013) 『命の格差は止められるか』 小学館 101 新書
- Christiaan Grootaert and Thierry van Bastelaer (2002) *Understanding and Measuring Social Capital: A Multidisciplinary Tool for Practitioners*. World Bank
- Wilkinson, Richard & Marmot, Michael (2003). *Social determinants of health: the solid facts*, 2nd ed. World Health Organization. Regional Office for Europe.  
<https://iris.who.int/handle/10665/326568>.