



III WORLD CONGRESS OF PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION
II LATIN AMERICAN CONGRESS OF COMMUNITY NUTRITION
X CONGRESO DE LA SOCIEDAD ESPAÑOLA
DE NUTRICIÓN COMUNITARIA (SENC)

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria. SPAIN

Banjul. GAMBIA

9-12 November

Congress

29th April-2nd May 2015

Post-Congress Workshops

PUBLIC HEALTH NUTRITION: THE CORE OF INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Spain is to host an international Public Health Nutrition congress to seek global food system sustainability and to curb nutritional disparities

Chronic malnutrition stimulates the rise in infectious diseases in developing countries

- **A chronic lack of calories and proteins reduces immunity against infectious diseases such as Ebola, malaria, AIDS and influenza as well as increasing the risk of complications that may result in death.**
- **The III World Congress of Public Health Nutrition, which will be held from November 9 to 12 in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, will play host to more than 1,500 specialists from 90 countries.**
- **This global meeting will serve to lay the groundwork for facing emerging challenges in the first world resulting from chronic undernourishment in disadvantaged areas of the planet.**

Madrid, 22 October 2014. Chronic and acute malnutrition, which is endemic in some areas of the planet, is a key agent in the transmission and propagation of infectious and opportunistic diseases caused by bodily nutrient deficiency and, therefore, by weakening of the immune system.

How to tackle these types of problems by laying the groundwork for community nutrition that stimulates suitable tools to reduce malnutrition and underlying illness rates is the aim of the III World Congress of Public Health Nutrition, which will be held from November 9 to 12 in Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and which will bring together over 1,500 specialists on the subject from 90 different countries.

“Malnutrition not only affects size and weight, but also the immune system due to low nutrient, calorie and protein intake. So much so that acute undernourishment levels increase the risk of opportunistic respiratory and intestinal illnesses and tuberculosis, among others”, explains Prof. Dr. Lluís Serra-Majem, Chairman of the aforementioned Congress, Professor of Preventive Medicine and Public Health and the UNESCO Honorary Professor of Health Systems at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

“Undernourishment caused by a severe lack of calories and proteins reduces lymphocyte and leukocyte levels due to thymus atrophy”, stresses Prof. Dr. Serra-Majem. “It also affects activation of the complement that prevents macrophages from ingesting and ridding the body of certain pathogens”.

Lower mortality thanks to community nutrition

“Between 35% and 40% of cases of death under the age of five are caused by chronic malnutrition”, Prof. Dr. Serra-Majem points out. “When malnutrition becomes chronic, immunity against infectious diseases such as Ebola, malaria, AIDS and influenza and other illnesses, such as tuberculosis, diarrheas and respiratory diseases, is reduced and, at the same time, there is an increase in the risk of complications that may even result in death. The effectiveness of vaccines also decreases”.

Although figures for mortality caused by malnutrition are still high, in the last 20 years, a reduction from 53% to the current 35-40% has been achieved thanks to healthcare and economic improvements in some regions. “In any case, and on account of the crisis we’re currently immersed in, this percentage could rise again due to the social, healthcare and economic fallbacks that several countries are experiencing”, concludes Prof. Serra-Majem.

More than 1,500 specialists from 90 countries

The III World Congress of Public Health Nutrition will also showcase the most significant developments in nutritional epidemiology, functional foods, nutrigenomics and new malnutrition indicators. “The main aim of prevention has ceased to be better hygiene and vaccination programs to focus on the search for solutions that encompass the etiological facets of present health problems such as obesity, undernourishment, cardiovascular diseases, cognitive impairment and sedentary lifestyles, among others”, explains Prof. Dr. Javier Aranceta, Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine and Public Health Nutrition at the University of Navarre and the Chairman of the Scientific Committee of the Spanish Society of Community Nutrition (by its Spanish acronym, SENC).

As an extension to this international event, from April 29 to May 2, a post-congress will be held in Gambia where several cooperation activities are being carried out to fight against undernourishment through the NGO Nutrition without Borders, which is also run by Prof. Dr. Lluís Serra-Majem.

For further information:

www.nutrition2014.org

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