



Good Food

BETTER HEALTH



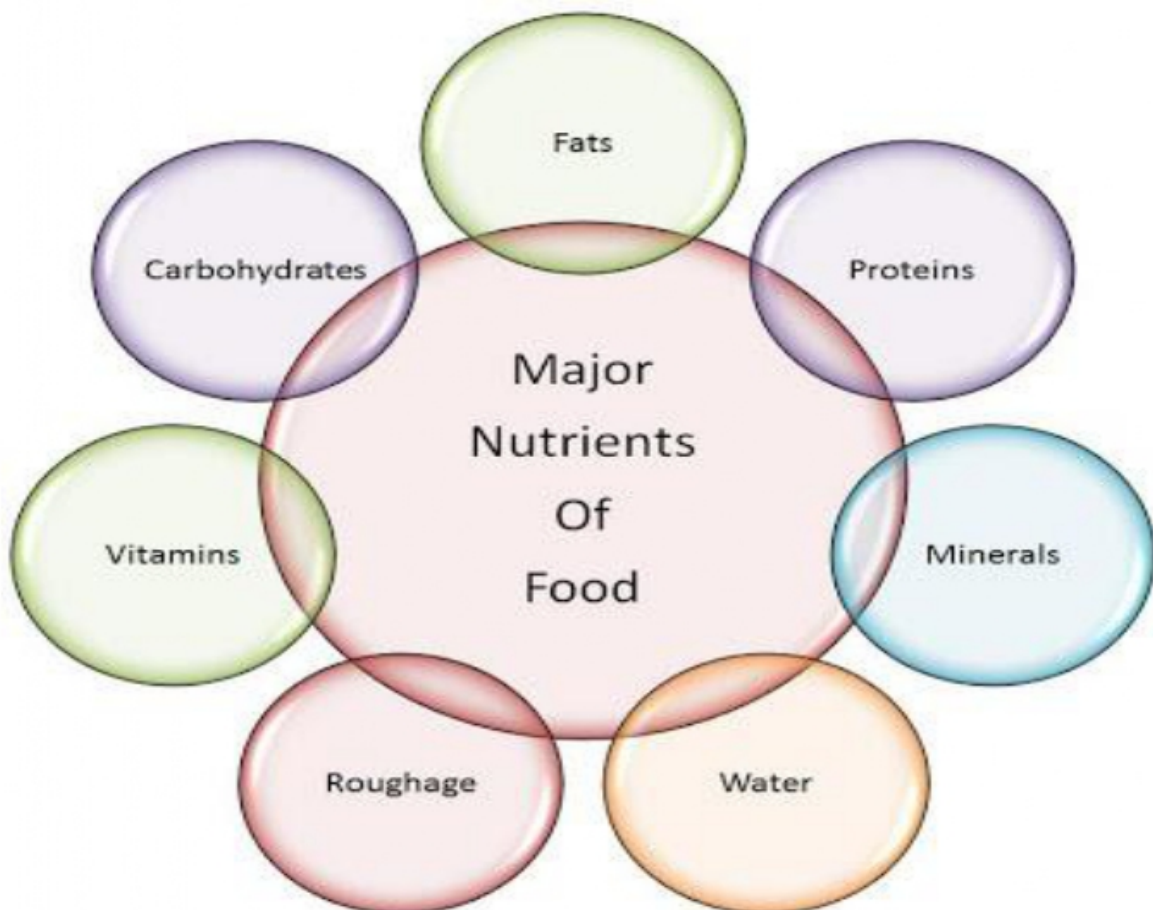
A SIMPLE GUIDE TO NUTRITION FOR EVERYONE

Anum Siddiqui
Nutritionist
MSc (DFSM), PGD

Hyderabad Development and Peace Program
COVA Peace Network



Understanding Health and Nutrition



Nutrition refers to the elements present in food which our body uses to grow, stay strong, and fight diseases.

Food is not only meant to fill our stomachs. Nutrition in food provides **energy, strength, protection, and development.**

Preface

Health is one of the most valuable assets a person can have. However, millions of people across the world suffer from poor health due to lack of proper nutrition and knowledge about healthy eating.

In many communities, people work hard every day but still struggle with health problems such as weakness, anemia, diabetes, obesity, and poor growth in children. These problems are often not caused by lack of food alone, but by **lack of knowledge about what to eat and how to eat in a healthy way.**

This book is written to help people understand the **importance of nutrition and healthy lifestyle practices using simple and practical ideas.** The goal is to empower individuals and families to make better food choices even with limited resources.

Good nutrition does not always mean expensive food. Many healthy foods are **locally available, affordable, and traditional.**

Through awareness, education, and simple changes in daily habits, every family can improve their health and live a longer and more productive life.

