Breastfeeding

Rural children breastfed more: survey (The Hindu: 20190109)

https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/rural-children-breastfed-more-survey/article29621019.ece

Breastfeeding is inversely proportional to household wealth and other factors, says study.

Malnutrition among children in urban India is characterised by relatively poor levels of breastfeeding, higher prevalence of iron and Vitamin D deficiency as well as obesity due to long commute by working mothers, prosperity and lifestyle patterns, while rural parts of the country see higher percentage of children suffering from stunting, underweight and wasting and lower consumption of milk products — these are among the findings of the first-ever national nutrition survey conducted by the government.

The Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey released by the government on Monday shows that 83% of children between 12 and 15 months continued to be breastfed, a higher proportion of children in this age group residing in rural areas are breastfed (85%) compared to children in urban areas (76%). Breastfeeding is inversely proportional to household wealth and other factors influencing this trend may include working mothers who have to travel long distances to reach their workplace.

Because of these reasons, it also noted that rural children receive meals more frequently in a day at 44% as compared to 37% of urban children. However, a higher proportion of children residing in urban areas (26.9%) are fed an adequately diverse diet as compared to those in rural areas (19%).

Nutrition survey

Nutrition survey finds rising diabetes risk in children (The Tribune: 20190109)

https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/nutrition-survey-finds-rising-diabetes-risk-in-children/843948.html

There is a growing risk of non-communicable diseases among children aged 5 to 9 years and adolescents aged 10-19 years in India. As per the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS) 2016-18, one in 10 school-age children and adolescents were pre-diabetic.

One per cent of school-age children and adolescents were diabetic and three per cent of school-age children and four per cent of adolescents had high total cholesterol.

Seven per cent of school-age children and adolescents were at risk for chronic kidney disease. Five per cent of adolescents were classified as having hypertension.

The CNNS, the first-ever nationally representative nutrition survey of children and adolescents in India, has also found that 35 per cent of children under five were stunted, 22 per cent of school-age children were stunted while 24 per cent of adolescents were thin for their age.

The CNNS India for the period 2016-18 is the largest micronutrient survey ever conducted.

To provide robust data on the shifting conditions of both under-nutrition and overweight and obesity, the Ministry of Health conducted the survey to collect a comprehensive set of data on nutritional status of Indian children from 0-19 years of age.

This survey was the largest micronutrient survey ever implemented. Also, the survey used gold standard methods to assess anaemia, micronutrient deficiencies and biomarkers of NCDs for the first time in India.

As far as stunting was concerned, a number of the most populous states including Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh had a high (37-42 per cent) prevalence.

The lowest prevalence of stunting (16-21 per cent) was found in Goa and Jammu and Kashmir. A higher prevalence of stunting in under-fives was found in rural areas (37 per cent) compared to urban areas (27 per cent). Also, children in the poorest wealth quintile were more likely to be stunted (49 per cent), as compared to 19 per cent in the richest quintile.

Stunting and underweight prevalence were both about 7 per cent in newborn children, with a steady increase in both indicators until two years of age. The prevalence of stunting peaked at 40 per cent at approximately two years of age and slowly declined to 30 per cent by the fifth year of life. The prevalence of underweight was highest (35 per cent) in the third year of life and ranged from 25 per cent to 34 per cent during 36-59 months of age.

Overall, 35 per cent of children aged 5 to 9 years were underweight, with 10 per cent severely underweight. The prevalence of underweight was 30 per cent at age five years and remained stable across the five-year period.

On deficiencies, as per the survey, the prevalence of vitamin A deficiency was 18 per cent among pre-school children, 22 per cent among school-age children and 16 per cent among adolescents.

Vitamin D deficiency was found among 14 per cent of pre-school children, 18 per cent of school-age children and 24 per cent of adolescents.

Nearly one-fifth of pre-school children (19 per cent), 17 per cent of school-age children and 32 per cent of adolescents had zinc deficiency.

On anaemia, the survey found that 41 per cent of pre-schoolers, 24 per cent of school-age children and 28 per cent of adolescents suffered from it. Anaemia was most prevalent among children under two years of age.

Female adolescents had a higher prevalence of anaemia (40 per cent) compared to their male counterparts (18 per cent).

Anaemia was a moderate or severe public health problem among pre-schoolers in 27 states, among school-age children in 15 states, and among adolescents in 20 states.

