

Roundtable Discussion

From conception to reception - improving early life nutrition for mothers and infants

Wednesday 8 April 2015

8:45am - 11:00am

The Guardian, in association with **Danone Nutricia**, has great pleasure in inviting you to a roundtable debate on Wednesday 8 April 2015 at The Guardian, Kings Place, York Way, London N1 9GU.

Malnutrition has been responsible, directly or indirectly, for 60% of the 10.9 million deaths annually among children under the age of five, with over two-thirds of these deaths being associated with inappropriate feeding practices. What and how we eat and drink in our first 1000 days of life, from conception to pre-school, really matters. Good food choices and eating habits in early life may reduce the risk of serious health problems, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes and cancer, later in life.

Yet parents say that the guidance on what to feed the pre-school child or what to eat in pregnancy for the best outcomes is not always clear. Despite a growing knowledge base, early childhood nutrition still does not occupy a central role in the early intervention policy agenda. Where policy has sought to improve early nutrition, efforts have centred primarily on early education settings, missing parents' vital role in establishing their children's taste preferences and eating patterns in the pre-school years.

Improving the diet of pregnant women, infants and toddlers should be considered a public health priority. We are convening a roundtable to discuss this issue with an objective to:

- raise awareness of the main problems, identify approaches to a solution, and provide a framework of essential interventions
- discuss ways to increase the commitment of governments and other concerned parties in this area
- help create an environment that will enable mothers, families and other caregivers to make and implement, informed choices about optimal feeding practices for infants and young children



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The roundtable will be hosted and chaired by Jane Dudman, editor of the Guardian Public Leaders network, followed by a full page write-up of the discussion in the Society section of the Guardian newspaper on 22 April, and online on Public Leaders on the same date.

A light breakfast will be served from 08:45 please advise us on any dietary requirements. The discussion will begin at 09:00, concluding at 11:00 with further opportunities for networking to follow.

We are inviting leading voices and experts from this area and we'd be delighted if you can join us to contribute your expertise to the debate.

Please RSVP to Vidhi Jhaveri at rsvp.roundtables@theguardian.com.

Yours sincerely,
Jane Dudman
Guardian News and Media