



Nutrient Intakes and Adequacy among Preschooler Children in Gaza, Palestine

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Nutrient intake; Preschooler; Recommended dietary allowances

Editorial

According to recent national surveys, 4 Palestinians are facing a double burden of malnutrition: a high level of micronutrient deficiencies alongside growing overweight and obesity. Approximately 50 percent of people assessed had very low levels of essential minerals and vitamins. Depleted levels of iron were found in 28 percent in the Gaza Strip. Prevalence of mild anemia in children aged 6 months to 59 months averaged 24 percent [1]. According to World Health Organization (WHO) standards, anemia is a moderate public health problem.

This cross-sectional, community-based, household survey was carried out in Gaza City, Palestine during the first half of 2018 to study the nutrient intakes adequacy of Palestinian preschool children aged 2 years to 5 years in Gaza.

The actual sample size was 176 of preschooler children comprising 126 from urban area, 30 from rural and 20 from refugee camp.

The nutrients deficient below the 75% RDA level of dietary intake, the study show the following findings. The energy was the highest (90%) deficient in the diet among the studied preschool children below RDA level of dietary intake. Also, a high prevalence of deficiency was in vitamin A intake (87%) and about three quarters (73.3%) of studied children consumed calcium below the RDA level of dietary intake. About half (47.2%) of studied children consumed iron below the RDA level of dietary intake, where about one fifth (20%) of studied children consumed carbohydrate and 17% consumed zinc below the RDA level of dietary intake respectively. A few percent of studied children (4.5%) have protein deficient diets and the plants sources were the main and majority consumption.

Deterioration of the nutritional status among Gazan preschool children and the malnutrition indicators shows the worst for several decades. It is reasonable to assume that the deterioration in nutritional status in the Gaza Strip was political in nature and man-made *via* the Israeli blockade and tightening of restrictions on the free movement of people and goods in the Gaza Strip and the unprecedented and prolonged closure of the Gaza Strip as confirmed by previous surveys by international agencies [2,3].

References

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