

# Nutritional Status and Factor Influencing among Adolescents – An Overview

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## Abstract

*Adolescence is a phase which transfers a person from adolescent to young. Also, it has a vital role for growth and development of everyone's lifespan. The teenage year is an intense embolic period when requirements for all nutrients increase. When they failed to intake of all kind nutrients, they may face a lot of nutrient disorder or related health problem. To overcome this kind of health problem the adolescent group has to take an intake of protein, carbohydrate, vitamins, and calcium in enough level. Among these, the calcium is more essential to build strong bones for everyone. In India adolescents (10-19) constitute 21.4% of the population, comprising one-fifth of the total population. They are going to be a Pillar of the nation, and they have a responsibility to produce healthy children in future. Therefore their nutritional status needs to be studied and focused at a higher level. Also adolescent is a period of rapid growth and maturation in human development that demands extra nutrients and energy to support growth. Focusing on their nutrition particularly among girls provides a unique opportunity to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition.*

**Keywords:** Adolescent, Nutrition, Factors

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## Introduction

The word "adolescence" is derived from the Latin word "Adolescent" which meaning "To Grow." The "WHO" defines adolescence as the segment of life between the ages of 10 to 19 years. As per the WHO statement adolescents are those between the age of 10 and 19 years and it is a middle phase between childhood and adulthood characterized by a marked acceleration in growth. They are no longer children but not yet adults. This stage is characterized by a remarkably radical rate of growth. An adolescent is a transitional period for the development of physical and psychological part between 10 – 19 years age group. These developments may occur from puberty to legal adulthood. Adolescent constitutes about one-fifth of the world's population and in India, they account for 21% (approximately 230 million) of the total population.

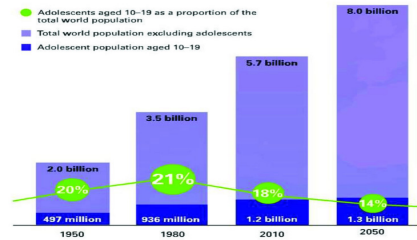
At the earliest stage, those children who have experienced a deficit in nutrition may have a second chance for growth and catch-up growth. Growth in stature, muscle and fat mass during the peak of adolescent growth spurt calls for the need for the extra nutrients. The nutritional requirement is very much essential to gain up to 50% of their adult height and skeletal mass.

Nowadays the world face a double burden of malnutrition that includes both undernutrition and overweight, especially in developing countries. Compare with another age group the adolescents are receiving low priorities to intake of nutritional food items. During the age group from 10-19, the adolescents are facing a great challenge for a fight against health problems and promoting their health. Virtually, as per the information of WHO, 20% of the adolescent population in the South East Asian region are suffering from malnutrition and anemia. Both of these nutritional problems adversely impact their health and development. There are some factors influencing the nutritional status of adolescents. Particularly, socio-economic and demographic factors are associated with universal patterns of stunting and thinness. It also observed that there could be found variability among nations and regions including individuals and their provinces.

In general, some studies were conducted on the topic of the factors determines the nutritional status of school adolescent girls. But only a few studies were focused on the importance of the nutrition situation of adolescent girls. Most nutrition-related studies have investigated the nutritional status of younger children in the country, but not reported about nutritional and health status of adolescent girls. Poor nutritional status during adolescence is an important determinant of health outcomes at a later stage of life. The malnutrition that prevails is mainly a consequence of inadequate food consumption, inadequate knowledge of food preparation and dietary habits, attitude towards the nutrition and balanced diet of adolescent girls and their mothers. Malnutrition is, therefore, an ultimate manifestation of the interaction of various factors in society.

### Adolescent in Global Level

1.2 billion adolescents are there in the world level which indicates one in every six persons, roughly. In the future, they may be a great demographic and economic force of the nation. However, they face challenges like poverty, inadequate health care services, poor environment, etc. Also, the adolescent age group is a time to prepare them to take great responsibilities such as familial, socio-cultural and economic issues in adulthood.

