



Iron and Zinc Status of Adult Women from Low Income Rural Families of Punjab, India

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Abstract: Iron and zinc deficiency are widespread in malnourished poor women subsisting on cereal-based diets in developing countries. The study was aimed to determine iron and zinc status of women from low income rural households of Punjab, India. Thirty clusters (villages) from all 12 blocks of Ludhiana district were chosen randomly to select 312 women (15-45 yrs) from households of agricultural labourers and of small and marginal farmers. Serum zinc values were below optimal level in 31.41 per cent of the subjects, 50.64 per cent reference women had haemoglobin levels below normal and low serum iron was in 65.38 per cent of the subjects. Serum ferritin level showed that 54.17 per cent of women had unsatisfactory ferritin levels. Wheat was the major contributor of energy, iron and zinc in the diets of women i.e. 43.5, 64.4 and 73 per cent. The iron intake was marginally inadequate among non-pregnant and non-lactating as well as lactating group, the per cent adequacy being 94.1 and 90.3 per cent, respectively. The percent adequacy of iron for pregnant women was 64.9 per cent. Zinc intake distribution showed that 82 per cent of women had inadequate zinc intake. Wheat was a noteworthy source of energy, iron, and zinc in their diets.

Keywords: Iron, Zinc, Low income, Rural, Women