Anum Siddiqui

MSc (DFSM), PGD (Dietetics and Clinical Nutrition)

Therapeutic Nutritionist & Wellness Consultant

Chapter 1

Why Nutrition Is Important

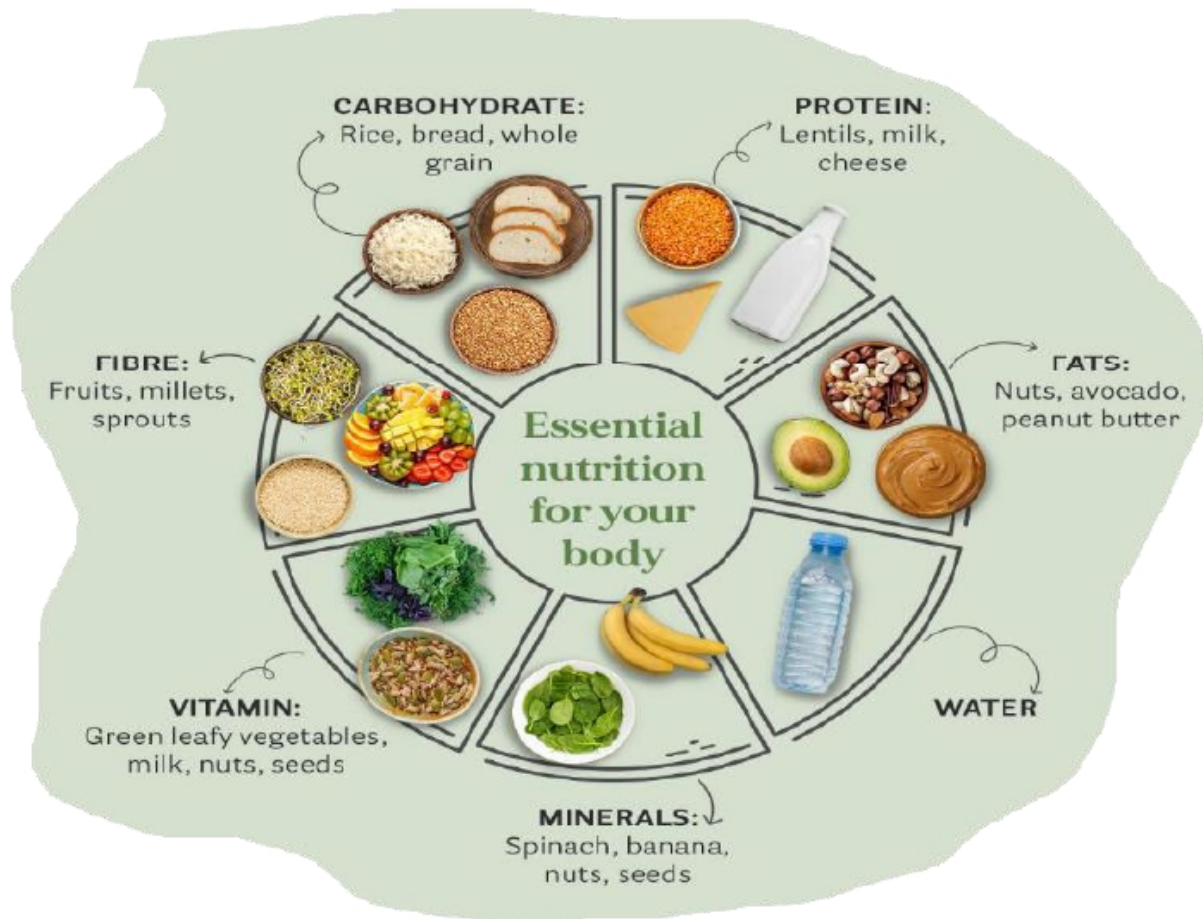


Good nutrition helps:

- Build strong bones and muscles
- Improve brain development in children
- Strengthen immunity
- Prevent diseases
- Improve energy levels for daily work

Poor nutrition, on the other hand, can lead to many health problems such as anemia, malnutrition, obesity, and diabetes.

A healthy body requires different nutrients such as:



- Carbohydrates
- Proteins
- Fats
- Vitamins
- Minerals
- Iron
- Calcium
- Iodine
- Zinc etc

Water is also essential for life.

Without proper nutrition, the body becomes weak and more vulnerable to disease.

Chapter 2

The Link Between Nutrition and Health

The food we eat directly affects our health.

Food and health are closely connected. What we eat directly affects how our body functions.

Nutrition plays an important role in preventing diseases and maintaining overall health.

People who have better knowledge about nutrition are more likely to make healthier food choices and improve their dietary diversity

Poor eating habits can lead to many health problems such as:

Undernutrition

This occurs when the body does not receive enough nutrients.

