

MALNUTRITION

Meaning

- Malnutrition or malnourishment is a condition that results from eating a diet in which nutrients are either not enough or are too much such that the diet causes health problems.
- It may involve calories, protein, carbohydrates, vitamins or minerals.
- Not enough nutrients is called undernutrition or undernourishment while too much is called over nutrition.
- Malnutrition is often used specifically to refer to undernutrition where there is not enough calories, protein, or micronutrients.

- If undernutrition occurs during pregnancy, or before two years of age, it may result in permanent problems with physical and mental development.
- Extreme undernourishment, known as starvation, may have symptoms that include: a short height, thin body, very poor energy levels, and swollen legs and abdomen
- People also often get infections and are frequently cold. The symptoms of micronutrient deficiencies depend on the micronutrient that is lacking.

- Undernourishment is most often due to not enough high-quality food being available to eat. This is often related to high food prices and poverty.
- There are two main types of undernutrition: protein-energy malnutrition and dietary deficiencies.
- Protein-energy malnutrition has two severe forms: marasmus (a lack of protein and calories) and kwashiorkor (a lack of just protein).
- Common micronutrient deficiencies include: a lack of iron, iodine, and vitamin A.

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- In some developing countries, overnutrition in the form of obesity is beginning to present within the same communities as undernutrition.
- Other causes of malnutrition include anorexia nervosa and bariatric surgery