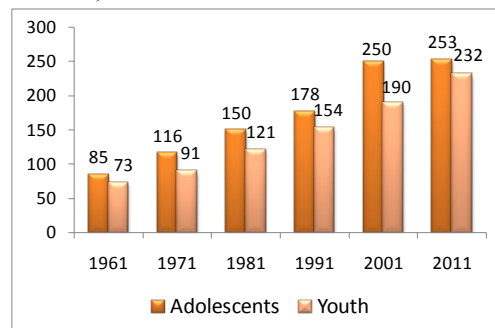


A proportion of adolescents and world population  
**Source:** Progress for children: A report card on adolescents. UNICEF

### Adolescent in India

Socially adolescents are the important segment of the population in every country. In India, nearly about 21% therefore 243 million of the total population is adolescents. In the future, they may be a great demographic and economic force of the nation. However, they face challenges like poverty, inadequate health care services, poor environment, etc. Also, the adolescent age group is a time to prepare them to take great responsibilities such as familial, socio-cultural and economic issues in adulthood. The different survey like National Family Health Survey, District Level Household Survey and sample registration system persist that the special focused attention to be given concerning health and social development for the adolescent's group. Our government has been launched some programmes which all have a sharp focus on adolescents health-related matters and make them realize their full potential and responsible decisions related to their health and well being.

### The growth of Adolescent and Youth Population in India, 1961 - 2011



- An adolescent population has increased from 85 million in 1961 to 253 million in 2011 (in five decades)
- A corresponding increase in the youth population is from 73 million to 232 million during this period

**Adolescent and Youth Population: State Ranking, 2011**

Rank	States	Adolescent Population	% to Total Population	States	Youth Population	% to Total Population
	India	253.2	100	India	231.9	100
1	Uttar Pradesh	48.9	19.3	Uttar Pradesh	40.6	17.5
2	Bihar	23.3	9.2	Maharashtra	21.7	9.4
3	Maharashtra	21.3	8.4	West Bengal	17.8	7.7
4	West Bengal	18.2	7.2	Bihar	17.5	7.6
5	Andhra Pradesh	16.2	6.4	Andhra Pradesh	16.2	7.0

Uttar Pradesh ranks first regarding both adolescent and youth population in the country, accounting for 19.3% of total adolescents of the country and 17.5% of India’s youth

Bihar, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh are among top five states regarding both adolescents and youth population, with varying ranking for the two segments, though all these four states each account for less than 10% of the share of adolescents and youth population of the country

**Nutritional Problems**

Nutritional requirements are higher among adolescents than any other period of life. Inadequate diet intake at this age led to stunted growth and delayed sexual Maturation. A lot of junk food products are promoted by celebrities with catchy advertisements leading to adaptation of unhealthy food habits. Media influences the diet and lifestyle among adolescents and leads to nutritional disorders by making them sedentary and giving false hopes. Habits like dieting and exercising inspired by a media celebrity may not be taken as a positive impact, often they do it incorrectly and consume low quality protein supplements without proper guidance which may lead to complications like renal failure. Instead of taking a balanced diet they starve and end up in anorexia nervosa. Nutritional education and routine screening will help to reduce health issues among adolescents.

**Importance of Nutrition**

In India teenagers between the age group of 10-19 constitute 21 % of the total population and it is comprising one-fifth of the total population. They are going to be a Pillar of the nation and, they have a responsibility to produce healthy children in the future. Therefore their nutritional status needs to be studied and focused at a higher level. Also adolescent is a period of rapid growth and maturation in human development that demands extra nutrients and energy to support growth. Focusing on their nutrition particularly among girls provides a unique opportunity to break the intergenerational cycle of malnutrition. Therefore nutrition for adolescents is important and it was found that it needs to changes in growth and hormones, activity. Adolescent girls are a backbone of the healthy and progressive family and thus future builders of the positive health of a community. Hence the nutritional status of an adolescent girl is valuable to attain healthy reproductive outcome and efficient physical activity.

Particularly in rural India, there is a high prevalence of malnutrition amongst adolescent girls. One out of five female adolescent affects as a result of Malnutrition. Nutritional requirement for the adolescence is serious for the well being of a society. It was observed that adolescence is normally a healthy period of the life cycle of a human life span. Certainly, adolescents are possibly less vulnerable to get an infection than their previous stage. It may

be contributed to their being neglected, and the reason for concentrating on adolescents' nutritional status is this period of life is a unique opportunity to break a range of cruel cycles of problems caused by malnutrition can be passed from one generation to the next.

### **Nutritional Health**

Adolescents have to be increased nutritional requirement demand on a diet rich in protein, vitamins, calcium, iodine, phosphorus and iron. It is essential due to a rapid growth spurt and increased physical activity. As indicated in NFHS-3 report, between the age group from 15–19 years 47% girls were thin, 56% girls were anemic, 2.4% girls and were overweight and 2/1000 adolescent girls suffer from diabetes. Due to body dissatisfaction and depression, they are also highly prone to eating disorders like anorexia nervosa or binge eating.