Common signs include:

- Weakness
- Poor growth in children
- Frequent illness
- Low immunity
- Fatigue

Micronutrient Deficiencies

Some common deficiencies include:

Iron deficiency (Anemia)

- Causes weakness, dizziness, and fatigue

Vitamin A deficiency

- Causes vision problems

Iodine deficiency

- Can affect brain development and thyroid function

Lifestyle Diseases



Modern lifestyles have also increased diseases such as:

- Diabetes
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease

These diseases are often linked to:

- Too much sugar
- Too much oil and fried food
- Lack of physical activity
- Stress and poor sleep

Good nutrition helps prevent many of these conditions.

Chapter 3

Nutrition Challenges in our Communities

Many families face difficulties in maintaining healthy diets due to several challenges.

Lack of Awareness

Many people are not aware of:

- What a balanced diet is
- Which foods provide important nutrients
- Healthy cooking practices

This lack of awareness leads to poor food choices and unhealthy eating habits.

Financial Limitations

Healthy food is sometimes believed to be expensive. As a result, families depend on cheaper but less nutritious foods.

Cultural Beliefs and Food Myths

Some communities avoid certain foods because of cultural beliefs or misinformation.

Certain traditional beliefs influence food choices.

For example:

1. Some foods may be avoided during pregnancy
 2. Some believe that being overweight means being healthy
- Such misconceptions can negatively affect health.

Limited Access to Health Information

Many communities do not receive regular health education or nutrition guidance.

Because of these challenges, people often eat food that fills the stomach but does not provide enough nutrients.

Low Literacy Levels

Low literacy makes it difficult for people to understand health messages, food labels, and nutrition guidelines

Chapter 4

A balanced diet

A balanced diet means eating different types of food in the right amounts.

It includes:

Carbohydrates

Provide energy.

Examples:

1. Rice
2. Wheat
3. Millets
4. Potatoes



Proteins

Help build muscles and repair tissues.

Affordable sources include:

1. Pulses
2. Lentils
3. Eggs

4. Milk
5. Peanuts

Fats

Provide energy but should be consumed in small amounts.

Sources include:

1. Cooking oils
2. Nuts
3. Seeds

Vitamins and Minerals

Protect the body from diseases.

Sources include:

1. Fruits
2. Vegetables
3. Green leafy vegetables

A healthy meal should include:

1. Grains

Rice, wheat, millets, roti, and other cereals provide energy.

2. Pulses and Legumes

Dal, beans, chickpeas, and lentils provide protein.

3. Vegetables

Vegetables provide vitamins and minerals.

4. Fruits

Fruits provide antioxidants and vitamins.

5. Milk or Curd

These provide calcium and protein.

6. Healthy Fats

Small amounts of oil, nuts, and seeds are important.

A simple balanced meal can be...
Roti or rice + dal + vegetable + curd



Healthy snacks can be: Fruits , chana, peanuts, chole, rajma , vegetable salad , corn , eggs, sprouts , green peas



