

# Nutrition and Food Safety

## ABSTRACT

Nutrition is a cornerstone to population health. Adequate quantity and quality of food are vital, especially for vulnerable groups of a population. Food security is the supply of readily accessible food at affordable cost. Nutritional security addresses essential macronutrients and micronutrients to ensure healthy nutritional status in sickness and in health. Nutrition is implicated as a direct and an indirect cause of morbidity and mortality for both communicable and non-communicable diseases. Overnutrition and undernutrition are both leading risk factors in global health. Globally, non-communicable diseases are the leading causes of death. Obesity and diabetes have emerged as a pandemic with heavy health, societal, and economic costs in countries at all income levels. International assistance should prioritize food and nutrition security policies to help national governments to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and their follow-up targets. Foodborne diseases are problematic in all countries at all levels of development.

## SUPPORT MATERIAL

### Student Competencies: Transferable Knowledge and Skills

The following are points of emphasis highlighting key principles that public health graduates are expected to understand and apply into practice. The key points arise from this chapter and other studies in specialized courses, seminars, readings during public health education, and continuing education. The selected skills and knowledge are divided into two parts. The first consists of core questions pertaining to immediate student requirements, while the second refers to competencies essential for successful public health practitioners. These include competencies recommended by the American Public Health Association in 2007, as well as those of the European Association of Schools of Public Health and the Public Health Agency of Canada's 2008 Report on Core Competencies. For more detailed competencies please consult the Association of Schools of Public Health website at: <http://www.asph.org/document.cfm?page=851>

#### Part I: Core Questions

1. What are the major food groups and essential elements in human nutrition?
2. Describe the place of nutrition in economic development.

3. Describe and define the importance of prevention of the following micronutrient deficiency conditions:
  - (a) iodine deficiency
  - (b) vitamin A deficiency
  - (c) vitamin D deficiency
  - (d) iron-deficiency anemia.
4. What is the importance of food fortification and supplementation in public health policy?
5. Discuss the importance of diet in cardiovascular disease.
6. What are the nutritional contributory factors to diabetes and cardiovascular diseases?
7. What are the nutritional risks of middle and old age?
8. Describe a nutrition policy in the New Public Health.

#### Part II: Knowledge and Skills

1. Identify at-risk populations for disorders of undernutrition and overnutrition and propose programs to reduce the resulting risks.
2. Identify and understand the common public health myths regarding nutrition. For example, recognize that obesity is not limited to western nations and be able to explain it.
3. Be conscious of advances in nutritional science with regard to dietary habits, food quality, and micronutrient-related issues, and their vital importance to a population's health.
4. Realize that population-level interventions may be controversial. Understand different points of view on this issue.
5. Recognize the importance and value of monitoring nutritional status both in the general population and in special vulnerable groups.
6. Understand the progress made in industrialized countries surrounding food safety. Note the importance of the establishment of the Food and Drug Act and its influence on future food safety regulations.
7. Describe surveillance of foodborne diseases.

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