Mass media is influenced higher among adolescents (boys 88.2% and girls 71.5%). So mass media takes an important role in habit picking and make a decision their lifestyle pattern. Influence rate is clearly revealed in a study from Chennai conducted in the age group 11 to 17 years shows that, 90% of the teenagers are eating either food or snacks while watching TV, 82% of them purchasing food products and snacks based on advertisement, 59% of the adolescents skipped outdoor activities for watching TV, 42% is following diet and 42% is doing exercise to build the body like their beloved media personality. Viewing television in childhood and adolescence is associated with obese, poor fitness, smoking and cause to raise cholesterol in adulthood.

### **Trends in adolescent nutrition**

Adolescence Body size can be used as a proxy for nutritional status, with manifesting as overweight and obesity, while undernutrition can obvious as stunting and wasting or as nutrient deficiencies without a change in body size (so-called hidden hunger). In the year 2013, there is a finding from the global burden of injuries and disease among adolescents recommended that protein-energy malnutrition is top 10 causes of death and accounting for 225,906 deaths happened. Worldwide, there is around 34 deaths per

1,00,000 children and adolescents are attributed to malnutrition and it considerably varies between developing (38.5 per 100,000) and developed countries (0.2 per 100,000). On a global level overweight and obesity affects one in every three adolescents. In 2011 globally, the occurrence of underweight among adolescent females aged 13–17 years across the five regions of the world. Compare with age and height in Africa and Asia roughly 10% or more of adolescent girls between 13 – 15 years are too thin.

However, data on the burden of stunting among adolescent are limited, in some countries it has been estimated that half of all adolescents are stunted reflecting persistent and cumulative effects of growth retardation from an early age. In spite of increased nutritional vulnerability, a little focus has to be given on micronutrient deficiencies among adolescents. To avoid health issues such as iron-deficiency anemia and iodine –deficiency disorders, it is importance to include micronutrients in their daily foodstuff. In global level about 700–1200 disability-adjusted life per 100,000 girls in the 10–14 years age group, 300–900 in 15- to 19-year-olds due to micronutrient deficiency. Malnutrition, in every form, presents a significant threat to human health. Adolescents have not traditionally considered at elevated nutritional risk. Great attention has been given to this group on a global level. Nutritional needs are critical for the adolescents for the well being of the society and World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended BMI-for-age as the best indicator for use in adolescence as it incorporates the required information on age.

### **Factors influencing nutrition**

Some factors is involved in nutritional status among adolescents in both urban and rural areas. They may be classified as individual factor, social environment, physical environment and macro level environment.

Perhaps, the individual factor is incorporated with demographic, cognition, skill and behavior, life style and biological health status of the adolescents in both rural and urban areas. The demographic factors included occupation, income, education, etc. focused on the parents of adolescents. The entire

demographic factor is treated as personal factors. The cognition factors are including knowledge, attitude, preferences, and perception, skill and behavior. This includes capability, the way in which perform in a given situation. In the category of social environment, the family, friends and the peer groups are involved to make the individual gain social support to adopt social norms Such as residential area, home, school, hotel or the restaurant / fast food shops also influencing among the adolescents particularly in the school setting comes Physical environment factor. The advertisement, media, cultural, caring in the school and the government policies are influenced by nutritional status among an adolescent group. Beside with physical and reproductive maturation, an adolescent goes through massive stress related to significant self-identity, ready to meet new life situations, fight towards autonomy, peer pressure, issues related to sexuality and academic pressure. Habits and behavior picked up during adolescence have a lifelong impact. Adolescence is the last chance to correct the growth lag and malnutrition. The theory of health, disease, illness and sickness are inextricably intertwined with social, cultural and economic factors, which are the product and influenced by the well being of family members and on their access to resources. The socio-cultural factors are more or less determined that beliefs and practices related to health, disease and treatment. Nutritional deficiency is the cause for any kind of diseases to human beings. Nutrition is playing a key role in every one's health and adolescent is an intense anabolic period when requirements for all nutrients increases. Consequently, the nutrition is very crucial for the adolescent period since there are the formative years in the life of an individual when major physical, psychological and behavioral changes take place.

### Conclusion

As we discussed earlier, adolescence is the period of transition between childhood to adulthood, and it occupies a critical position in the human life. Nutrition for adolescents is important in which there was found changes in growth and hormones, daily activity, and intake of food. Adolescent girls are the backbone and progressive family and thus future

builders of the positive health of a community. To attain a healthy reproductive outcome and efficient physical activity nutritional status of an adolescent girl is valuable. In India, especially in a rural area, there is a high prevalence of malnutrition amongst adolescent girls. Malnutrition affects one out of five female adolescents in this. Adolescence is commonly regarded as a relatively healthy period of the life cycle. Hence Adolescents' nutritional status to be improved by inventing the factors influenced in the food habits and need to generate a healthy community in future.

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