

Unhygienic environment hampers children's growth

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Many children, especially those from poor families, are suffering from intestinal diseases and they easily fall to malnutrition due to lack of knowledge about nutrition and intake of improper and dirty foods in unhygienic environment.

Mothers should only breastfeed their children during the first six months to protect their babies from intestinal diseases.

While giving care to children, it should be kept in mind that their foods must be safe. Their food items, pot for making foods and food makers' hands should be germ free and clean.

Physical growth of human being continues till the age 20-22 years after birth. Foods containing protein and minerals are needed for this growth. Main element in human body's every cell is protein, so children become weak and malnourished if they fail to take protein-rich foods during childhood. Physical growth, studies and their intelligence are also hampered.

Protein and minerals are needed for physical growth and keeping their body fit upto age 22 years.

Main function of food is to keep our body fit and protect from diseases. Lack of vitamin reduces the disease-prevention capacity of body, hence, the body easily fall to cold and cough. Vitamin also protects us from night blindness and teeth diseases.

Severe malnutrition is one of the causes of child mortality. Children suffering from malnutrition lose their disease-prevention capacity and fall to various diseases and they also face more death risk. Though such children survive, their physical and mental growths are disrupted posing threat to formation of talent future generation.

According to statistics, three to four lakh children are now victims of severe malnutrition in the country.

The children aged below five years fall to various diseases and many of them die due to lack of nutrition in our country. Generally, this problem becomes less after crossing this age category. Children, who are deprived of proper care and balanced food, turn sick and their cognitive development hampered.

Children may grow up properly if they have sufficient breastfeeding at first six month after birth. After the first six-month, they should be given sufficient nutritious food for their growth. If they don't get this, their growth is hampered that caused physical and psychological problem. An underage child needs more protein than aged man. Protein is needed for an underage child because it is the basis for formation of body. Pregnant women need more protein and minerals during this time, because foetus takes elements from the foods of mother for its body formation.

Expectant mother needs proper food for maintaining her natural body weight. If a pregnant woman's body weight remains less than normal, untimely abortion may occur or she may be affected by complex diseases that may cause mother's death. During pregnancy, lack of nutritious food cause more damages to foetus. It hampers the physical growth of foetus, hence a immatured, disabled or a dead child is given birth. So additional food is needed for the growth of foetus.

A pregnant woman need more iron-riches food for meeting iron need. A pregnant woman is likely to fall victim to anemia due to lack of iron. So, she should take additional iron through tablet.

A pregnant mother should take foods properly for keeping her health well and future child's health fit and for growth of her child.

The children who are born with less weight lack the necessary amount of iron like other elements, hence, they may be easily affected by any disease and it enhance their death risk.

A mother can ensure the nutrition of her foetus by taking foods as per nutrition demand before and after pregnancy till delivery. A baby is more likely to be given birth with less weight if a girl becomes pregnant at under age.

Those women who suffer from iodine deficiency are more likely to face abortion and to give birth to dead or disabled child than other women. Those children who suffer from iodine deficiency are more likely to fall to malnutrition than other children and their disease prevention capacity also get

reduced. The death risk also increases for iodine deficiency. The demand for nutrition elements for the under five children is more than the grown up man as their body weight increases at every six months till the age two. Under age children need protein for their quick growth and body formation. So the amount of both quality and quantity of protein should be ensured in the food of children.

Since six month, they should be given other foods along with human milk. This food is called complementary food for children. If the children are provided only breastmilk or other milk and are not given complementary foods, then they may gradually become sick and thin which is called marasmas caused by lack of necessary protein and calorie.

Another serious malnutrition of children is various eye diseases caused by vitamins and children become completely blind if this malnutrition continues.

Many of our children turn blind due to lack of Vitamin-A every year. Intake of huge quantity of vegetables and yellow coloured fruits can solve the Vitamin-A deficiency. The above-mentioned two types of may affect children in two-year age but protein deficiency malnutrition is seen within first one year of age. Many of poor children suffer from intestinal diseases and malnutrition due to living in unhygienic environment.

Experts said mothers should breastfeed their children during first six months to keep their children free from intestinal diseases. Intake of excess foods may cause trouble in their liver and hamper digestive system. A child remains healthy with sound body if they get foods timely and as per quantity.

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