

Letter to the Editor

**NATIONAL PROGRAM FOR ELIMINATION OF IODINE DEFICIENCY
DISORDERS IN IRAN**

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Dear Editor

Recently, H. Ghandwani, et al., published a paper in *Electronic Physician* about iodine nutritional status and goiter prevalence in primary school children aged 6-12 of Panchmahal District, Gujarat, India (1). This study reported an incidence of goiter in of 18.35 percent of grade 1 and 5 percent in grade 2 children in this region. Also, the median urinary

iodine excretion level was 110µg/L in this study. The authors concluded that iodine content of salt is inadequate in this area.

In Iran, the National Program for Elimination of Iodine Deficiency Disorders (NPEIDD) was initiated in 1989. Also, in 1994, the production of iodine salt was mandatory and its consumption increased to 95 percent in urban and 92 percent in rural populations (2).

Studies before NPEIDD reported a high prevalence of goiter and low iodine intake in Iran (3, 4). Studies seven years after NPEIDD showed its success and Iran was reported to be IDD-free by the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in 2000 (2). Azizi, et al., reported a reduction of grade 1 goiter (13.9 vs. 53.8 percent) and grade 2 (11 percent vs. 44.8 percent) in 2001, compared to 1996 in Iranian schoolchildren (5).

In 2007, although a reduction in the incidence of goiter was reported, urinary iodine was lower in comparison to 1996 and 2001 (6).

This successful experience of NPEIDD can be helpful to other countries with a high prevalence of goiter. Also a reduction in median urinary iodine in recent studies in Iran indicates the need for countries to adopt NPEIDD's successful measures.

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