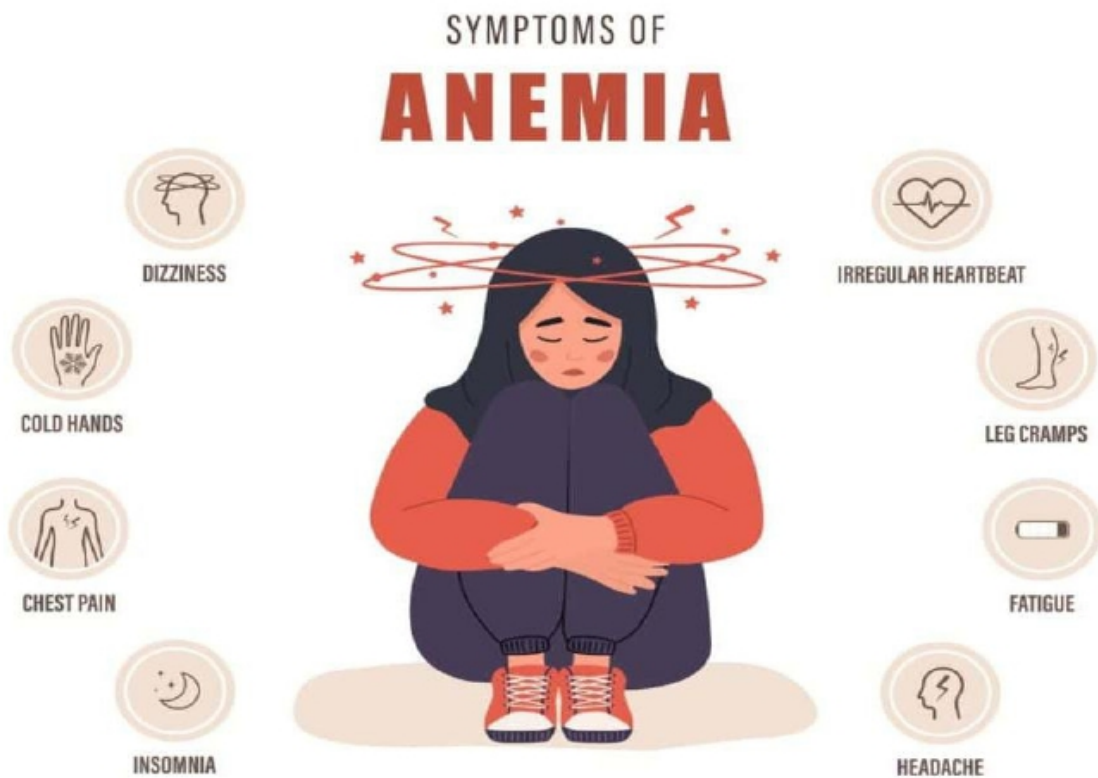
Chapter 5

Common Nutrition Problems in Families and Foods to be used for it

Many families experience nutrition-related health problems.

Some common issues include:

Anemia



This is very common among women and children.

Symptoms include:

- Weakness
- Pale skin
- Fatigue
- Dizziness



Iron-rich foods include:

- Green leafy vegetables
- Lentils
- Jaggery
- Eggs
- Meat

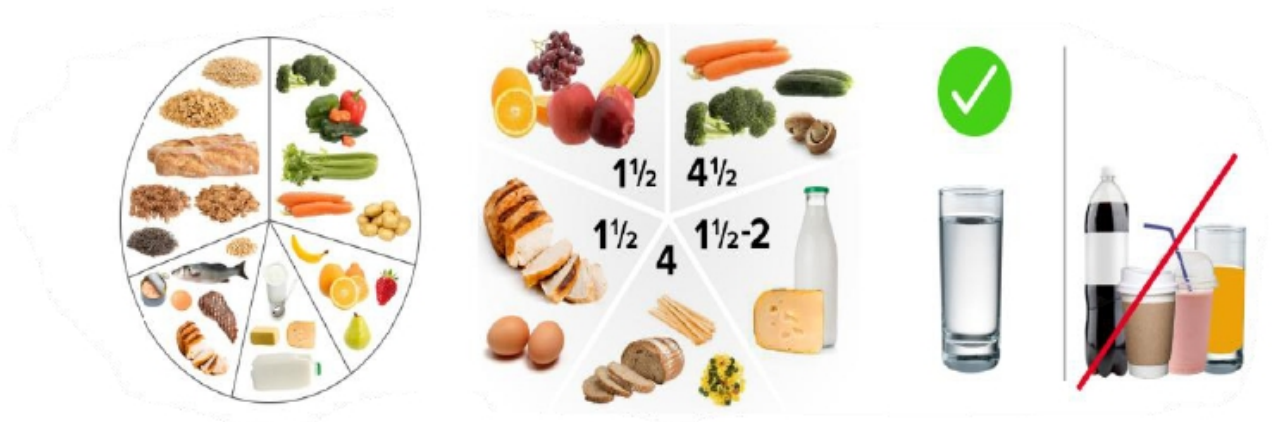
Poor Child Growth

Children require good nutrition for proper growth and brain development. Lack of nutrition can lead to:

