



UNIT V
DIET IN SPECIAL CONDITION

NOTES

An adult woman during her pregnancy and lactation requires more nutrients such as protein, vitamins and minerals. She requires extra food for the growth of the foetus internally and later on for nursing the child externally. During pregnancy the mother has to meet her own needs and the needs of the growing foetus. There is additional need for the growth of other related tissues and to build up fat stores to cushion the foetus, prior to birth and to supply part of the energy needed for milk formation during lactation. Thus the need for all nutrients involved in tissue synthesis is increased during pregnancy.

If the food requirements of the adolescent mothers are not met, their health may be affected which may indirectly affect the foetus.

No mother would like to injure the health of her baby through poor food habit. However, nutritional studies have shown that many women attend to the needs of other family members at the expense of their needs. The pregnant women are often the most poorly fed members of the family. As she takes care of others she doesn't take time to sit down and eat. If the food supply is limited, she is the worst affected, as she feeds all other members and eats what is left. The family should plan for the arrival of the baby so that the pregnant mother doesn't suffer from lack of food in terms of amounts and kinds of foods, so that the health of the foetus doesn't suffer.

A modified food containing additional amount of fat/butter which supplies energy and Vitamin A or special preparations (chicken soup, boiled vegetables, etc.) which contain sources of protein, iron, calcium and vitamin B group are given to the nursing mother.

A mother, who subconsciously thinks of nursing as an imposition on her freedom, may not be able to nurse her baby. Such subconscious reaction may affect secretion of milk. Normal lactation helps the mother to regain her natural figure effortlessly. A calm, quiet life favours maximum milk secretion. Moderate exercise helps milk secretion while excessive exercise depresses it.



Proper feeding of infants is necessary to ensure normal growth and development. Breast milk provides the nutrients needed in a proportion suited to the infant's rapid growth needs. The capacity of stomach of the infant and ability to digest food components changes rapidly during this period.

Boys may need to consume a lot of energy rich foods in order to provide sufficient energy. Girls may need to pay special attention to foods rich in protein, iron and other nutrients necessary for synthesis and regeneration of red blood cells. It is also important for adolescents to gain appropriate weight for their height and body build.

There are separate lists of food needs of adolescents of 12-16 years and 17-21 years. The diet of older people should be low in calories, high in protective foods, proteins and moderate fats.

There are different ways for preparing modified diets during illness and some recipes for the sick and also recommended here.

