Children's Iodine Intake in the Aseer Region, Southwest Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Study Design: Descriptive cross-sectional study.

Objectives: To figure out if children in the Aseer region of southwestern Saudi Arabia are getting enough iodine by looking at what they eat and how many of their families use iodized salt.

Methods: This cross-sectional research implemented a stratified proportional allocation sample. A questionnaire was used to study dietary habits. The families of each child were requested to supply one teaspoon of table salt. Spectrophotometric analysis was used to determine the iodine content of salt.

Results: The investigation included school-aged participants. Insufficient iodized table salt samples were observed in 22.3% (95% CI: 20.8%–23.8%) of the samples. Based on the results of this study, rural areas had significantly more insufficient table salt samples than urban areas. Milk (2,451; 80.7%), chicken (1,835, 60.4%), and eggs (1290; 42.0%) were the items consumed most frequently on a daily basis during the preceding week. The daily intake of milk and chicken is more frequent among those consuming insufficient iodine table salts. Unfortunately, children who ate table salts with too little iodine ate less fish than other kids.

Conclusions: The study revealed that the region still frequently uses insufficient iodized salt. There should be increased emphasis on health education regarding the need of frequently consuming dairy products, chicken, and fish. Through sales and marketing, iodized salt can be made more widely available. The Aseer region's authorities should take all reasonable measures to prevent the sale of non-iodized salt in the area's markets.

Keywords: Iodine, Dietary pattern, Table salt, Saudi Arabia

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