

WHAT IS NUTRITION?



Nutrition is a science that deals with absorption, digestion and metabolism of food in our body.

Constituents of nutrition –

- 1. Carbohydrates** – Compounds containing one or more sugar energy giving source should constitute 60% of our food. 1 gm carbohydrates = 4Kcal. For example – Roti, rice, pasta, noodles, poha, upma, oats.
 - Complex carbohydrates such as whole wheats, oats etc. have more dietary fibers than simple carbohydrates like those found in sugar or biscuits. Hence, complex carbohydrates are more beneficial.
- 2. Proteins** – Helps in growth and maintenance of our body. Proteins should constitute 15% of our food. 1gm protein = 4Kcal. For example – Lentils, Quinoa, milk, egg, chicken, mutton, fish.
- 3. Fats** – provides energy and cushions our body from the environment. Also important for fat soluble vitamins. 1gm of fat = 9Kcal. Should be approximately 25% of our food.

Types of fats –

- i. Saturated Fats** – Solid at room temperature. Ex – coconut oil, butter, ghee, margarine.
- ii. Unsaturated Fats** – Liquid at room temperature. Ex – olive oil, canola oil, sunflower oil.

Should avoid saturated fats as these deposit on arteries. Those with following ailments should moderate fat intake – Heart disease, high cholesterol, thrombosis, obesity, removal of gall bladder.

- 4. Vitamins** – Micro nutrients are needed in small quantity. These are organic compounds in fruits and vegetables. Overdose of vitamins may lead to toxicity, we should pay extra attention to fat soluble vitamins (A, D, E and K) as they are deposited in our fat and not easily excreted by body.

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5. **Minerals** – Micro nutrients needed in small quantity such as calcium, phosphorus, manganese etc. overdose may cause toxicity.
6. **Water** – Most important nutrient. 60-70% of adult body gives structure and form to human body.

Health Problems which may be Associated to Ageing –

1. Obesity – Due to lack of exercise.
2. Malnutrition – Due to loneliness, or as side effect of medication.
3. Osteoporosis – Decrease in bone mass.
4. Cardio vascular disease
5. Diabetics – Decreased ability to use carbohydrates due to sedentary lifestyle.
6. Cancer – Risk factors increase after 60-65 years due to exposure to carcinogens.