Thirty-two percent of pre-schoolers, 17 per cent of school-age children and 22 per cent of adolescents had iron deficiency. IANS

Air pollution

Air pollution exposure linked to aggressive behaviour: US study (The Tribune: 20190109)

https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/air-pollution-exposure-linked-to-aggressive-behaviour-us-study/842602.html

Exposure to air pollution is associated with increased chances of exhibiting aggressive behaviour, according to research conducted in the US.

Researchers from Colorado State University (CSU) in the US analysed a set of studies, finding strong links between short-term exposure to air pollution and aggressive behaviour, in the form of aggravated assaults and other violent crimes across the US.

The results, appearing in the Journal of Environmental Economics and Management, were derived from daily Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) crime statistics and an eight-year, detailed map of daily US air pollution.

Scientists typically measure rates of pollution through concentrations of ozone, as well as of "PM2.5," or breathable particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or smaller, which has documented associations with health effects.

Eighty-three per cent of crimes considered "violent" by the FBI are categorised as assaults in crime databases, the researchers said.

They observed whether crimes occurred inside or outside the home, finding that 56 per cent of violent crimes and 60 per cent of assaults occurred within homes, an indication that many such crimes are tied to domestic violence.

The results show that a 10 microgramme-per-cubic-metre increase in same-day exposure to PM2.5 is associated with a 1.4 per cent increase in violent crimes, nearly all of which were crimes categorised as assaults.

Researchers also found that a 0.01 parts-per-million increase in same-day exposure to ozone is associated with a 0.97 per cent increase in violent crime, or a 1.15 per cent increase in assaults.

Changes in these air pollution measures had no statistically significant effect on any other category of crime, the researchers said.

"We're talking about crimes that might not even be physical—you can assault someone verbally," said Jude Bayham, from CSU.

"The story, when you're exposed to more pollution, you become marginally more aggressive, so those altercations—some things that may not have escalated—do escalate," said Bayham.

The researchers made no claims on the physiological, mechanistic relationship of how exposure to pollution leads someone to become more aggressive.

Their results only show a strong correlative relationship between such crimes and levels of air pollution.

The researchers were careful to correct for other possible explanations, including weather, heat waves, precipitation, or more general, county-specific confounding factors.

The team published a companion paper in the Journal of Environmental Economics and Policy with similar results that used monthly crime statistics.

A third paper, published in the journal Epidemiology by researchers at University of Minnesota in the US and co-authors from CSU, used the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) pollution monitor databases and different statistical techniques and came to similar conclusions.

"The results are fascinating, and also scary," said co-author Jeff Pierce, an associate professor at CSU.

"When you have more air pollution, this specific type of crime, domestic violent crime in particular, increases quite significantly," Pierce said. — PTI

Diabetes

Diabetes remission possible if 10 per cent body weight lost within first 5 years (The Tribune: 20190109)

https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/health/diabetes-remission-possible-if-10-per-cent-body-weight-lost-within-first-5-years/840533.html

People who can reduce their weight by 10 per cent or more within the first five years of diagnosis with type 2 diabetes have the greatest chance of going into remission, according to a study which suggests that it is possible to recover from the disease without intensive lifestyle interventions, or extreme calorie restrictions.

Type 2 diabetes which affects more than 400 million people worldwide, increases the risk of heart disease, stroke, blindness, and amputations, the study, published in the journal Diabetic Medicine, noted.

The researchers, including those from the University of Cambridge in the UK, said that while type 2 diabetes can be managed through a combination of positive lifestyle changes and medication, it was also possible for the patients' high blood glucose levels to return to normal if they went through significant calorie restriction and weight loss.

Studies have established that an intensive low-calorie diet consisting of 700 calories daily intake—less than one cheeseburger—for a period of 8 weeks was associated with remission in almost nine out of ten people recently diagnosed with the disease, and in half the number of people with longstanding disease, the researchers said.

However, they added that there was little evidence to show whether the same effect could be achieved by people undergoing less intensive interventions, which are more feasible and potentially scalable to the wider population.

They studied data from the ADDITION-Cambridge trial—a cohort study of 867 people with newly diagnosed diabetes aged 40 and 69 years recruited from general practices.

The study noted that 257 participants (30 per cent) were in remission at a follow-up after five years.   The researchers said that people who could reduce their weight by 10 per cent, or more, within the first five years after diagnosis were more than twice as likely to go into remission—compared to those who maintained the same weight after the period.

