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Somatic Status, Stress Levels and Energy Expenditure Pattern of Adult Women

Sowmya G. Rao* and Shashikala Puttaraj

Department of Studies in Food Science and Nutrition, Manasagangothri, University of Mysore, Mysore 570 006, Karnataka, India
**E-mail: rao.sowmya@yahoo.com*

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ABSTRACT Recent research on women's health and nutritional status have indicated disturbing trends related to malnutrition due to excess energy intake or impaired energy balance leading to overweight/obesity, particularly among those women who are physically inactive. Further, those women who are gainfully employed are subjected to additional stress due to their diverse economic, reproductive and cultural roles, which can have a detrimental effect on their nutrition and health. The present study assessed the nutritional status of 40 normal adult women in the age group of 20-60 years residing at different locales of Mysore city of Karnataka State. While somatic status of these women was assessed by Anthropometric measurements (Height, Weight, Mid upper arm circumference (MUAC), Skin Fold Thickness (SFT)), their energy expenditure was computed by a Factorial method using activity level and time records of two consecutive days and also using a Pedometer. The results indicated a positive energy balance in all age groups with concomitant increase in Body mass index. The energy, protein and fat status remained normal up to 40 years of age and increased thereafter. Waist Hip ratio (WHR), a risk factor for the development of chronic diseases increased as age advanced. However the energy intake of women was lower than the recommended dietary intake. The tendency towards reduced physical activity reflected in their increasing weight resulting in overweight with advancing age. It is suggested that studies such as these are required to predict the risk of developing non-communicable diseases in normal population.