

Efficacy of Post-natal Nutrition Counseling on the Nutrient Intake and Haematological Profile of Rural Lactating Punjabi Mothers

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ABSTRACT Sixty rural Punjabi women aged between 18-33 yrs from low socio-economic group were selected from three villages of Ludhiana district during first month of lactation. The subjects were divided equally into Experimental (E) and Control (C) groups. Nutrition counselling was carried out in vernacular through lectures, demonstrations, visual aids etc. to the E group. Inadequate intake of cereals, pulse, fats and oils were observed during I and II month of lactation in both the groups. Average energy intake in E and C groups was 2248, 1934 Kcal and 234, 2009 Kcal during I and III months, respectively. All the subjects consumed diets inadequate in calories, fat, iron, riboflavin, niacin and folic acid but adequate in protein, calcium, retinol equivalents, thiamine and ascorbic acid. The mean Hb levels in the two groups were 11.7±0.8, 9.5±0.5 and 11.9±0.7, 9.9±0.4 g/dl during I and III months, respectively. It was observed that haematological profile improved significantly ($P<0.03$) in the E group during III month. Though there was significant ($P<0.05$) improvement in the nutritional status of the subjects, but it did not meet the recommendations. It could be due to low income, illiteracy, large family size, low availability of foods etc. There should be multiprolonged nutrition counseling programme, keeping in view the cost benefit analysis and severe financial constraints in the developing countries especially in rural areas.