

31. THE ROLE OF NUTRIENTS IN BALANCED NUTRITION

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Introduction. Food nutrients are the main source of energy for the growth, development and proper functioning of the human body. They can be divided according to their need, the amount in the daily food ration, in micro and macronutrients, as well as according to how the body responds to their deficiency, by changing the growth and body weights.

Aim of study. To investigate the role of food nutrients in rational nutrition and to determine their main food sources.

Methods and materials. The study method by which aspects of the studied topic were highlighted was analytical. The most current international nutrition guidelines, specialised nutrition manuals and research in the field of pathophysiology of the cardiovascular system have been analysed and studied. The latest publications in the field of dietetics, food hygiene, pediatrics and geriatrics have been consulted to create a broad understanding of the role of food nutrients in a balanced diet and accessible food sources.

Results. Macronutrients are the nutrients that are needed in larger quantities in the whole body which include fat, carbohydrates, and protein. They have an important role in development of the body, repair and development of new tissues, driving nerve impulses, and regulation of life processes. These nutrients are found in meat fat, butter, eggs, fish, fruits, starchy vegetables. Micronutrients are vitamins and minerals needed by the body in very small amounts. However, their impact on a body's health are critical, and deficiency in any of them can cause severe and even life-threatening conditions. Vitamins are necessary for energy production, immune function, blood clotting and other functions. Meanwhile, minerals play an important role in growth, bone health, fluid balance and several other processes. They are found in tomatoes, citrus fruit, sweet peppers, broccoli, kiwi fruit, chicken, cereals, bananas, milk and others.

Conclusion. The role of food nutrients, a subject studied for centuries, still remains an open subject for study and research, as a balanced diet adapted to individual characteristics, is a shield against disease and sometimes an accessible weapon, but demanding in handling certain pathologies.