

this question, but a few hints may aid in the solution of the problem. Proteids are represented by the casein, or curd, of milk, the white of eggs, lean meat, and the gluten of flour. They are essentially tissue builders, and are the chief agents in carrying on the vital functions of digestion and assimilation of all the other foods. Deficiency of proteids in the food will induce anæmia, impaired digestion and nutrition, general weakness and loss of tone in the tissues and circulation, etc. Excess of proteids is indicated by colic, and by masses of undigested casein or curd in the stools. Fats are best supplied to infants, as cream or cod liver oil. They increase the body weight, produce animal heat, prevent tissue waste, and promote absorption of mineral salts, especially phosphates, from the intestines, and thus favor the growth of bone and nerve tissue. Deficiency of fats in the food is shown by emaciation, defective bone formation, nervous exhaustion, obstinate constipation, etc. Too much fat will cause regurgitation of the food an hour or so after eating, and will increase the action of the bowels.

In the early months carbohydrates are supplied to infants in the form of sugar, later as starch. They are, in part, converted into fat, thus increasing body weight, and in part used up in the generation of heat, thus preventing tissue waste. When deficient the gain in weight is slow, and there may even be emaciation. In excess they cause eructations of gas, pyrosis, colic and green stools. Mineral salts are essential to the upbuilding of the nervous and osseous systems. They enter into all cell formation and are found in the blood and digestive fluids. They facilitate absorption, secretion and excretion. They are incorporated with all other food stuffs, and therefore need no separate consideration.

Water is the medium in which all the proximate principles of life are dissolved, elaborated and distributed. In the infant metabolism goes on rapidly, and water is needed to dissolve, suspend and eliminate the waste. In proportion to its weight an infant requires six times as much water as the adult. The youngest infant should have water several times in the day, and the demand increases as the number of meals is reduced and solid food is added. When water is withheld every function of the body is impaired; it is as essential for growth as any other kind of food; it is as necessary for health as the sunlight.

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