

Causes of Misconceptions Regarding Dietary Patterns and Nutrition

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< Summary >

There are numerous misconceptions in terms of the relationships between food or nutrient intakes and longevity or health. These misconceptions are brought about by the power which can profit from the outbreak of misconceptions including food faddism. In many cases, scholars give the rationale to the misconceptions, and further mass media play the role of diffusing them. On the other hand, the misconceptions are likely to lack historical and topological aspects concerning the relationship between food or nutrient intakes and longevity or health.

In another words, they lack the epidemiological aspect. In these days, quite a few Japanese are affected by the notion that Japanese should reduce calorie intake and avoid eating meat and milk.

They know neither that the primate beginning to eat meat evolved to human beings nor that races eating meat a lot attained the 50 years of average life expectancy in the early 20th century. These are typical cases of lacking historical aspects.

The energy intake in Japanese is close to that in developing countries, 30% lower than that of developed countries. However, the Japanese public thinks that the energy intake in Japan is close to that in developed countries because Japanese dietary pattern is westernized.

In additions to the facts mentioned above, a series of animal experiments reducing calorie intake for prolonging life span or life expectancies have been misleading the public. Animal for experiments are usually fed under asepsis. However, in human beings one of staple targets for improving nutritional status is to combat infectious diseases. Findings from animal experiments neglecting the issue of infections cannot be extrapolated to human beings.