Commentary

The Importance of Nutrition for Health and Wellbeing

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DESCRIPTION

Nutrition plays a critical role in maintaining overall health and well-being. It is the process through which our bodies obtain and utilize essential nutrients from food, allowing us to grow, repair tissues, produce energy, and carry out various physiological functions. Proper nutrition is crucial at every stage of life, from infancy to old age, and it impacts every aspect of health, including physical, mental, and emotional well-being. In this article, we will explore the fundamentals of nutrition, the significance of macronutrients and micronutrients, the role of nutrition in preventing chronic diseases, and the impact of poor nutrition on health. We will also examine the importance of a balanced diet and provide practical strategies for improving nutritional intake. Nutrition is the intake of food in relation to the body's dietary needs. A balanced and well-regulated diet helps maintain overall health, promotes physical growth and development, and boosts energy levels. Nutrients from food are classified into two categories: macronutrients and micronutrients. Macronutrients are needed in larger quantities and include carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Micronutrients such as vitamins and minerals are required in smaller amounts but are equally important for health. The body needs a variety of nutrients to function effectively, and each one plays a specific role. A lack of proper nutrition can lead to malnutrition, which in turn can result in a variety of health issues, including weakened immunity, stunted growth, and increased susceptibility to diseases. Macronutrients are the nutrients that provide the body with energy. They are required in large quantities because they serve as the body's primary fuel source and are vital for maintaining cellular processes. The three

primary macronutrients are carbohydrates, proteins, and fats. Carbohydrates are the body's primary source of energy. They are broken down into glucose (a type of sugar) during digestion, which is then used by the body's cells for energy. Carbohydrates can be classified into 2 categories. Simple carbohydrates such as sugars, provide quick bursts of energy because they are easily digested. Complex carbohydrates found in foods like whole grains, legumes, and vegetables, provide a more sustained release of energy due to their higher fiber content. Carbohydrates also play a role in brain function, as glucose is the brain's preferred energy source. For a healthy diet, the majority of carbohydrates should come from whole grains, fruits, and vegetables, which provide fiber and important micronutrients. Proteins are essential for the growth, repair, and maintenance of tissues in the body. They are made up of amino acids, which are the building blocks of cells. There are 20 different amino acids, 9 of which are essential because the body cannot produce them; they must be obtained through the diet. Complete proteins which contain all essential amino acids. These are typically found in animal-based foods such as meat, fish, eggs, and dairy. Incomplete proteins which lack one or more essential amino acids. These are found in plant-based foods such as beans, lentils, nuts, and seeds. Protein is not only important for muscle repair and growth but also plays a role in immune function, enzyme production, and hormone regulation.

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COMPETING INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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