

Pregnant and breastfeeding women vulnerable to malnutrition

Pregnant and breastfeeding women are also vulnerable or at-risk to malnutrition because of increased nutrient needs.

Women's child-bearing and nurturing responsibilities sometimes work to their disadvantage when they devote most of their time to family and neglect their own health. It is important that pregnant and breastfeeding women get full support from loved ones to relieve them of some discomforts related to pregnancy and breastfeeding.

During pregnancy, there are special nutrient needs to meet the demand of the growing fetus whose nourishment depends entirely on the mother's food. These additional nutrients include energy, protein, folate, iron, calcium and iodine that combine to ensure a healthy baby.

The mother's nutrient reserves are usually depleted when her food intake is inadequate. It is a natural mechanism for the growing fetus to use the mother's nutrient reserves to protect the pregnancy outcome, but to the risk of the mother's health. More often, inadequate nutrients from the mother's womb results to baby's low birth weight of less than 2.5 kilograms.

Women need to be healthy and well-nourished even before getting pregnant to ensure successful pregnancy.

During breastfeeding, adequate and balanced diet is needed for continuous milk supply and nutritional needs of the baby exclusively for six months and onwards.

The Food and Nutrition Research Institute of the Department of Science and Technology has conducted a Food Consumption Survey on food intake of Filipino pregnant and breastfeeding women as a component of the National Nutrition Survey.

The survey revealed that Filipino pregnant and breastfeeding women eat less than what is required based on Recommended Energy and Nutrient Intakes or RENI.

Survey results showed the dietary pattern of pregnant and breastfeeding women was a rice-fish-vegetable combination. When the daily food intake was computed to equivalent nutrients, all nutrients except for niacin are below RENI.

Among pregnant women, energy and protein intake is only 78.4 percent and 84.7 percent adequate, respectively. For breastfeeding women, energy and protein intake is only 75 percent and 73.9 percent, respectively.

Iron, the nutrient specifically important for maternal blood volume and iron stores of the baby is only 28.8 percent adequate for pregnant women and 33.4 percent adequate for breastfeeding women based on RENI.

Mean riboflavin intake does not meet even half of the requirements of pregnant women at 48.1 percent and of breastfeeding women at 45.5 percent.

Intake of vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and thiamin are all less than 80 percent adequate for both pregnant and lactating women.

The results demand urgent action on the alarming dietary intake of Filipino pregnant and breastfeeding women. FNRI experts said there is a need to constantly educate pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, soon-to-be mothers, and even teenagers on the importance of mothers' health, nutritional status, and the role of proper diet for pregnant and breastfeeding women.

The government needs to intensify information and education campaign on healthy pregnancy and breastfeeding at the community level, FNRI added.

About the Author

From www.catanduanestribune.com:

Although some physicians routinely prescribe a low iodine diet prior to administration of therapeutic dose of radioactive iodine, there have been no. Prior to this treatment, patients often are advised to go on a low iodine diet for about two weeks to deplete the body of its iodine.

3 weeks before you have this treatment, you will be asked to start eating a low iodine diet. This is because too much iodine in your body can mean that the.

Source: <http://productsherbal.com>