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## CHAPTER THREE

## THE HEALTH BELIEF MODEL

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For five decades, the Health Belief Model (HBM) has been one of the most widely used conceptual frameworks in health behavior. The HBM has been used both to explain change and maintenance of health-related behaviors and as a guiding framework for health behavior interventions. The HBM has been expanded, broken down into components, compared to other frameworks, and analyzed using a wide array of multivariate analytic techniques. Over the past two decades, more research has been conducted to specify measures of health beliefs and relationships between these beliefs.

In this chapter, we review the components of the HBM that remain vital. We also examine other psychosocial constructs that further explain relationships within the HBM. Earlier reviews of HBM research findings provide historical context for this chapter (Becker, 1974; Janz and Becker, 1984). Recent HBM research continues to emphasize individual health beliefs, placing them in multivariate analyses and examining their predictive qualities. This type of analysis does little to further specify measurement of or relationships between health beliefs. While there are certainly new, interesting results to review, a consideration of three aspects of the HBM is most needed: components of the HBM, the relationships between HBM components, and how to use the HBM to understand and change behaviors with public health significance.

We begin by describing the origins of the HBM and its place in psychosocial theory. Issues related to the measurement of and relationships between HBM