

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the presentations to this Colloquium on "Prenatal and Perinatal Nutrition" and on the discussion these originated between the speakers and distinguished members of the Auditorium, the following Conclusions and Recommendations were reached:

CONCLUSIONS

1. In the Latin American countries, fetal growth retardation is the most frequently associated factor with infant morbi-mortality and retardation of postnatal growth.

2. Contrary to what is generally accepted, the analysis of fetal-maternal relations indicate that the fetus is not a parasite of the mother; therefore, it is logical to expect that intrauterine development be adversely affected by suboptimal maternal nutrition.

3. The high incidence of low birth weight observed in the Latin American countries is the resultant of a causal complex, the important components of which are:

a) the nutritional history of the mother since conception and her present nutrition during pregnancy;

b) the high exposure to infection during pregnancy, and

c) other conditions resulting from the economic, social and cultural deprivation which define the low socioeconomic level of the great majority of the Latin American populations.

4. In our countries, different types of nutritional actions directed to the pregnant woman have been implemented, the majority of which have not been adequately evaluated.

5. It is considered that the nutritional actions oriented towards the improvement of reproductive efficiency of Latin American women must form part of comprehensive health care systems, focusing in the high-risk groups and taking into consideration the specific characteristics of each population group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Proposal is made to the Latin American Nutrition Society (SLAN) to carry out actions with the following objectives:

a) to promote planning, implementation and evaluation of programs aimed to the reduction of the incidence of low birth weight and infant mortality in Latin America, and

b) to stimulate the development of investigations to attain a better definition of the magnitude of the problem of low birth weight, its causes and sequelae, and the application of the more appropriate actions in the countries of the Region.

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