



CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH LABORATORY NUTRITION REPORT

Summary: The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) National Report on Dietary and Nutritional Indicators in the U.S. Population provides comprehensive, centralized information and gives public health officials and others essential insight into which groups of people have levels of these indicators that are below or above levels considered optimum for good nutritional health. No other document in the public or private sector currently offers this information.

It is essential to continue and expand the current efforts being made by CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory for a program that monitors human levels of vitamins, trans fats and omega-3 fatty acids, and other indicators of nutritional and dietary status needed to provide the hard scientific data needed to make critical decisions about nutritional health for the Nation.

Issue: Research shows that good nutrition is key to lowering people's risk for many chronic and costly diseases, including stroke, heart disease, some cancers, and diabetes, that plague the Nation, profoundly diminishing quality of life for Americans every day.

Yet there's a wide gap between recommended dietary intakes and what Americans actually eat. We also know that over the last three decades Americans have increased their calorie intake dramatically. Although many recommendations for healthful diets have been made, we still don't know—for most nutritional indicators--what levels actually are in people's bodies.

Therefore, we suggest the following report language in the FY 2008 Department of Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill:

CDC's National Report on Dietary and Nutritional Indicators in the U.S. Population:

The Committee supports the efforts of CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory and its commitment to improving the measurement of dietary and nutritional indicators in the American people. The Committee is aware that many Americans are confused about which foods to eat to improve and maintain their health. The Committee is also aware that there is a wide gap between recommended dietary intake and what people eat. Consequently, without knowledge of what levels of most dietary or nutritional indicators actually are in people's bodies, it is difficult for public health officials and others to improve the diet and nutritional status of Americans.

The Committee recognizes that this and future Reports will provide this essential information, which is not available in any other document in the either the private or public sector. A publicly funded program that monitors human levels of vitamins, trans fats and omega-3 fatty acids, and other indicators of nutritional and dietary status is needed to provide the hard scientific data needed to make critical decisions about nutritional health for the Nation. Accordingly, the Committee has provided \$7 million above the FY 2007 level for CDC's Environmental Health Laboratory to support the

measurement of dietary and nutritional indicators and dissemination of these findings in the National Report.

The \$7 million increase would be used to:

- Expand the measurement of levels of nutritional and dietary indicators in the U.S. population. Among these indicators are vitamins A, D, E, C, B6, and B12; trans fats and omega 3 and 6 fatty acids; caffeine and other stimulants in food; folic acid; iron-status indicators; food carcinogens; botanicals and herbs; food residues, such as antibiotics and hormones; natural antioxidants; and trace elements such as selenium and iodine;
- Assess the nutritional status of special groups within the population, including infants and children, women of childbearing age, minorities, and the elderly;
- Develop more rapid, sensitive, and specific laboratory methods for measuring these indicators in people; and
- Develop and apply laboratory analytic methods for determining the role of nutritional factors in disease, particularly in chronic disease.

Justification:

The National Report on Dietary and Nutritional Indicators is national resource that showcases information about levels of selected dietary and nutritional indicators in the bodies of Americans. The Report displays that information by age, sex, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status for the Nation. The first Report will contain information on 21 indicators, including phytoestrogens and selected vitamins (such as vitamin A, E, and B12; serum and red blood cell folate; and trace elements (selenium and iodine) that are essential to human health CDC scientists measured these levels in the blood and urine of people who took part in CDC's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) during the period from 1999 through 2002.

The Report will also make it obvious whether the nutritional status of special groups in the population-children, women of childbearing age, minorities, the elderly-needs improvement and thus could prove a useful tool for those designing WIC or school lunch programs, "Meals-on-Wheels," or other similar programs.

Over time, public health officials and others will be able to use the hard scientific evidence in the Report to assess how effective the Nation has been in improving the diet and nutritional status of all Americans as well as to track trends and set priorities for future research.

In the future, CDC will publish biennial reports that provide information on numerous other indicators. Categories of indicators planned for inclusion include other vitamins (such as Vitamins D, C, and B6); trans fats and omega fatty acids; caffeine and other food stimulants; food residues and food carcinogens; natural antioxidants and markers of oxidative stress, and botanicals and herbs.