

A COVID-19 vaccination camp was organized at NIN campus on 4th, 22nd & 26th March, The 2nd dose of the vaccine was administered to 300 staff members.



Director Dr. Hemalatha's responses to Citizen's queries on Nutrition, Immunity and Health published in The Times of India Hyderabad.

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THE TIMES OF INDIA | WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31, 2021

'Nutritious food can ensure best response to vaccine'

Director of the National Institute of Nutrition, **Dr Hemalatha**, answers questions from **TOI** readers on the ideal diet to boost immunity, importance of a balanced meal and why mixing oils might be beneficial

Q I am an eggarian and lactose intolerant (I can eat cheese but not milk or curd). What diet would you suggest to keep my protein intake good? Can I supplement my vitamin intake with tablets or drinks?—**Sharath R**

A Yes, eggs and milk provide all nine essential amino acids (EAA). One whole egg is equal to 38g of lean meat, poultry or fish. But one egg can provide only 12% of the daily requirement of protein along with many other nutrients (vitamins and minerals). As for cheese, it is high in protein, as well as vitamins A, D, E, B12, and calcium. If you enjoy cheese, you can continue taking cheese as it is a good source of quality proteins and other nutrients. In case of vegetarian diets, although certain EAAs are lower, and some of them are not available in individual food groups, a well-balanced diet can supplement all the required EAA. Even protein requirements can be met with pulses, beans, legumes, peas and nuts etc. For proportions of different food groups, to maintain good health, our institute has recommended "My plate for the day", which can be accessed at: https://www.nin.res.in/downloads/My_plate_for_the_day.pdf

EXPERT ADVICE

Q I am 76-years-old and suffered from Covid-19/pneumonia in January. Though I have recovered now, I'm also borderline diabetic. Please suggest a suitable diet to boost immunity.—**Raghuram B**

A In general, the nutritional requirements of older adults are more or less similar to that of the general

adult population. Though the energy requirement is reduced in old age, requirements of other nutrients such as vitamins and minerals remain the same, and the requirements of some nutrients such as vitamin D and calcium are increased to improve bone density. The elderly is, therefore, encouraged to consume nutrient-dense foods such as nuts, oils/seeds, fruits, vegetables, legumes and moderate amounts of animal source foods. For good immune response: Ensure substantial servings of fresh fruits (100g/day) and vegetables (300g/day), prefer whole grains and include nuts in your daily diet. Avoid consumption of highly processed foods, fruit juices and carbonated drinks. Thoroughly cooked meat/poultry may be included in moderation.

Q There are a lot of myths around food these days. Though it is summer, many suggest avoiding cold drinks, ice-creams and cold fruit juices given the risk of a second Covid wave. Do you think it's necessary?—**Parimala G Tadas**

A Yes, in general, it's good to avoid these things during any season. These foods are only refined sugars (also fats in ice creams), which lack nutrients. Calorie dense, nutrient poor diets impair immune response. For example: Micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) and phyto-



Using two or more vegetable oils will ensure that the fatty acid balance is maintained and one gets the benefit of minor components present in them

Q I am a housewife and regularly use mustard oil for cooking. I read somewhere that oil should be changed or mixed. Can you suggest the right mix and how does it help in deriving nutrition?—**Sumitra Ghosh**

A Each vegetable oil has a unique fatty acid composition and minor components. Complete dependence on just one vegetable oil does not ensure optimal intake of all fatty acids. Hence ICMR/NIN recommends use of two or more vegetable oils for optimal health benefits. By selecting

lemons, and limes and pineapples must be avoided on an empty stomach to prevent acidity.

Q What is the right temperature for storing cooked food in a refrigerator? And how long can I keep it in the refrigerator?—**Pramesh Raj**

A Cooked food should be refrigerated within two hours if one does not intend to consume within 4 to 5 hours of preparation. Our recent studies show that cooked food can stay safe up to 6 hours at room temperature and can be used up to 4 days if stored in refrigerators, which is ideally maintained at 4°C. Storing food at this temperature will reduce the pace of multiplication of bacteria.

