Correction of iodine deficiency in Macedonia.


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A national survey conducted in 1995-96 showed that mild to moderate iodine deficiency existed in Macedonia (median urinary iodine [UI] concentration 117 microg/l). It was concluded that a new legal regulation should be introduced concerning the iodination of table salt for human consumption. The iodine level was recommended to be 20-30 mg/kg salt, exclusively in the form of the more stable potassium iodate. The new regulations were instituted and became effective in October, 1999. National surveys performed in 2000 and 2001 showed increased median UI concentrations (154.1 microg/l in 2000 and 164.5 microg/l in 2001). In 2001, UI excretion was assessed in 490 pregnant and lactating women (median UI concentration 140 microg/l). During the last three surveys, household salt specimens were assessed for iodine content. The findings showed an increase of the percentage of the optimal iodine content in household salt (42-69%), which correlated with the higher IU excretion results. The new regime of salt iodination was proved to be highly effective in correcting the iodine deficiency in Macedonia.

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