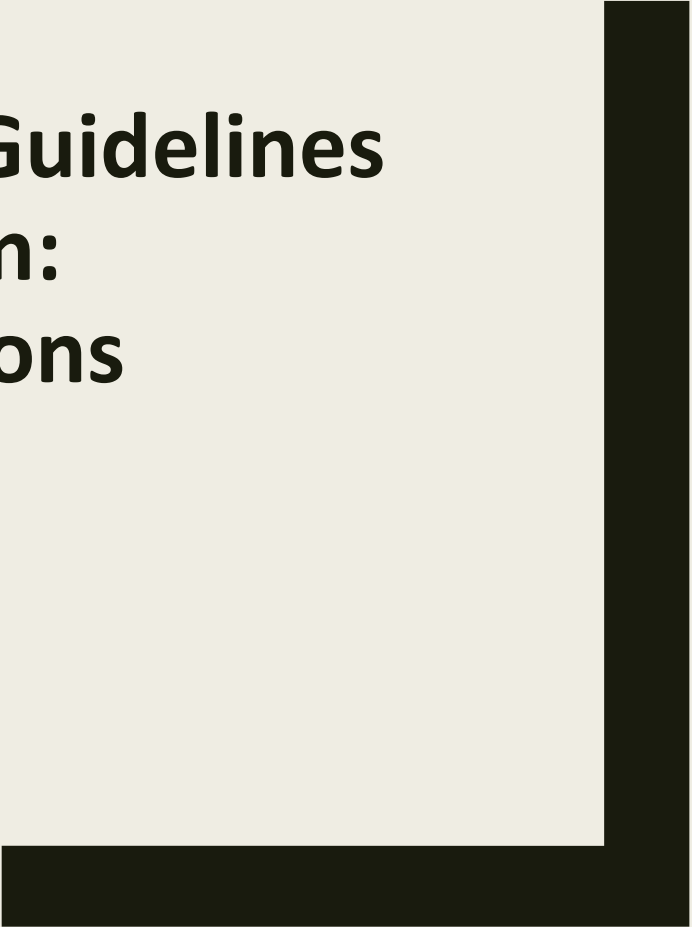




# **Systematic Review on Current Guidelines on Adolescent Nutrition: Challenges and Implications**

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# Review of Adolescent Nutrition Guidelines

- Topics such as: healthy eating, dietary guidance, micronutrient supplementation (including iron, folic acid, calcium, vitamin D, vitamin A, zinc, iodine, and multiple micronutrient supplementation); food/protein energy supplementation; nutrition counselling for pregnant adolescents; prevention and management of gestational diabetes; and prevention and management of obesity.
- Published in English and in Public domain.
- Information was extracted from guidelines that collectively cover nutritional needs of children, women of reproductive age and pregnant women.

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REVIEW

## Review of nutrition guidelines relevant for adolescents in low- and middle-income countries

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The economic and social well-being of any country will one day depend on its current adolescent population. To provide a good foundation for healthy adolescent development, healthy diet, along with physical activity and adequate nutrients, is necessary. Therefore, addressing the nutrition needs of adolescents could be an important step toward breaking the vicious cycle of intergenerational malnutrition, chronic diseases, and poverty. These problems could be addressed with timely recognition and appropriately delivered interventions. Our aim here is to review the existing guidelines on various aspects of nutrition interventions for adolescents and young women. We review all of the major existing guidelines on adolescent nutrition. We were able to find 18 guideline bodies that covered some form of nutritional advice in guidelines that targeted adolescents. Although the guidelines that focus specifically on this age group are limited in scope, we also extrapolated recommendations from guidelines focused on adults, women of reproductive age, and pregnant women, which were based on evidence that included populations of adolescent girls. We were able to extract and synthesize specific directives for nutrition in adolescents, macro- and micronutrient supplementation, exercise, obesity, and nutrition during preconception, pregnancy, and the postconception period.

Keywords: adolescent; nutrition guidelines; obesity; micronutrient; malnutrition; pregnancy

# Challenges and Implications

- Found 18 guideline groups that covered some form of nutritional advice.
- The guidelines that specifically focused on adolescents are limited in their scope.
- No exclusive guidelines for pregnant adolescents.
- The guidelines provide little to no guidance on implementation strategies and delivery platforms.
- Guidelines limited in their scope on defining the guiding principle.
- There is also the need to highlight the importance of psychosocial support and to provide interactive behavioral therapy, exercise, and nutritional advice to adolescents and young women at home and in schools.
- There is a need to take into account the tools and expertise required for effective delivery of these interventions and the appropriate delivery platforms.
- Guidelines require strong evidence from RCTs on adolescents and best practices, when possible, and are updated as new evidence becomes available.