



Malnutrition: A Serious Problem of Rural Areas

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Abstract:

This growing problem of malnutrition is severe in the state of Maharashtra; rather very serious in the under development areas like Marathwada and its rural sectors. Inconsistency in following proper and regular diet hampers the development of society by a remarkable impact.

India stands at first position in the world in the list of Malnutrition. The main reason behind this is the large number of underweight newborns. Along with this, malnutrition is observed in the people of all ages in India. But the most sensitive age group of victims of malnutrition happens to be in the age group from 0 to 5 years of birth. Also it is observed that the reason behind this the malnutrition during pregnancy, feeding and lack of proper diet during age 1 to 5 years.

Keywords: Malnutrition, Serious Problem, Rural Areas

Introduction:

A good quality of food is the only reason of healthy family and bad quality of food is the source of all diseases, directly or indirectly. According to dieticians, so as to remain healthy and disease free, food and its nutritional values has incomparable importance. For maintaining good health and immunity, and for treatment against any disease, diet plays an important role along with the medicines. Your diet is the first medicine is said by the well-known personality of this field, TheHippocrates.

Because of the different contents of the food, we get nutrition for our muscles, glands and all other various body parts which is must for its proper growth with the age. Deficiency of which

causes the malnutrition among human beings, especially among children. On the other hand, excess intake of above mentioned nutrients also leads to obesity among children which is also a new form of malnutrition these days.

Definition:

Malnutrition means the condition faced due to lack of one or more nutrients required during a specific period of age. This leads to various internal infections which reduces immunity. This leads to the problems in regular and expected development of body, which also leads to the malnutrition. This malnutrition has the impact on the victim for the entire life. For example, the girl child who has faced malnutrition in her childhood remains weak for her entire life and fails to deliver a healthy baby in her future because of the history.

Concept:

Every human being needs very proper and balanced diet so as to remain efficient and maintain its balance with efficacy. Even if malnutrition can be caused due to excess diet; in India, it is mainly because of the scarcity of food. For estimating the same, especially in children, age and weight are considered to be the main parameters. It is observed that around 30% newborns suffer from malnutrition in India out of which 4.2% die within one year whereas 2.3% die before the age of five.

Methodology for measurement of malnutrition among children:

For children below six years of age, following are the methods to measure the malnutrition

1. Height as per age
2. Weight as per age
3. Weight as per height

Depending upon these children can be classified in four different categories as follows:

1. Not malnourished: if the weight is above 90% of expected weight
2. Less malnourished: if the weight is in between 75% to 90% of expected weight.

3. Moderately malnourished: if the weight is in between 60% to 75% of expected weight.
4. Severely malnourished: if the weight is below 60% of expected weight.

Types of Malnutrition:

Normally, 2400 to 3500 calories are required for a human being for a healthy and nourished lifestyle. Whereas, as per Indian Council of Medical Research, Indian women get only 1400 to 1600 calories in place of 2500. So they lack sufficient proteins, calcium, magnesium, iron, iodine and vitamins. This happens to be the main reason behind undernourished newborns.

Major types of Malnutrition

1. Due to Lack of Proteins and calories: This mainly leads to Kwashiorkor and Marasmus under nutrition which leads to muscle lethargy, frail body, skin appearance change, etc.
2. Anemia: it can be observed from area below eyes, faded skin, nails, tiredness and weakness.
3. Vitamin A deficient Malnutrition: this leads to dry eyes, spots on eyes, etc. it is generally found among children of age group one to five years.
4. Bronchocele: this is due to lack of iodine in body which lead to physical as well as mental disability.

Causes of Malnutrition:

Following are the major categories of causes for malnutrition, especially in India:

1. Physical:
 - a. Lack of nutritional and sufficient diet
 - b. Diseases
 - c. Irregularities in internal systems of body
2. Financial:
 - a. Poverty
 - b. Limited sources of income
3. Social:

- a. Illiteracy
 - b. Blind faith
 - c. Habitat
 - d. Number of members in family
 - e. Addictions
 - f. Adulteration of food
 - g. Environment
4. Geographical
- a. Droughts
 - b. Eathquakes**

Remedies to combat Malnutrition:

1. Healthy diet, especially for pregnant women
2. Immediate Breast feeding to newborns
3. Proper diet to all children from 6 months of age
4. Breast feeding till the age of 2 to children along with five times additional nutritional diet
5. Include sprouts, soybean, milk, meat and eggs in diet
6. Anemia can be avoided by including leafy vegetables, jaggery, dates, etc. which are rich in iron
7. For vitamin A, include vegetables, oil, ghee, milk, etc.
8. Include soybean to your daily diet by any direct or indirect means.
9. If required, take tablets for iron and vitamin A.

Conclusion:

Malnutrition in India is a major issue which leads to the under development of family, society and in turn nation. Healthy women are the main need of our country, especially from the rural areas. Various government schemes and facilities are available along with many national and international organizations for fighting against this Malnutrition. Let us hope to see a healthy India free from Malnutrition in near future.

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