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# Food consumption pattern among lactating mothers

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The period of lactation is a relatively brief and very special time in a women's life that is fondly remembered with a measure of pride. A lactating mother will need to take some extra care to assure that she produces and provides to her infant abundant, high-quality milk. Lactating mothers who eat a nutritious diet ensure good health for themselves and optimal growth pattern for their babies. In India it is observed from various nutritional surveys that the nutritional status of lactating mothers and infants is not satisfactory. Keeping this in mind this present study was carried out with the objective to find out the food consumption pattern among lactating mothers of Digboi, Assam with a total sample of 100 lactating women from rural areas of Digboi. An interview schedule was used as a tool. Majority (75%) of women had up to secondary level education and rest 25 per cent had up to primary level education. None of the mothers was working. Majority (72%) had knowledge that diet should be changed by increasing, adding or avoiding some special food items in the diet during lactation, but only 11 per cent practiced them. The reasons for this deficient knowledge and practice of dietary intake are lack of nutritional knowledge and poor economy. However, this can be overcome by improving nutritional knowledge and dietary practices of population in general and vulnerable groups on the use of locally available low cost nutritious foods and to avoid undue food restrictions.

**Key Words :** Lactation, Nutrition, Nutritional status

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