

Role of women in saving macro and micro nutrients at household level

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Abstract

Women's and men's distinct roles in family nutrition are a key to improving food security at the household level. To tackle this issue, FAO bases its approach to nutrition on the economic and cultural context of the area, FAO bases its approach to nutrition on the economic and cultural context of the area concerned, and considers that food security depends not only on the availability of food, but also on access to food, as well as on food adequacy and acceptability to consumers. In the present modern scenario and keeping in view the changing environmental conditions, it is very essential to remain conscious towards one's health. It is a known fact that a woman and cooking go hand in hand and both are complementary to each other. So, it becomes more and more essential for a woman to be aware and have knowledge about the right cooking practices through which she can safeguard the various nutrients present in food while cooking to improve the health of family and herself.

Keywords: macro, micro nutrients

Introduction

Essential nutrients are simply those that are vital for the normal growth, maintenance and development of the body. There might be a slight confusion about essential nutrients that must be addressed. The term 'essential' when applied to amino acids and certain fatty acids, applies to those that need to be taken in the diet as they are not synthesized by the body. Essential amino acids include Methionine, Valine, Leucine, Isoleucine, Phenylalanine, Tryptophan, Threonine and Lysine. Essential fatty acids are Linolenic acid, Linoleic acid and Arachidonic acid.

Micronutrients are different from macronutrients (like carbohydrates, protein and fat) because they are necessary only in very tiny amounts. Nevertheless, micronutrients are essential for good health, and micronutrient deficiencies can cause serious health problems. Micronutrients include such dietary minerals as zinc and iodine, and they are necessary for the healthy functioning of all your body's systems, from bone growth to brain function.

Objectives

1. To study the socio-economic status of women.
2. To assess the awareness and knowledge level of women about macro and micro-nutrients in food.
3. To assess the importance of macro and micro nutrients in daily diet and benefits to human health.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Gorakhpur district. Total 20 wards were selected in the study area. 15 women were selected from each ward. Thus total 300 were selected for the study purpose. Dependent and independent variables were used such as age, education, income, nutrient, adoption, cooking methods etc. The statistical tools were used such as weighted mean, rank, Cr etc.

Results

Nutrition education is an evidence based cost affected way to improve health outcomes and fasten healthy eating habits for a lifetime. Women provide an opportunity to combine access to healthy foods with nutritional education for all family members across the life cycle with proper coordination, efficient and effective way. There are many Government programmes that give special focus on food security and maximize investment in nutrition assistance by providing women with knowledge and skills for living healthy lines and creating environment where healthy choices are the easy choices.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to education

Education	Frequency	Per cent
Primary	15	5.0
High School	92	30.7
Intermediate	128	42.7
Graduate	58	19.3
Post Graduate	7	2.3
Total	300	100.0

Table 2: Knowledge and awareness of respondents about various macro and micronutrients

Macro Nutrients	Yes	No	Mean scores	Rank
Carbohydrates	210 (70.0)	90 (30.0)	1.70	II
Fats	120 (40.0)	180 (60.0)	1.40	III
Proteins	243 (81.0)	57 (19.0)	1.81	I
Micro Nutrients				
Vitamins	123 (41.0)	177 (59.0)	1.41	I
Minerals	33 (11.0)	267 (89.0)	1.11	II

Figures in parentheses denotes the percentage of respective value

Knowledge level of women respondents about macro and

micronutrients, 81.0 per cent of women have a knowledge about macro nutrients, protein with mean score 1.81 and rank I and 70.0 per cent of respondents have a knowledge about carbohydrate with mean score 1.70 and rank II and 40.0 per cent of respondents were very well known about fat as a macronutrients with mean score 1.40 and rank in study

area. 41.0 per cent of women respondents were having knowledge about vitamin as a macro nutrients with mean score 1.41 and rank I whereas, 11.0 per cent respondents were known about minerals with mean score 1.11 and ranked II in study area. Eat more vegetables is long standing advice for a healthy diet and for good reason.

Table 3: Awareness about benefits of macro and micro nutrients to human health

Vitamins	Diseases	Yes	No	Mean Scores	Rank
Calcium	▪ Rickets	60 (20.0)	290 (80.0)	1.20	III
	▪ Weak bones	90 (30.0)	210 (70.0)	1.30	II
	▪ Osteoporosis	180 (60.0)	120 (40.0)	1.60	I
Vitamin C	▪ Rickets	2 (0.7)	298 (99.3)	1.01	II
	▪ Goiter	2 (0.7)	298 (99.3)	1.01	II
	▪ Scurvy	300 (100.0)	-	2.00	I
Iron	▪ Anaemia	300 (100.0)	-	2.00	I
	▪ Scurvy	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	II
	▪ Goiter	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	II
Iodine	▪ Goiter	300 (100.0)	-	2.00	I
	▪ Anaemia	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	II
	▪ Rickets	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	II
Protein	▪ Goiter	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	III
	▪ Kwashiorkar	125 (41.7)	175 (58.3)	1.42	I
	▪ Marasmus	70 (23.3)	230 (76.7)	1.23	II
Fat	▪ Cancer	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	IV
	▪ Behavioural problem	5 (1.7)	295 (98.3)	1.02	III
	▪ Depression	32 (10.7)	268 (89.3)	1.11	II
	▪ Heart diseases	156 (52.0)	144 (48.0)	1.52	I
Carbohydrates	▪ Fatigue	60 (20.0)	240 (80.0)	1.20	III
	▪ Weight loss	120 (40.0)	180 (60.0)	1.40	II
	▪ Dehydration	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	V
	▪ Loss of sodium	8 (2.7)	292 (97.3)	1.03	IV
	▪ Weak immunity	-	300 (100.0)	1.00	V
	▪ Constipation	240 (80.0)	60 (20.0)	1.80	I
	▪ Mood swings	9 (3.0)	291 (97.0)	1.03	IV
Vitamin E	▪ Anti aging	3 (1.0)	297 (99.0)	1.01	III
	▪	180 (60.0)	120 (40.0)	1.60	II
	▪	240 (80.0)	60 (20.0)	1.80	I

(Figures in parentheses denotes the percentage of respective value)

20.0 per cent of women were aware with fatigue benefitted through carbohydrate with mean score 1.20 and rank III. 80.0 per cent of women were having aware about vitamin E with mean score 1.60 and rank II. The micronutrients in our diet consist of food components that don't provide energy yet are essential for the healthy functioning of our cells and tissues. They include water-soluble vitamins major minerals and trace minerals. Each micronutrient serves a specific purpose in our body and consuming a well-balanced, wide variety of foods helps ensure get the health benefits of every one.

Conclusion

Women produce most of the food that is consumed in their homes, and are generally responsible for processing and preparing food for their households. Recognizing women's and men's distinct roles in family nutrition is a key to improving food security at the household level. Another key issue is respecting the knowledge of traditional communities, particularly women, about the nutritional value of local crops and foods gathered from the wild.. Micro-nutrients deficiency is referred to as the hidden hunger since often times it is not an obvious killer or crippler, but extracts heavy human and economic cost.

Recommendation

- **Vitamin D:** If you are over 50, you have higher needs for vitamin D - an amount that may be difficult to meet with food alone. Health Canada recommends that men and women over the age of 50 take a daily supplement of 400 IU.
- Special attention should be paid to folate (folic acid) intake during pregnancy, in order to avoid birth defects.

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