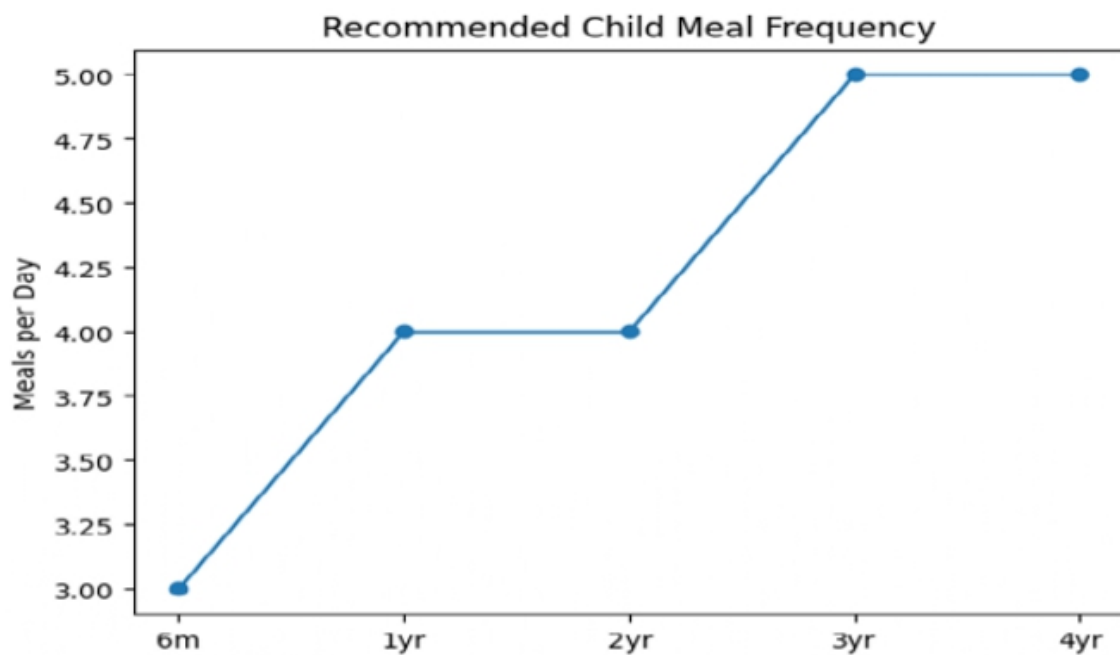
- Stunting
- Low weight
- Poor immunity



Children should eat:

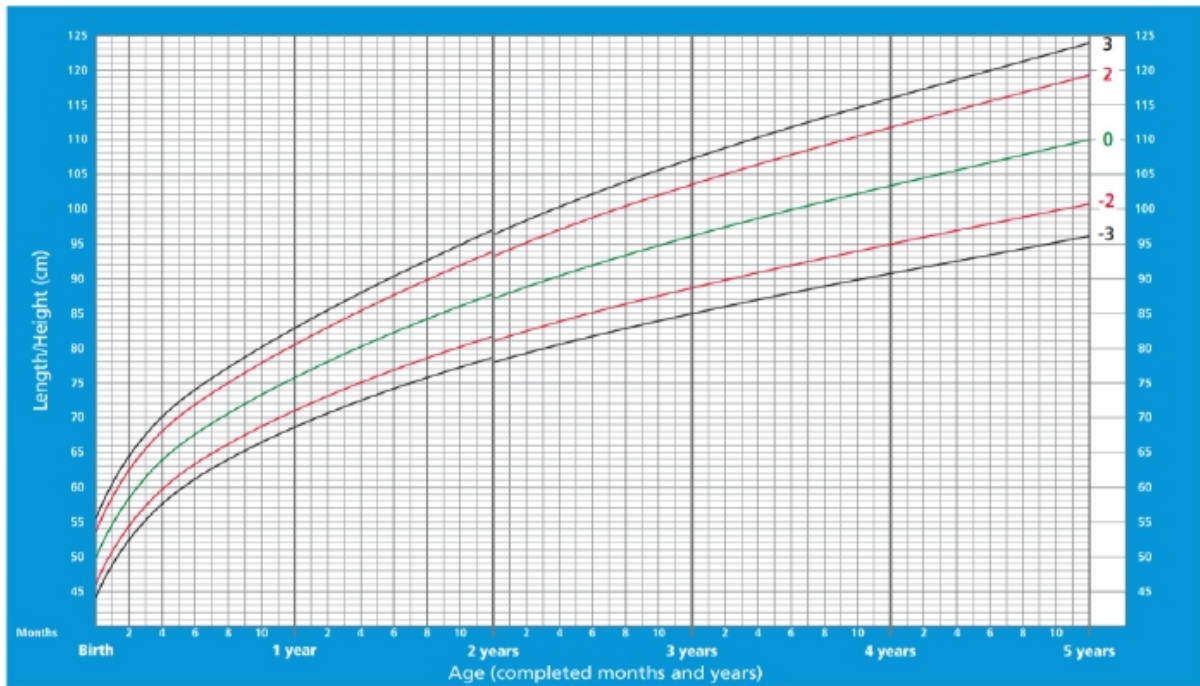


- Milk or curd
- Eggs
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Dal and cereals



