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Vitamin A: Dietary Intake and Bioavailability of Provitamin A Carotenoids and Retinol in Human Health

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Message from the Guest Editors

Vitamin A is an essential nutrient obtained through diet, either as retinol from animal products or as provitamin A carotenoids, although mainly from plant products. The contribution of the provitamin A carotenoids depends not only on the amounts of fruits and vegetables consumed and on their proportion with respect to retinol intake from animal sources, but also on the bioavailability and capacity of conversion into retinol of the carotenoids consumed.

The evaluation of the suitability of the diet or the risk associated with excessive or inadequate vitamin A intakes are based in the assessment of nutritional status, using biochemical markers or dietary estimation. Data on nutritional status based on food intake are highly useful for decision-making in the public health setting and in the context of epidemiological studies.

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