Q When is the ideal time to have fruits? If I have fruits after 3 pm I immediately have acidity issues? And since I have issues with acidity, what fruits should I avoid?—**Shruthi Reddy**

A You can eat fruits any time in a day but ideally if you consume fruits along with a meal it may improve micronutrient absorption—a study from our institute showed that consuming guava with meals increased iron absorption and improved hemoglobin status of children. Taking fruits along with meals will also reduce chances of acidity. Citrus fruits, such as oranges,

warning signal that you need to consult a physician immediately.

Q Since both of us are working, it sometimes gets impossible to cook every day and we resort to ordering in. Many say we should avoid it, especially with Covid. What are your thoughts?—**Pankaj Kumar**

A Whether you prepare at home or order from outside, every meal should be balanced. Be aware that

Q I am 60 years and post the pandemic, I have been losing weight consistently, despite eating all meals. I am also diabetic and insulin-dependent. What supplements can I take to build immunity and strength?—**Syed Mubshesh Mehdi**

A Losing weight without any conscious effort from your side is a

you may get almost your total calories required for a day from just one full fried rice/biryani, restaurant curries, or a big burger. These can be very high in calories as they add a lot of fat and use refined cereals with little or no vegetables.

If you order healthy diets that contain a good proportion of all food groups prepared from fresh foods, contain no sugar, are limited in salt and fats/oils—it should not be an issue to your health. But as for the Covid issue—take all necessary precautions.

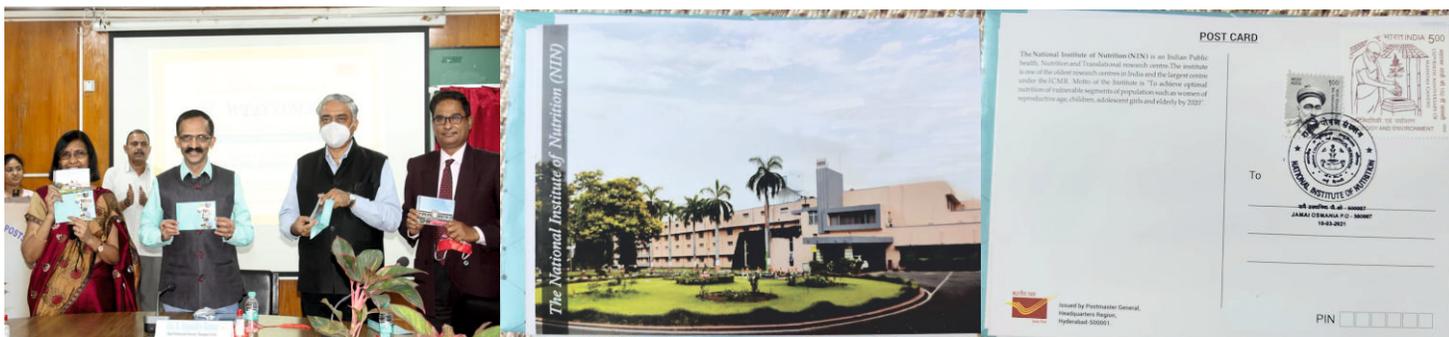
Q Apart from diabetes, I have also been prescribed mild medication for hypertension and cholesterol control. Though with medication, all the parameters are under control, I fear being susceptible to infections. How can I take care of myself during this pandemic?—**Srinivasa Rao Nandula**

It's good that your sugar is under control and blood pressure is maintained. People with poorly controlled diabetes are likely to be at higher risk of infections and complications. You may not be at higher risk as all parameters are under control. Nevertheless, like every one, you must also follow hand hygiene, physical distancing and wearing a mask. As mentioned above include adequate quantities of healthy foods in your diet.



INDIAPOST RELEASED PICTURE POST CARD OF NIN

- India Post released a Picture Post Card on ICMR-NIN which was unveiled by Dr. Hemalatha R, Director, Mr. S Rajendra Kumar, Chief Postmaster General, Telangana Circle and Directors of other institutes (also seen) (10th March).

