

Nutritional Status and Mental Ability of School Girls (7-9 years) as Influenced by Nutrition Counselling

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ABSTRACT Sixty girls of 7-9 years belonging to low socio-economic group in Ludhiana city were divided equally into experimental and control group. The experimental group comprising of 30 girls and their mothers were imparted nutrition counselling twice a month for a period of four months. Dietary survey conducted before and after nutrition counselling revealed that daily intake of cereals, pulses, fruit, milk and milk products, fats and oils and sugar and jaggery were less as compared to suggested intakes by ICMR (1987) in both the groups. However, the intake of all these food groups increased significantly in experimental group after nutritional counselling. The intake of nutrients like energy, protein, fat, calcium, iron, beta carotene and vitamin C were below the RDA (ICMR, 1990) before nutrition counselling. A significant increase in nutrient intake was observed in experimental group, with protein, calcium, β carotene and Vit C exceeding the RDA. This may be due to increased food intake and also due to adoption of desirable nutritional practices like use of sprouted grains and other nutritious foods. After nutrition counselling haematological profile and IQ scores significantly increased in experimental group. Percentage of girls in high intellectual score category increased from 23.3 to 43.3. Thus nutrition counselling to school girls along with mothers is likely to result in better nutrient intake and mental ability of school girls.