

Biology of the Tribal Groups of Rajasthan, India: 7. Occurrence of Nutritional Deficiencies

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ABSTRACT The study was carried on the tribal groups of Rajasthan. Cross-sectional study was done on 2928 samples consisting of 1503 males and 1425 females belonging to both adolescent (8⁺ to 18⁺) and adult age groups (19 & above). Clinical assessment (using clinical signs of a disease) has been used for describing the prevalence of nutritional diseases for the tribal groups under study. All the populations show high prevalence of mottled enamel and spongy and bleeding gums. Females in all the tribal groups were found to have high prevalence of lack of lustre in hair, which may indicate higher protein deficiency in them than males. Percent prevalence of Bitot's spot, which occurs due to vitamin A deficiency, is also seen to be high. Thus the data for deficiency diseases from the six tribal groups of the present study indicate widespread prevalence of deficiencies of protein, vitamin A, vitamin B. It has been recognized that vitamin B deficiency is the most commonly occurring nutrient deficiency among the tribal groups of Rajasthan.