

National Nutrition Week to be observed from 1st to 7th September**National Nutrition Week to be observed from 1st to 7th September**

The National Nutrition Week will be observed throughout the country from 1st to 7th September. The theme of the National Nutrition Week for 2017 is "Optimal Infant & Young Child Feeding Practices: Better Child Health". The basic objective of this annual event is to intensify awareness generation on the importance of nutrition for health which has an impact on development, productivity, economic growth and ultimately National development.

The Food and Nutrition Board of Ministry of Women & Child Development, through its 43 Community Food and Nutrition Extension Units (CFNEUs) located in 30 States/UTs, will coordinate with concerned Department of the State/UT Governments, National Institutions, NGOs and organize State/UT Level Workshops, Orientation Training of Fields Functionaries, Awareness Generation Camps, Community meetings during the week on the specified theme.

Large numbers of State, district and village level activities are being organized during this week. One day workshops will be held to sensitize and for capacity building of State/Districts Level officers on importance of nutrition for better health. There will be lecture cum demonstration on low cost nutritious recipes for grassroots level functionaries like school teachers, anganwadi workers and helpers, village women and mahila samitis. Mini exhibition on nutrition displaying low cost nutritious diets for different age groups will also be organized at grassroots level. Awareness generation on weight management and its importance through Body Mass Index will be held for adolescent boys and girls. Besides there will be large number of activities like quiz competition on nutrition and competition on preparation of nutritious recipes. Awareness programmes will be held at village level through puppet shows, skits, dance & drama, films, slide shows, AV Spots, nutrition rallies etc.

Nutrition is an issue of survival, health and development for current and succeeding generations. Child born underweight have impaired immune function and increased risk of diseases such as diabetes and heart diseases in their later life. Malnourished children tend to have lower IQ and impaired cognitive ability, thus affecting their school performance and then productivity in their later life. It has to be realized that the nutritional health and all age groups represent say National Economic Asset.

As, improving the nutritional status of the population is imperative for National Development. Under nutrition in young children continues to be a major public health problem in India. The NFHS4 has not shown an encouraging improvement in the nutritional status, especially among women and children. As per NFHS-4 the level of underweight has decreased by 6.8% and is stunting by 9.6%. Level of anaemia has decreased by 11% as compared to NNHS-3 figures.

Malnutrition is not to be viewed merely as an offshoot of poverty having adverse effects on health and development of individuals but as a national problem that results in loss of productivity and economic backwardness. Time has come to create a moment so as to improve nutrition at the individual level. Thus, series of convergent and well coordinated actions in different sectors are required to be undertaken in the mission mode approach to address this big network problem of malnutrition

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