

Nutritional Profile of Urban Preschool Children of Punjab

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ABSTRACT The nutritional status of 524 preschool children (1-6 years) from middle socio-economic background was evaluated with the help of dietary survey and anthropometric measurements. The consumption of cereals, pulses and green leafy vegetables was grossly inadequate, whereas the intake of income elastic foods like milk and milk products, fats and oils and sugar and jaggery was higher than suggested intake. The intake of energy by both the groups (1-3 and 4-6 years) was 99 and 91 per cent, respectively. The diets of preschool children supply adequate amount of protein and calcium. The intake of vitamin A was inadequate only in the age group of 1-3 years, whereas the intake of vitamin B complex was inadequate in the age group of 4-6 years. Adequacy of iron intake was 89 and 81 per cent, respectively. The mean weight, height and mid-upper arm circumference of both the boys and girls in all the age groups were significantly ($P < 0.01$) lower than the standard. However, the chest circumference of boys (3-4 and 5-6 years) and girls (2-3, 3-4 and 5-6 years) and head circumference of boys (2-3 and 4-5 years) compared well with the standard.

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