

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1951

ANSWERED ON:17.07.2009

MALNUTRITION AMONG WOMEN AND CHILDREN

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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether more than fifty percent women are suffering from malnutrition in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefore;
- (c) whether the efforts made by the Government have shown any decline in malnutrition among women and children in the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the steps taken/proposed to taken by the Government to step up nutrition level among women and children including infants and pregnant women?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH)

(a) & (b) Nutrition status in adults is estimated by the Body Mass Index (BMI) which is based on height and weight measurements.

As per National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3),35.6% of women (between 15-49 years) have BMI below 18.5 indicating chronic energy deficiency. State-wise prevalence is at Annexure-I.

Malnutrition is a multifaceted problem, the determinants of which vary from food insecurity, female illiteracy, poor access to health-care, safe drinking water,sanitation and poor purchasing power. Early marriages of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the new borns, poor breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections further aggravate the situation

(d) The prevalence of chronic energy deficiency/undernutrition has decreased by about 3% in 2005-06 as compared to 1998-1999 as per NFHS-3 report

(e) The Ministry of Women and Child Development is addressing the problem of malnutrition in pregnant and lactating women & children through the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme (ICDS). The ICDS provides a package of six services namely supplementary nutrition, immunization, health check-up, referral services, pre-school non-formal education and nutrition & health education.

Lately, the ICDS programme has been revamped wherein the nutritional feeding and financial norms have been upwardly revised. The revised norms are as under:

Category	Revised Rates (per beneficiary per day)	Revised Nutritional Norms Calories	Protein
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(i) Children (6 months to 72 months)	Rs. 4.00	500	12-15
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(ii) Severely malnourished Children (6 months-72 months)	Rs. 6.00	800	20-25
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(iii) Pregnant women and Nursing mothers Rs. 5.00 600 18-20

Besides the above. Government is implementing a number of schemes throughout the country, which directly or indirectly improve the nutritional status of women and children. A list of some such schemes being implemented by various Ministries is at Annexure-II.