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Awareness regarding the iodized salt among housewives of selected areas of Himachal Pradesh

S.R. Malhotra, S. Bhama and A. Sharma
Department of Food Science and Nutrition
College of Home Science
CSK Himachal Pradesh Krishi Vishvavidyalaya, Palampur- 1760 62.

Abstract

In the present study efforts have been made to know the awareness of iodized salt among the housewives, their salt buying practices, duration of powered salt consumption and their storage places in the rural area of the selected Zone of Himachal Pradesh. The result revealed that 65 percent of the housewives were aware about the use of the iodized salt. About 96 percent of the housewives of zone II buy the salt monthly and 25 percent buy salt twice or thrice a month. 80 percent families consume powered salt since more than 10 years. The storage place of the families was either near the fire or away from the families. Regarding the salt storage practices of the housewives about 20 percent women of the Zone II stored the salt in small container with loose lid, 26.7 percent women of Zone III stored the salt in the polythene or original packet but about 80-91 percent women stored the salt in the air tight containers. From the study it is concluded that rural women are also well aware of the consumption of iodized salt. The knowledge about the consumption of iodized salt was received from the mass media like radio and television etc.

Introduction

Iodine is one of the essential nutrients required for the normal mental and physical development of human beings. The human body requires around 150µgs of iodine every day. This is mostly met by the diet and drinking water we consume (Satapathy *et al.* 1995). Deficiency of iodine occurs when the daily intake , especially from food and water, does not fulfill the requirement of the body. This leads to an abnormal swelling in the neck called "Goitre". Mother with deficient iodine may have frequent abortions and still births (Prakash, 1997). The children born to such mothers can be crippled with varying degrees of mental handicap and physical deformity. Animals are also equally at risk to the spectrum of IDD at all the stages of growth and development. IDD have a significant effect on human and animal development and the quality of the nation' resources. Nearly 167 million persons in India are exposed to the risk of IDD of which 6.6 million have mild neurological disorders. Iodized salt has been proved to be the most successful source for the improvement of iodine status of population in Sub- Himalayan region (Sooch, *et. al.* 1973).

To meet the requirement of this nutrient, salt is the most commonly accepted vehicle for iodine, because all populations universally consume it in fairly uniform quantities almost daily. Keeping in mind this factor the survey has been conducted to know the awareness of the iodized salt among rural and urban areas of Himachal Pradesh with following **objectives**

- To assess the awareness about the use of iodized salt.
- Buying and storage practices of salt

Material and Methods

Selection of households

The three zones viz. zone I (low hill), zone II (mid hill) and zone III (high hill) of Himachal Pradesh were selected. Rural and urban areas were selected from each zone. From each area 45 households were selected by random sampling methods.

Collection of information

The total of 270 household was selected. The information regarding the awareness of iodized salt, salt buying practices, salt storage place and salt storage practices were collected from the housewives of rural and urban areas of H. P. and the data obtained was complied. Awareness among housewives regarding importance of iodized salt in different zones of H.P. is presented in the Table 1. Among 270 surveyed families 82.22 and 65.19% in urban and rural households were aware about the use of iodized salt.

Regarding salt buying practices in different zones of H.P. most of the respondents bought salt once a month (79.26% from rural areas and 89.63% from urban areas respectively), followed by twice a month, and thrice a month both in urban and rural households (Table 2).

Duration of consumption of powdered salt in different zones of H.P. is presented in the Table 3. Most of the (80.74%) of urban respondents had been using powdered salt since more than 10 years as compared to rural respondents (42.96%). It means that they were aware about the idolization of the salt and consequences of use of the non- iodized salt.

Table 1.Awareness among housewives regarding importance of iodized salt in different zones of H.P.

Response	Zone-I		Zone-II		Zone-III		Total	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Yes	35 (77.78)	37 (82.22)	34 (75.56)	43 (45.56)	19 (42.22)	31 (68.89)	88 (65.19)	111 (82.22)
No	10 (22.22)	8 (17.78)	11 (24.44)	2 (4.44)	26 (57.78)	14 (31.11)	47 (34.81)	24 (17.78)

Values in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table 2. Salt buying practices in different zones of H.P.