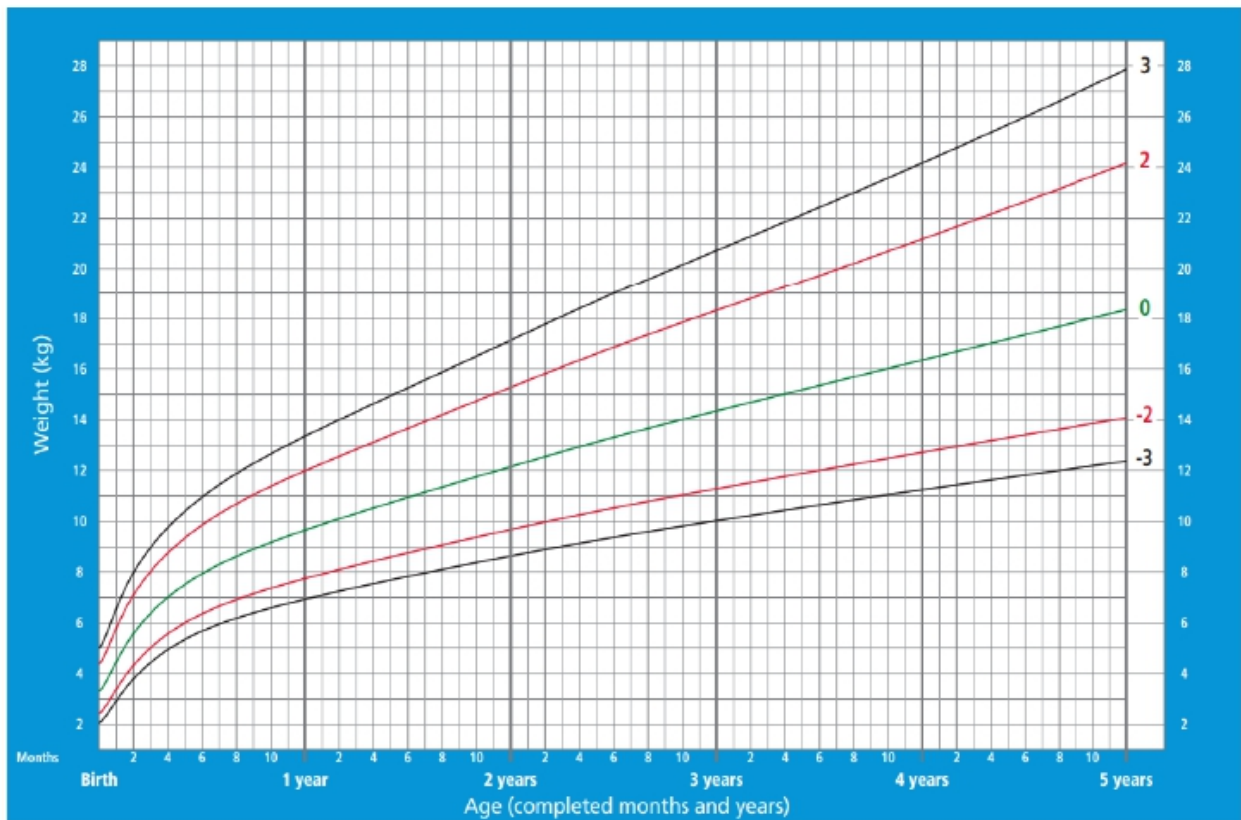
Children must eat 3 to 5 meals in a day for complete nutrition and optimal growth.

Height for Age 0 to 5 years Children



WHO Child Growth Standards

Weight for Age 0 to 5 years children



WHO Child Growth Standards

Obesity

In our communities, obesity is increasing because of:

