

A study of food and nutrient intake of Punjabi adult males engaged in varied occupations

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The combination of a healthy weight, prudent diet and daily physical activity clearly plays a role in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of chronic diseases. Occupational level greatly influences the physical activity which in turn has significant effect on body composition. The present scenario of high prevalence of life style diseases is a serious threat to health and wellbeing of Punjabi community, the males being more prone due to their genetic pre-disposition. The study was conducted to determine the food and nutrient intake of adult males engaged in varied occupations. Thirty adult male subjects in the age group of 40 to 50 years from each category *i.e.* field workers, laboratory workers and office workers were selected from Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. The consumption of pulses, green leafy vegetables and other vegetables and fruits were inadequate while cereals, milk and milk products and fats and oils and sugars were adequate in all the three groups. Diets were inadequate for energy, protein but adequate for fat in all the three categories. The contribution of fats to total energy was higher *i.e.* more than 20 per cent in case of lab workers and office workers which was undesirable as it may lead to obesity and other degenerative disorders. Thiamine was found to be adequate while rest of the five vitamins namely niacin, folic acid, vitamin B₁₂ and vitamin C were inadequate in all the three groups. Iron intake was adequate in field workers but marginally inadequate in lab and office workers while calcium was inadequate in field workers. Excess consumption of food especially in the form of cereals, pulses, sugar, fats and oils resulted in gaining total body weight which may result in increased risk of degenerative diseases. Hence, it is recommended that people must be educated to consume adequate diet so as to achieve desirable body weights.

Key Words : Food intake, Nutrient intake, Field workers, Laboratory workers, Office workers

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