

Such infants are often brought for a genuine respiratory infection, before 6 months age or are picked up during immunization contact. One infant was referred from Primary Health Centre as a case of adrenogenital syndrome.

We wish such prescriptions be banned and over the counter sale stopped. Awareness of this adverse effect will help. Any action in this connection from the consumer protection cell of Indian Academy of Pediatrics will be welcome.

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Nutrition Disc

Amongst all approaches for preventing and combating malnutrition, nutrition education is an important one. Ignorance about nutritive values of foods, at times, leads to spending of limited money on the prestigious foods, which are not cost effective sources of calories and protein. Expensive foods like apples, grapes, almonds, cashew nuts, sweet lemons, which are in no way nutritionally superior to cereals and pulses, often get priority for consumption in the family. An attempt has been made by developing a 'self learning package' entitled Nutrition Disc of India (NDI) to overcome this bottleneck. NDI is a simple device which serves as a ready

reckoner for understanding and calculating the nutritive value of 144 foods commonly consumed in the Indian families. It helps in scientific selection of foods for the formulation of balanced diets. The information on nutritive value of foods is available in different text books, which are frequently not readily available for reference purposes to health and nutrition programmes functionaries.

NDI is made of thick card board, portable and easy to operate. By adjusting the name of food on the respective window of the disc, the nutritional content of 144 food items like milk, fish, prawn, egg in terms of calories, protein, vitamins and minerals can be calculated.

The NDI is primarily meant for Pediatricians, Nutritionists, Public Health Specialists and Programme Manager of Supplementary Nutrition Programmes. It can also be used by postgraduates in Pediatrics, Community medicine, Home Science, Practicing Physicians, Health Planners and Administrators and Agricultural Scientists in developing countries. Its simplicity enables it to be used beneficially by all nutrition and health conscious individuals.

NDI gives nutritive values in terms of calories, proteins, vitamins and mineral of foods. The envelope of disc provides information on role of different nutrients in body, household measures and their weight equivalents, important nutrition education messages, measurement of raw quantities from cooked foods, cost of nutrients from vegetarian and non vegetarian foods (*Fig.*).

A pilot study was conducted on 56 Nursing students. All of them were able to

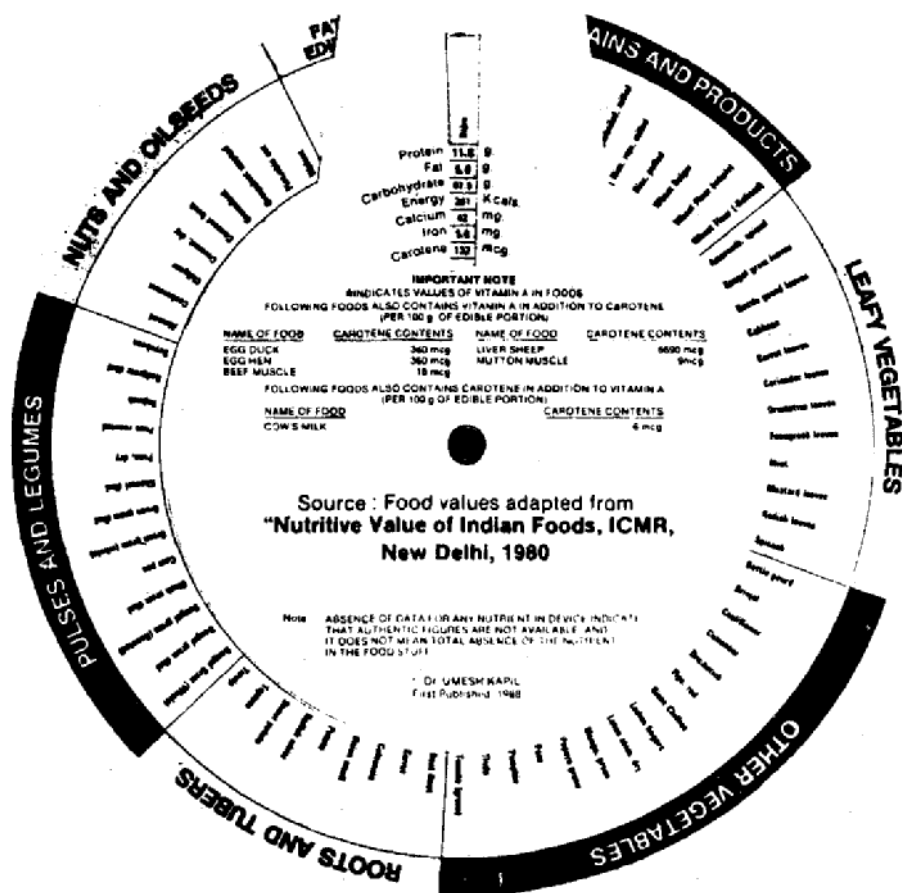


Fig. Photograph of Nutrition Disc of India.

calculate nutritive value of common foods with the help of Nutrition Disc of India.

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Pyridoxine Supplementation with Isonex: Is it Necessary?

Isoniazid is the most widely used anti-tubercular drug. Peripheral neuritis as a result of competitive inhibition of pyridoxine metabolism(1) is one of the various

side-effects of this drug. Though this side-effect of isonex is completely reversible and reported to be extremely rare in pediatric practice (unless it is used in very high dose, the child is alcoholic or in adolescent phase)(1-5), still doctors in general have a wrong notion about its incidence and importance. We too have yet to come across such a case though practising in an area where both tuberculosis and malnutrition are quite rampant.

'Isoniazid-pyridoxine' combinations are marketed by many pharmaceutical companies (Concept, Albert-David, IPCA, etc.) using pyridoxine in different doses—needless to say on an arbitrary basis. Some companies (Concept, IPCA) give 5 mg pyridoxine with 100 mg isonex while