

Books

Trace Elements in Human Nutrition and Health

WHO. Pp. xviii + 343. Illustrated. Sw.Fr.85. US\$76.50.
Geneva: WHO. 1996. ISBN 92-4-156173-4.

Trace Elements in Human Nutrition and Health, a report of a World Health Organisation Expert Committee, contains material contributed by numerous experts consulted in different specialised fields, together with the conclusions reached and recommendations made by the Expert Consultation.

The nineteen nutritionally significant trace elements that were considered individually by the Expert Consultation have been divided into three groups in the report, from the point of view of their nutritional significance in humans, as follows: (i) essential elements; (ii) elements which are probably essential; and (iii) potentially toxic elements, some of which may nevertheless have some essential functions at low levels. The report further provides guidelines on how to conduct and interpret trace element investigations, assess dietary intake of trace elements, and detect and anticipate the risks of development of trace element-related disorders. It offers more reliable criteria with which to assess the possibility that the dietary habits of specific communities may have adverse effects on health, attributable to the deficiency or excess of a specific trace element, and it will undoubtedly contribute to the more effective diagnosis and control of such problems. For each element, where possible, requirements are estimated and safe ranges of intake for population groups are proposed to facilitate both food and nutrition planning and the assessment of observed intake as a step in the diagnosis and control of trace element-related disorders.

The aim of this book is to provide scientists and national authorities worldwide with an up-to-date and authoritative review of trace element requirements for human health and nutrition, together with guidelines and recommendations that will remain appropriate at least until the turn of the century.

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