"We've known for some time now that it's possible to send diabetes into remission using fairly drastic measures such as intensive weight loss programmes and extreme calorie restriction," said co-author Hajira Dambha-Miller of the University of Cambridge.

The interventions, he said, can be very challenging to individuals and difficult to achieve.

But the researchers suggested that it may be possible to lose weight, for at least five years, with a more modest weight loss of 10 per cent.

"This will be more motivating and hence more achievable for many people," Dambha-Miller said. — PTI

Anaemia

Anaemia a health problem in all states except Kerala (New Kerala: 20190109)

https://health.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/anaemia-a-health-problem-in-all-states-except-kerala/71491797

Anaemia was a moderate or severe public health problem among pre-school children in 27 states, school-age children in 15 states and adolescents in 20 states, the report said.

up of 5-9 years in all states except for Kerala, according to the findings of the Comprehensive National Nutrition Survey (CNNS), 2016-18.

Anaemia was a moderate or severe public health problem among pre-school children in 27 states, school-age children in 15 states and adolescents in 20 states, the report said.

Anaemia was most prevalent at more than 50 per cent among both boys and girls under two years of age and thereafter, decreased steadily to 11 years of age to about 15 per cent.

Overall, 41 per cent of pre-schoolers aged 1-4 years, 24 per cent of school-age children aged 5-9 years and 28 per cent of adolescents aged 10-19 years had some degree of anaemia.

The survey noted that the severity of anaemia varied across age groups. Among pre-schoolers, 22 per cent had mild anaemia, 18 per cent had moderate anaemia and 1 per cent had severe anaemia.

Among school-age children, 10 per cent had mild anaemia, 13 per cent had moderate anaemia, and 1 per cent had severe anaemia. Among adolescents, 17 per cent had mild anaemia, 10 per cent had moderate anaemia and 1 per cent had severe anaemia.

An increased prevalence was observed among older adolescents. Anaemia was more prevalent among female adolescents 12 years of age and older at 40 per cent compared to their male counterparts at 18 per cent.

The prevalence of anaemia varied by the schooling status of children and adolescents.

Compared to those currently in school, anaemia prevalence was higher among out-of-school children aged 5 to 9 years and adolescents aged 10-19 years.

Additionally, the prevalence of anaemia decreased with a higher level of mother's schooling among both school-age children and adolescents.

In all three age groups, anaemia was most prevalent among scheduled tribes, followed by scheduled castes. More than half (53 per cent) of pre-schoolers and more than one-third of school-age children and adolescents (38 per cent each) belonging to scheduled tribes were anaemic.

The prevalence of anaemia decreased steadily with an increase in household wealth in all three age groups.

Among pre-schoolers, the prevalence of anaemia was highest in Madhya Pradesh (54 per cent), followed by Haryana (48 per cent) and Delhi (47 per cent) and was lowest in Nagaland (8 per cent) and Manipur (10 per cent).

Among school-age children, Tripura (41 per cent), Assam (35 per cent) and Jharkhand (34 per cent) and West Bengal (34 per cent) had the highest prevalence of anaemia and Kerala (3 per cent), Jammu & Kashmir (7 per cent) and Manipur (7 per cent) had the lowest prevalence. Among adolescents, West Bengal (46 per cent), Tripura (41 per cent) and Assam (37 per cent) had the highest prevalence of anaemia, while Nagaland (8 per cent) and Kerala (9 per cent) had the lowest prevalence.

Nipah scare

Nipah scare over, says Kerala Health Minister (New Kerala: 20190109)

The health department is now conducting studies to find out the reasons behind the second Nipah outbreak.

https://health.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/industry/nipah-scare-over-says-kerala-health-minister/69801349

Thiruvananthapuram: After one positive case and over 300 suspects, the scare of the second attack of Nipah virus in Kerala is over, state Health Minister K.K. Shailaja told the media on Saturday.

"Even though the Nipah scare is over and there is no need for complete surveillance, the situation will be under observation till the middle of next month," Shailaja said.

On June 3, a 23-year-old college student, admitted to a private hospital in Ernakulam, tested positive for Nipah virus. Since then, the health authorities in the state have been on their toes to prevent the virus from spreading. And after almost two weeks, Shailaja finally gave the signal that the scare was over.

After 12 deaths were reported last year in Kozhikode and Malappuram districts following a Nipah outbreak, experts had collected samples from bats. Now, fruit bats have been identified as the carriers of the deadly virus.

The health department is now conducting studies to find out the reasons behind the second Nipah outbreak.