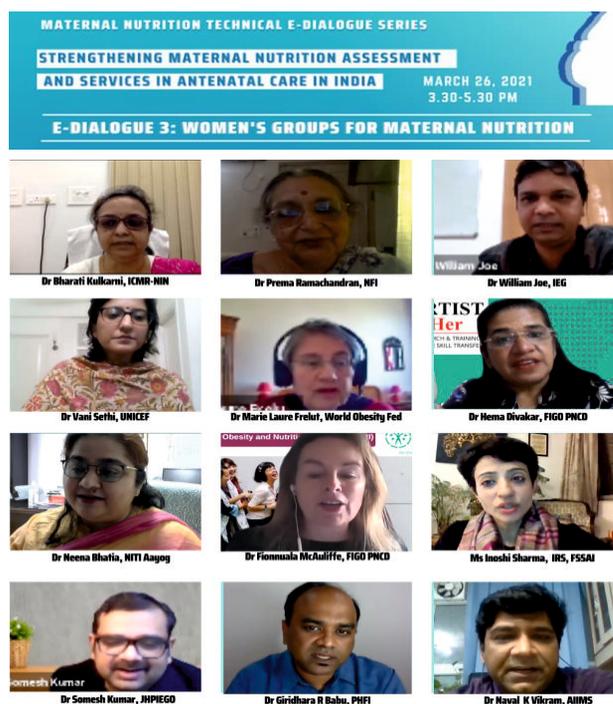


- ICMR-NIN's stall at the virtual exhibition "VigyanEkSamadhan" 2021 at <http://techframes.in/vigyanexpo/index.php> enthralled many visitors (20th March). Several S & T organisations participated in this virtual exhibition.



WEBINARS/ MEETINGS ORGANIZED/ PARTICIPATED

- The third Webinar in the Series of Monthly Technical Webinars on "Strengthening maternal nutrition assessment and services in antenatal care in India" was organized by ICMR-NIN and Federation of Obstetric and Gynecologic Society of India (FOGSI) in association with UNICEF on the topic "Women's Groups for Maternal Nutrition" (18th March).
- Dr. Prema Ramachandran, Director of the Nutrition Foundation of India, Dr Bharati Kulkarni, Scientist F, ICMR-NIN, Dr Vani Sethi of UNICEF, Dr. William Joe of IEG, Dr Hema Divakar, co-chair of the FIGO PNCD committee, Dr Neena Bhatia, Senior Specialist, NITI Aayog, Dr Fionnuala McAuliffe, FOGO PNCD, Ms Inoshi Sharma IRS, Director, FSSAI, Dr Somesh Kumar, Senior Director, JHPIEGO's Program Strategies for Maternal Obesity Control, Dr Giridhara Babu, PHFI and Dr Naval K Vikram, AIIMS Delhi participated in the webinar



Dr. Hemalatha R Director

- Participated in the virtual meeting on the draft 'India Nutrition Report' under the Chairmanship of Principal Scientific Adviser to the Govt. of India, organized by POSHAN Abhiyaan, Ministry of Women and Child Development (3rd March)
- Participated in the first meeting (virtual) of the Healthy Life Trajectories Initiatives (HeLTI) Steering Committee, organized by Department of Biotechnology Ministry of Science and Technology, New Delhi (5th March).

- Participated in the third meeting of the Expert Committee (virtual) on devising the revised strategy of vitamin A supplementation, organized by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, New Delhi (5th March).
- Addressed the session on 'Role of women in societal transformation in the post-COVID Era' on International women's Day, organized by Department of Biotechnology, Ministry of Science & Technology, Gol in association with the National Institute of Plant Genome Research, New Delhi (8th March).
- Attended the release of Picture Post Cards of ICMR-NIN by the Chief Postmaster General, Abids (10th March).

Dr. M. Maheshwar

- Delivered a talk on “Importance of nutrition for women of all ages” organized by NIN in collaboration with Family Planning Association of India at the Webinar on “Women's Health and Rights”(16th March).