- Junk food
- Sugary drinks
- Lack of physical activity



Ideal weight chart based on height

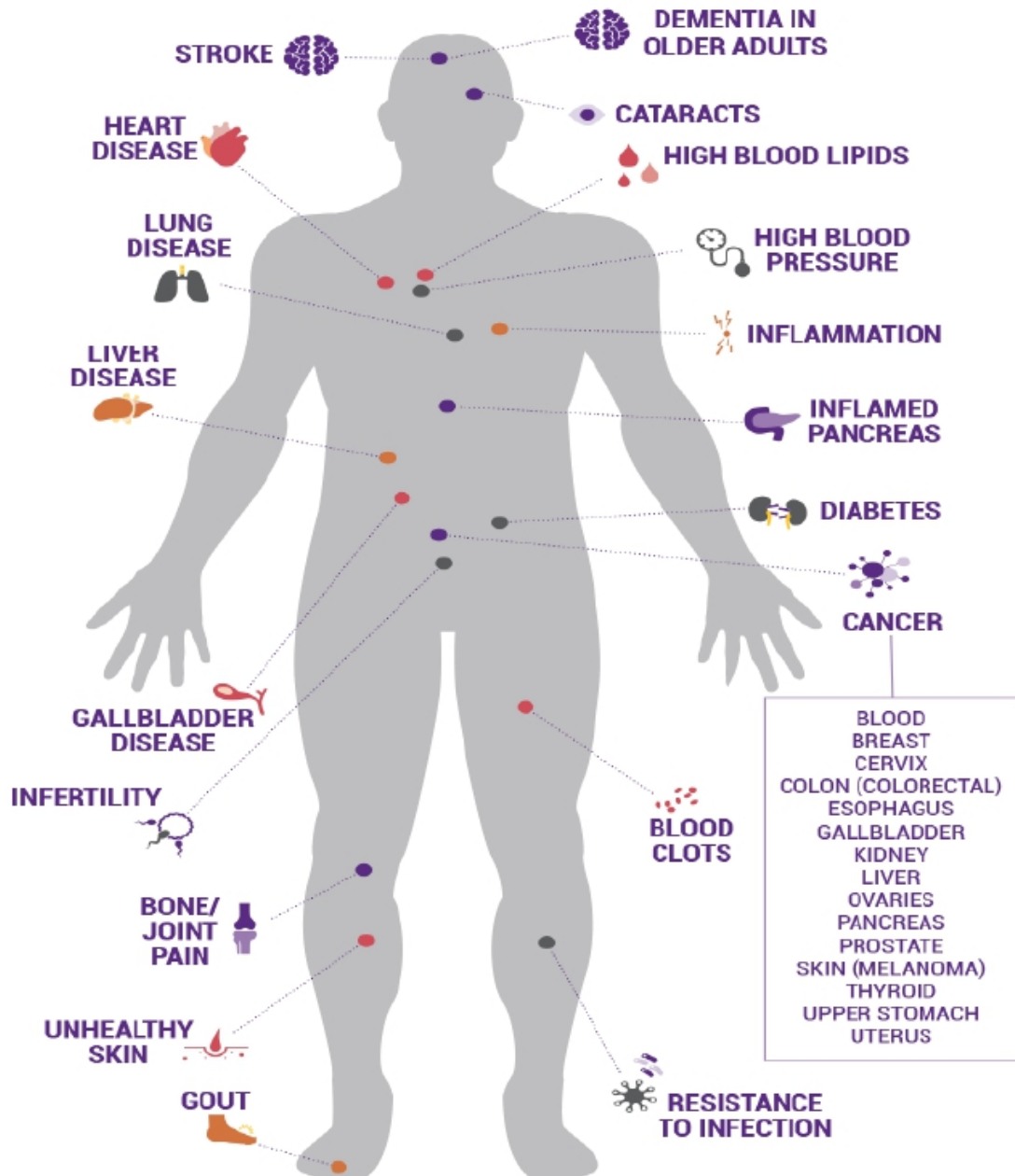
Height & Weight Chart

WOMEN'S MEDICAL WEIGHT CHART			MEN'S MEDICAL WEIGHT CHART		
HEIGHT		AVERAGE WEIGHT	HEIGHT		AVERAGE WEIGHT
Cms	(ft in)	KG	Cms	(ft in)	KG
142	(4,8)	46	155	(5,1)	56
145	(4,9)	47	158	(5,2)	58
147	(4,10)	49	160	(5,3)	59
150	(4,11)	50	163	(5,4)	60
152	(5,0)	51	165	(5,5)	62
155	(5,1)	53	168	(5,6)	64
158	(5,2)	54	170	(5,7)	66
160	(5,3)	56	173	(5,8)	68
163	(5,4)	58	175	(5,9)	69
165	(5,5)	60	178	(5,10)	72
168	(5,6)	62	180	(5,11)	74
170	(5,7)	64	183	(6,0)	76

Women

Men

MEDICAL COMPLICATIONS OF OBESITY



LSU's Pennington Biomedical Research Center, 2019

Healthy and timely eating and exercise help prevent obesity.

Chapter 6

Healthy Eating on a Low Budget

Healthy food does not always need to be expensive.

Some affordable nutritious foods include:

- Lentils
- Seasonal vegetables

Bananas

- Eggs
- Peanuts
- Curd
- Millets

Affordable Protein

Sources

1. Dals
2. Chickpeas
3. Peanuts
4. Eggs
5. Soybeans

Affordable Iron Sources

1. Spinach
2. Beetroot
3. Jaggery
4. Lentils

Affordable Vitamin Sources



1. Seasonal fruits
2. Green leafy vegetables
3. Carrots
4. Pumpkins

Using locally available foods can improve nutrition without increasing household expenses.

Tips for Affordable Nutrition

- Buy seasonal fruits and vegetables
- Use pulses regularly
- Include eggs when possible
- Reduce junk food purchases
- Cook at home instead of buying outside food

Small changes can improve nutrition significantly.

Chapter 7

Healthy Cooking Practices



The way food is cooked can affect its nutritional value.

Healthy Cooking Tips

- Avoid excessive frying
- Use less oil
- Wash vegetables before cutting
- Avoid overcooking vegetables
- Use iodized salt

Steaming and boiling often preserve nutrients better than frying.

Chapter 8

Importance of Nutrition for Women

Women play a crucial role in family nutrition.

Pregnant and lactating women require extra nutrients.

