

Summary:

Food is a basic necessity. The intake of the right quality and quantity ~~amounts~~ of food can ensure good nutrition and health. Nutrient requirements are the quantities of nutrients that healthy individuals must obtain from food to meet their physiological needs. The recommended dietary allowances (RDAs) are estimates of nutrients to be consumed daily to ensure the requirements of all individuals in a given population. A diet balanced in the required amounts of nutrients play a vital role in meeting the nutritional needs of individuals during all the stages of life. The quantity of food groups and the nutrient requirements differ with age and the physiological state. Functions of food may be classified according to their role ~~in the body~~ as physiological, social and psychological functions. Foods have been classified into different groups as cereals and millets, pulses and legumes, milk and meat products, fruits and vegetables; fats and sugars depending on their nutritive value and for the ease to plan a diet. The ICMR has provided guidelines for Indians to use right combinations and amount to ensure balanced diet. Food pyramid and food plate are other nutrition guides which are used widely to give an insight of what is to be included in the diet each day to ensure balanced and good nutrition.

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