

Nutritional status indices in population studies Indicadores del estado nutricional en estudios poblacionales

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The access to information is crucial to plan, define and evaluate nutritional interventions. Analyzing the main nutritional indices proposed by international fora for food and nutrition surveillance, the usefulness of anthropometry is underscored due to its simplicity and low cost. The height/age index has advantages and limitations, considering that height may be influenced by genetic factors. The joint analysis of different indicators allows a correct individual or population nutritional assessment. It is concluded that height continues to be a good index of nutritional status and of standard of living in countries where nutritional problems are relevant.