

In this issue

Assessing beverage consumption – enough to make you drink?

What we drink has a potentially large impact on our nutrient intake and overall nutrition and health status. Some beverages are energy-dense and nutrient-poor, others deliver alcohol and other drugs, and others can be relatively nutrient-dense. Estimating and assessing the contribution of beverages to nutritional status is an ongoing nutrition assessment challenge. In this issue, Muckelbauer *et al.*⁽¹⁾ report on a validation study of a self-completed 24 h recall questionnaire compared with a 24 h weighed record to assess beverage consumption among schoolchildren aged 7 to 9 years. This paper highlights the difficulties in validating beverage consumption from self-report instruments.

No such thing as a free lunch?

School teachers around the world will attest to the view that children who consume unhealthy or limited food at meals have difficulties with classroom behaviour and associated learning. Ask *et al.*⁽²⁾ present data from a controlled intervention study that explored if serving a healthy free school lunch had an impact on weight development and food intake among lower secondary-school children in Norway. They also assessed the association between self-perceived school behaviour and food intake. This study suggests that further work is required to assess the impact of school food supply interventions trying to address weight gain and school behaviours.

Anaemia and HIV infection

Anaemia is a major health problem in most developing countries and has a devastating effect on the health and potential of vulnerable groups such as women and the young. In this issue, Chatterjee *et al.*⁽³⁾ present research

from a prospective cohort study investigating the predictors and consequences of childhood anaemia in settings with high HIV prevalence. They present evidence to show associations between HIV infection in both mothers and infants, malaria parasitaemia and Fe deficiency as independent risk factors for anaemia among children.

Breast-feeding needs support

It is well accepted that breast-feeding mothers require social, economic and environmental supports. Yun *et al.*⁽⁴⁾ present an evaluation of a breast-feeding peer counselling programme in Missouri and demonstrate that participation in early pregnancy increased the rate of breast-feeding initiation. Logic suggests that peer and other social supports will be just as, if not more, important as a strategy to promote breast-feeding duration.

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References

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