

## Research Priorities in Maternal and Child Nutrition - Summary

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Mothers and children compose the group vulnerable to malnutrition. The nutrition of mothers is important for adequate weight at birth and successful lactation. Children must not only survive but must be assured of a good quality of life.

Indicators of assessment of maternal nutrition include clinical and social history, anthropometric and biochemical measures and placental weight. Low birth weight is related to maternal height and weight. Supplementation of mother's diet is necessary. The question is when should this be done if birth weight is to improve.

What is the role of maternal infections?

Is weight gain in pregnancy related to low birth weight?

The interventions for maternal anaemia needs study.

Is placental weight an index of function?

Lactational Performance has to be improved for adequate growth in infancy.

The poor weight gain in infancy is further compounded by late complementary feeding.

Nutritious low cost weaning foods must be formulated for universal use.

Low cost technology is necessary for identifying risk groups in pregnancy and in the preschool period.

Functional competence of malnourished persons needs further elucidation whether macro or micro nutrients deficiency result in low I.Q.

Interaction between infection and nutrition has not been clearly measured.

A few priorities are named:

1. The various factors influencing maternal nutrition.
2. Operational research on identification of risk groups, management and implementation of programmes; evaluation of interventions.
3. The role of maternal infections in pregnancy outcome.
4. The adaptation limits of a malnourished pregnant women safeguarding her own health and that of her offspring.
5. The late sequelae of childhood malnutrition affecting biological performance in adulthood.