

Food products prepared according to special recipes are simply nowhere to be found,. As for the gifts of nature -- the seal meat, whale, and other marine animals, which from the times of old made up a considerable part of the diet of the indigenous northerners -- their absence goes without saying.

In the opinion of the local physicians, the existing standards of nutrition developed for the European North cannot be applied to the indigenous population of the Siberian North and the Far East.

"For many years now our district has received an insufficient amount of fresh vegetables, fruits, potatoes," laments I.A. Ismakaev, Head State Physician of the Chukotsk Autonomous District. "Because conditions for keeping them are absent, reindeer-breeders, hunters, and fishermen in the field conditions are supplied mainly with canned products. It is incomprehensible why the food industry terminated the production of food-stuffs specifically intended for regions of the Far North -- vitaminized and enriched products, iodized salt, products that keep for a long time.

A large share in the structure of mortality belongs to accidents, cases of poisonings, and injuries, most of which are related to alcohol use.

"In order to get rid of withdrawal symptoms, people consume anything they can get their hands on," A.G. Chuiko, Head Physician of the Kamchatskaya Regional Hospital, admits bitterly upon our meeting. "Unfortunately, the majority of medical workers do not have a deep-seated conviction concerning the necessity of personal active participation in the fight against drunkenness and alcoholism."