Frequency	Zone-I		Zone-II		Zone-III		Total	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Once a Month	36 (80.00)	42 (93.33)	43 (95.56)	43 (95.56)	28 (62.22)	36 (80.00)	107 (79.26)	121 (89.63)
Twice a Month	4 (8.89)	3 (6.67)	1 (2.22)	2 (4.44)	10 (22.22)	8 (17.78)	15 (11.11)	13 (9.63)
Thrice a Month	5 (11.11)	—	1 (2.22)	—	7 (15.56)	1 (2.22)	13 (9.63)	1 (0.74)

Values in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table 3. Duration of consumption of powdered salt in different zones of H.P.

Period	Zone-I		Zone-II		Zone-III		Total	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
< 2 year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2-5 Years	6 (13.33)	-	2 (4.44)	2 (4.44)	5 (11.11)	1 (2.22)	13 (9.63)	3 (2.22)
5-10 Years	19 (42.22)	9 (20.00)	20 (44.45)	7 (15.56)	25 (55.56)	7 (15.56)	64 (47.41)	23 (17.04)
> 10 Year	20 (44.45)	36 (80.00)	23 (51.11)	36 (80.00)	15 (33.33)	37 (82.22)	58 (42.96)	109 (80.74)

Values in parentheses indicate percentages.

As depicted in Table 4 the salt was kept either near fireplace or away from fire place. All the urban respondents kept salt away from fireplace whereas only 7.41 percent of rural respondents kept salt near fireplace. The reason being that the most of the rural people cook food in the *chullas*, around the *chullas* there is a raised space where the things can be placed and located easily while cooking.

As regard to storage practices of salt by the households, none of the households stored salt in gunny bags (Table 5). Small containers open i.e. without lid with loose lid were used by 11.11 percent of the rural households except two households of rural areas. Maximum percentage used airtight containers for storage of salt both in rural and urban households i.e. 90.37 and 70.37%, respectively. Very few i.e. 8.15 and 17.04 percent kept the salt in polythene or original packet as observed in urban and rural households, respectively.

Table 4. Storage place of salt by the households

Storage Place	Zone-I		Zone-II		Zone-III		Total	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
In kitchen near fire	1 (2.22)	-	7 (15.56)	-	2 (4.44)	-	10 (7.41)	-
In kitchen away from the fire	44 (97.78)	45 (100.00)	38 (84.44)	45 (100.00)	43 (95.56)	45 (100.00)	125 (92.59)	1350 (100.)
Any other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Values in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table 5. Storage practices of the salt by the households

Storage Practices	Zone-I		Zone-II		Zone-III		Total	
	Rural (n=45)	Urban (n=45)	Rural (n=45)	Urban (n=45)	Rural (n=45)	Urban (n=45)	Rural (n=135)	Urban (n=135)
Gunny Bag	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small Container (Open or Loose lid)	1 (2.22)	-	1 (2.22)	1 (2.22)	13 (20.00)	1 (2.22)	15 (11.11)	2 (1.48)
Air Tight Container	36 (80.00)	43 (95.56)	41 (91.11)	40 (88.89)-	18 (40.00)-	-39 (86.67)	95 (70.37)	122 (90.37)
Polyethene / Original Packet	8 (17.78)	2 (4.44)	3 (6.67)	4 (8.89)	12 (26.67)	5 (11.11)	23 (17.04)	11 (8.15)
Any other	-	-	-	-	2 (4.44)	-	2 (1.48)	-

Values in parentheses indicate percentages

Recommendations

Training should be organized to make the housewives aware about the complication of the use of the non- iodized salt, better salt buying and storage practices of the salt.

Conclusion

Most of the housewives are aware about the iodization of the salt. They are buying the salt since more the ten years. Most of the families are buying salt once a month and place the salt away from the fire and store in the air tight container. Few of the families store the salt in the original polythene bags.

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