Dr. GM SubbaRao

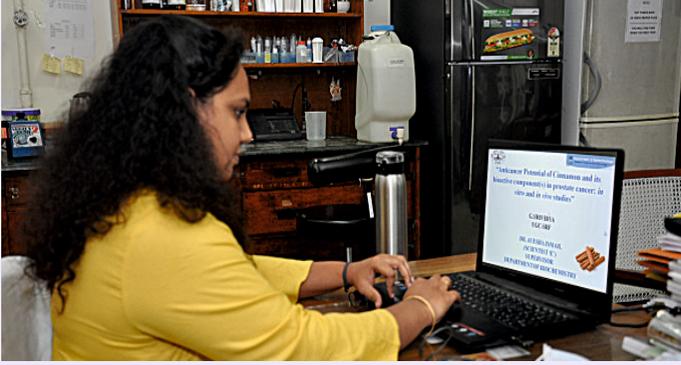
- Invited as Special Guest Speaker to deliver a talk on “Nutrition, Diet Diversity and Pandemic – Making Sense of the Information Overload” on the occasion of Women's Day Celebrations on 7th March 2021 by The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), Hyderabad Chapter at BM Birla Auditorium, Hyderabad.
- Chaired the South Zone Regional Communication Hub meeting of the Southern institutes of ICMR on 9th March.
- Invited to attend the virtual technical webinar on Scaling Up Population Salt Reduction in South-East Asia organised by WHO Regional Office for South East Asia (SEARO) (11th March)
- Attended the virtual Meeting of the Nodal Communication officers convened by ICMR on India@75 initiative of Government of India (11th March).
- Invited as the External Expert Committee Member to the Departmental Committee and the Board of Studies Meeting of the Department of Communication, University of Hyderabad, held virtually (12th March).
- Chaired the virtual meeting of the reviewers and co-chairs of Health Communication Working Group of International Association of Media and Communication Research (IAMCR), (13th March).
- Nominated by the Director to attend the Virtual meeting of the Codex Coordination Group on Food Labelling for preparing India's comments on Development of Guidelines on the Use of Front-of-Pack Nutrition Labelling and Revision of provisions related to Allergen Labelling under the Codex Committee on Food Labelling (CCFL) (19th March).
- Invited by Dangoria Charitable Trust for an interaction with Self Help Group (SHG) members under the project Promotion of homestead nutrition gardens in villages through Self-Help Groups (SHGs), (26th March).
- Invited as a Keynote Speaker to deliver a talk on 'Nutrition, diet diversity, health and pandemic' in the webinar during *Poshan Pakhwada* organised by Press Information Bureau (PIB) & Regional Outreach Bureau, Ministry of I & B, Govt of India, Hyderabad (24th March).

PAPERS PUBLISHED/ ACCEPTED FOR PUBLICATION

- SubbaRao M Gavaravarapu and Archana Konapur. Media and Marketing: Iniquitous Influence on Children's Diets, In: Puri S (Ed.) “Children in India: Opportunities and Challenges”, NOVA Science Publications.
- Uma Chitra, Priyanka Sharma. Role of Nutrition in Prevention and Prognosis of the COVID-19 Infection - A Review. International Journal of Science and Research. April 2021; 10(4): 482-486. doi: 10.21275/Sr21408153701.

JOURNAL CLUB

Ms. Srividya Gopalakrishnan [UGC Fellow] presented a paper titled “Anticancer potential of Cinnamon and its bioactive components in Prostate Cancer: *in vitro* and *in vivo* studies”- Progress and Final Presentation” (26th March).



Dr. Raja Sriswan presented a paper titled “Revisiting the RDA's - Calcium and Phosphorus” (12th March).



STAFF NEWS

Congratulations

Dr. Bhanuprakash Reddy on being elected as the Fellow of National Academy of Medical Sciences.



Dr. J. Sreenivasa Rao appreciated by Hon'ble Governor of Telangana Dr. Tamilisai Soundararajan for his research studies on “Malnutrition problems in primitive tribes of Telangana State”.



53rd NIN-Employees Co-operative Credit Society General Body Meeting (25th March)



- Mr. Saibaba addressing the 53rd NIN-Employees Co-operative Credit Society General Body Meeting (virtual). Dr. Devindra & Mr. Jamaluddin are also seen (25th March).

A few English words and their Hindi equivalents

Breach of agreement	करार भंग	Breach of confidence	विश्वास भंग
Breach of contract	संविदा भंग	Breach of discipline	अनुशासन भंग
Breach of law	विधि भंग	Breach of peace	शांति भंग
Breach of privilege	विशेषाधिकार भंग	Breach of promise	वचन भंग
Breach of Rule	नियम भंग	Breach of trust	विश्वास भंग