

## Nutritional status of rural elderly people with special reference to iron deficiency, anemia

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The present study was undertaken to assess the nutritional status of rural elderly people with special reference to iron deficiency, anemia. For this purpose a sample of 60 each, rural elderly male and female of 60-80 yrs. were selected. A pre-tested interview schedule was developed to collect information regarding socio- economic status, nutritional status by dietary survey (24 hrs. recall method), anthropometric measurements (height, weight and BMI), clinical and hemoglobin estimation to assess the nutritional status of the elderly. It was concluded from the findings of research that socio- economic status of the families was poor 48.3 per cent of them were from lower caste and 46.6 per cent from medium class. Dietary survey revealed that the diet of the elderly people in comparison to the balanced diet was substantially inadequate. Cereals and pulses were food consumed by all the people. In anthropometric indices, distribution of elderly subjects on the basis of height (cm.), weight (kg.) and BMI (kg./meter square) revealed that 70 per cent of elderly male and 84 per cent female were suffering from different grades of malnutrition. By the assessment of prevalence of clinical signs/symptoms and hemoglobin estimation showed that the mean hemoglobin level of elderly people showed that 57.5 per cent elderly people were falling in moderate category of anemia, 38.3 per cent people were severely anemic and very few (4.16%) subjects were falling in mild category of anemia. The prevalence of anemia was higher in low socio-economic status (53.3%) group as compared to high and middle socio-economic status (46.6%) group. The correlation between Hb status and pertinent nutrients showed that there was a positive correlation between Hb and protein intake, while there was non-significant correlation observed between iron, vitamin C and folic acid content. From the above results it can be concluded that overall nutritional status of rural elderly people was not satisfactory and they were having higher prevalence of iron deficiency anemia.

**Key Words :** Nutritional status, Anemia, Elderly, RDA BMI.

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