



Nutrition and Health



Nutrition is critical to health as it impacts health status and consists of everyone's diet intake. In order to understand the importance of nutrition to health the definition of nutrition is needed. The definition of nutrition by Wikipedia is:

“Nutrition is the science that interprets the interaction of nutrients and other substances in food (e.g. phytonutrients, anthocyanins, tannins, etc.) in relation to maintenance of growth, reproduction, health and disease of an organism. It includes food intake, absorption, assimilation, biosynthesis, catabolism, and excretion.”



The effect of nutrition on health is described by the World Health Organization (WHO) as “Nutrition is the intake of food, considered in relation to the body's dietary needs.” WHO further describes this relationship as “Good nutrition – an adequate, well balanced diet combined with regular physical activity – is the cornerstone of good health. Poor nutrition can lead to reduced immunity, increased susceptibility to disease, impaired physical and mental development and reduced productivity.” Good nutrition promotes good health and counteracts certain disease such as diabetes, heart conditions, high blood pressure, osteoporosis, strokes, cancer, abnormal childhood growth, obesity, and malnutrition diseases.

Basic facts of a healthy diet: 1. Energy intake (calories) should balance with energy expenditure- unhealthy diet and lack of physical activity are leading global risks to health. 2.

Type of nutrients consumed effect health- total fat should not exceed 30 % of total energy intake, causes weight gain and saturated fats effect cardiac health. Intake of free sugars should be less than 10% of diet for weight. Salt intake is recommended to be less than 5 Grams per day to reduce stroke and heart disease.

Government agencies such as World Health Organization (WHO), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) have programs and guidelines to promote healthy nutrition. Further information can be found on the internet:

<http://www.cdc.gov> division of Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity

<http://www.nutrition.gov> nutrition and health issues

<http://www.supertracker.usda.gov>

<http://www.nutritiondata.self.com> BMI & Calories Burned Calculator

<http://www.who.int/topics/nutrition>