

Nutritional Assessment of Boys of the Spitian Tribe of the Himalayas

S.P. Singh, P. Malhotra, L.S. Sidhu and Prit Pal Singh*

Department of Human Biology, Punjabi University, Patiala 147 002, Punjab, India

**Public College, Samana, Punjab, India*

KEYWORDS Spiti Tribe. Nutritional Status. Calories. Protein. Carbohydrate. Fat

ABSTRACT The present study has been conducted on boys belonging to Spitian tribe of the high altitudes of the Himalayas in order to evaluate their nutrient intakes. The 24 – hour recall data on nutrient intake was collected on 149 subjects during 1996-1998 from various areas of Spiti valley. The altitudes of different areas from where the data was collected range between 3500-4200 metres above mean-sea-level. The amounts of nutrients present in each food item (viz., carbohydrate, protein, fat, minerals, etc.) consumed by the subject were calculated. The diet of Spitians is low in calories as well as in fat than the RDA which perhaps reflects on a fact that the food intake is closely monitored so as it lasts for the whole year and especially during winter when the outside activity cannot commence. The deficit in caloric intake is to the tune of 12 to 21 per cent in this population, and this deficit is more during childhood than during late adolescence.