Important nutrients during pregnancy

- Iron
- Calcium
- Protein
- Folic acid

Pregnant women should consume:

- Green leafy vegetables
- Milk or curd
- Fruits
- Eggs or pulses
- Iron supplements as

advised by doctors

Good nutrition during pregnancy helps ensure healthy babies.

Good maternal nutrition improves birth outcomes and child growth.



Chapter 9

Healthy Lifestyle Habits

Good nutrition alone is not enough. Healthy lifestyle habits are also important.

Key Healthy Habits

- Eat meals at regular times
- Eat 4–5 small meals per day
- *Eat at least one fruit daily
- *Include vegetables in every meal
- Drink enough water – 2 to 3 litres
- * Reduce fried foods/
Restaurant foods
- *Drink clean water
- *Avoid soft drinks
- *Encourage children to eat healthy foods
- *Cook meals at home
- Exercise/ Walking daily – 30 minutes to one hour
- Get enough sleep – 7 to 8 hours
- Manage stress



These simple habits can lead to better health.

Hygiene and Food Safety

Food should be prepared safely to avoid illness.

Important practices include:

1. Washing hands before cooking and eating
2. Washing fruits and vegetables
3. Proper food storage

These practices help prevent food-borne diseases.



1 Wet hands with running water.



2 Apply soap or liquid soap.



3 Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds.



4 Wash all areas, including the back of your hands and between fingers.



5 Rinse hands, making sure you remove all soap.



6 Dry your hands thoroughly with a paper towel.

Chapter 10

Role of Nutrition Education



Education plays a major role in improving nutrition awareness. In all urban and rural communities, people are willing to learn about healthy eating.

Nutrition education programs can help people understand:

- Balanced diets
- Healthy cooking practices
- Disease prevention through diet
- Affordable nutrition choices

Community programs conducted by:

- Health workers
- NGOs
- Schools
- Government programs

can significantly improve health awareness.

Chapter 11

Community Solutions for Better Nutrition

Communities can work together to improve health.



- Community nutrition education programs
- Health awareness camps
- School nutrition education
- Kitchen gardens
- Support groups for mothers

Community participation is essential for long-term success.

Chapter 12

Practical Daily Meal Example

Meal	Food Option 1	Food Option 2	Low-Cost Alternative
Breakfast	Roti + Egg	Rice Khichdi	Roti + Groundnut mix
Lunch	Rice + Dal + Veg	Roti + Dal	Rice + curd
Snack	Fruit	Roasted peanuts	Boiled corn
Dinner	Roti + Veg Curry	Rice + Dal	Jowar roti + Vegetables

Example of a healthy low-cost daily diet:

Breakfast

1. Idli or roti or dosa or upma
2. Peanut chutney or egg or coconut chutney or veg curry

Lunch

1. Rice or roti
2. Dal

3. Vegetable curry

4. Curd

Snack

1. Fruit or roasted peanuts or raw vegetable salad

Dinner

1. Rice or roti

2. Dal or egg curry

3. Vegetables

Drink plenty of water throughout the day.

Chapter 13

The Power of Small Changes

Even small improvements in diet can make a big difference.

Examples:

Instead of:

1. Fried snacks → roasted snacks

Instead of:

1. Sugary drinks → water or buttermilk

Instead of:

1. Junk food → homemade meals

Small steps lead to big health improvements over time.

Chapter 14

Breaking Food Myths

Some common myths include:

Myth: Being overweight means being healthy

Truth: Obesity increases disease risk.

Myth: Healthy food is expensive

Truth: Many nutritious foods are affordable.

Myth: Only medicines improve health

Truth: Food is the first medicine.

Addressing such misconceptions is essential for better nutrition.

Chapter 15

Eat For A Better Future



Future Generations Depend on Our Choices

The food habits we practice today influence the next generation.

Healthy eating leads to:

1. Healthy children
2. Strong families
3. Better communities

Teaching children about healthy food is one of the best investments in the future.



Conclusion

Good nutrition is the foundation of a healthy life. It is a powerful tool for improving health, reducing disease, and strengthening communities. Many health problems can be prevented through simple changes in diet and lifestyle. While financial limitations and social challenges exist, awareness and education can empower individuals to make better choices.

Healthy food does not need to be expensive. Many traditional and locally available foods provide excellent nutrition.

Improving nutrition awareness among marginalized communities is an important step toward reducing disease, improving productivity, and building healthier societies.

Good nutrition is not only a personal responsibility — it is a shared commitment for a healthier society.

Every individual, family, and community has the power to improve their health through knowledge, good food practices, and healthy lifestyles. A healthier future begins with informed choices today.

Final Message



Health is the greatest wealth.

Small steps taken today can create a lifetime of better health for you and your family.

Follow a Healthy diet and lifestyle now to live healthy in Old Age !
You can do it.

