

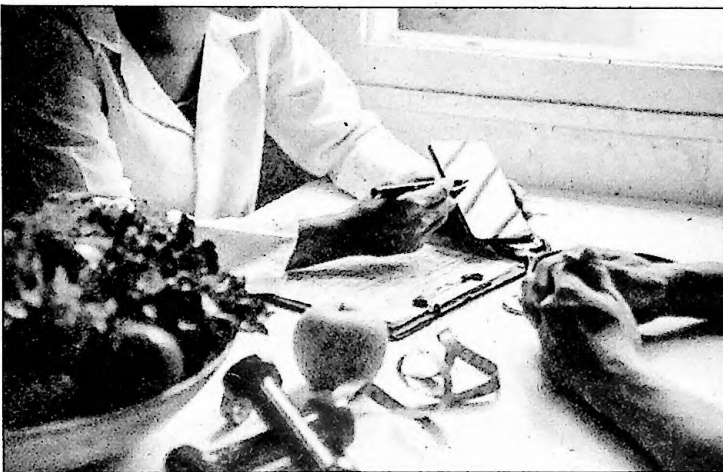
CAREER IN NUTRITION

HOW TO START AND WHAT TO EXPECT

Prateek Singh

With the clarion call of the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, 'Poshan Maah' is being observed in September to improve the nutritional outcome for children, adolescent, pregnant women and lactating mothers across the country and to address the issue of malnutrition on a mission mode. To combat the scourge of malnutrition, collaboration and convergence is required among all stakeholders including the centre and state administrations, local governments, health sector, industry bodies, services sector and the academia. Nutrition professionals play a significant role in the entire web of things aimed at helping the country realize the goal of conquering malnutrition and unlocking the true potential of its human capital.

Nutritionists are professionals who help people struggling with their health to reverse the damage caused to their bodies due to unhealthy or inadequate eating habits. Other than the



national mission on Poshan, the following trends indicate a positive demand for nutrition professionals.

Immunity Booster: The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered an unprecedented consciousness among the people about the need for maintaining and boosting immunity so that the body can combat the onslaught of viruses and recover from its after effects. To enhance immunity, the food sector is concentrating on producing food items supple-

mented with zinc, selenium, vitamin C, and vitamin D. Moreover, people are increasingly seeking the professional advice of nutritionists on ways to boost immunity through healthy eating habits.

Mental Health: Given the mental health impact of the

protracted lockdown, focus has shifted to people suffering from stress, worry, and depression. People are increasingly seeking the intervention of professionals in incorporating antioxidants, zinc, magnesium, vitamin B, and other bioactive components that boost mental health in their daily meals.

ACADEMICS

A student of science stream (generally) or from any other stream also, after completing class 12th can pursue B.Sc. in Nutrition and Dietetics which can be followed by an M.Sc. in Nutrition and Dietetics. M.Sc. Nutrition and Dietetics has four major types of specialized fields of nutrition which are as follows:

- Clinical Nutrition
- Public Health Nutrition

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EN QUESTION OF THE WEEK

Readers' views elicited on important issues

Last date for entry submission: 21/09/2022

FREE SUBSCRIPTION FOR WINNERS

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- Food Science and Technology
- Sports Nutrition

Popular Courses

- B.Sc Nutrition and Dietetics
- B.Sc in Clinical Nutrition and Dietetics
- B.Sc in Food Science and Nutrition
- Diploma in Nutrition and Diet Planning
- Diploma in Nutrition and Dietetics
- Diploma in Health Education
- M.Sc. Clinical Nutrition
- M.Sc. Food Science
- M.Sc. Public Health and Nutrition
- M.Sc. Nutrition and Dietetics
- M.Sc. in Paediatric Dietetics
- M.A. in Family and Consumer Sciences
- M.A. in Dietetics Studies
- M.A. in Food Studies
- M.A. in Food Technology
- Diploma in Nutrition and Food Sciences
- Diploma in Human Nutrition

Top Colleges for Nutritionist Courses

- ICMR - National Institute of Nutrition, Hyderabad
- University of Delhi
- University of Madras
- Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University
- Osmania University
- University of Mysore
- G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar
- University of Bombay

- Shreemati Nathibai Damodar Thackeray University
- Guru Nanak Dev University
- MGR University, Chennai
- Madurai Kamaraj University
- Sri Ramachandra Medical College and Research Institute, Chennai

JOB PROFILE

Whether a bachelor's degree or a master's, opting for a specialization in a Nutritionist Course will open doors to ample career opportunities both in India and abroad. From government to private sectors, almost all industries need such professionals.

A Nutrition professional offers guidance to people, families, communities and organizations on how to bring positive changes in their food, lifestyle, and mindset for optimum health promotion. They can work with a licensed healthcare professional to help individuals with previously diagnosed disease and recognize biochemical imbalances and toxicity which lead to poor health and help them improve their overall health through proper diet, nutrition and exercise.

Clinical Nutritionist: Clinical Nutrition is one of the major and most common disciplines of Nutrition and Dietetics. Their major goal is to be very precise and accurate about the nutrition and health aspects of diet in order to help/treat various types

of infectious/communicable and non-infectious/non-communicable diseases with the help of the knowledge of therapeutic diets. The scope of this field is as follows: (i) A person with B.Sc. Nutrition and Dietetics can work as a Dietician in hospitals and Nutritionists in health clinics, health centers, Multinational Companies, schools, spas and hotels and restaurants. (ii) Become a Registered Dietician (RD) - Graduates can work as a project assistant, project associate, chief nutritionist in NGO's and private organizations.

Public Health Nutritionist: Public Health Nutrition is another field of nutrition that focuses on the public health problems caused by malnutrition/over nutrition such as Anaemia in females, particularly in young school/college girls, stunting and wasting of children, Vitamin A deficiency diseases in poor communities and populations, persons affected with Diabetes, Iodine deficiency, Obesity etc. The scope of this field is as follows: (i) Graduates can work as a project assistant, project associate at an organization like PHFI (Public Health Foundation of India), WHO, UNICEF, other health organizations and even with the various programmes launched by the State and the Central Government and gain rich experience in work (ii) Work as a chief nutritionist in NGO or private organizations. (iii) They

can work as an author in Nutrition Journals (iv) They can also work as a public health policymaker (v) They also have an option of working as a sustainable food nutritionist.

Sports Nutritionist: Sports nutrition deals with the specific nutrition and diet requirements and guidelines of various sports players depending on the category of their sports, weight category, height and weight proportions, etc. The scope of this field is as follows: (i) Working as a Nutritionist at sports training, gyms and fitness centers (ii) Working as a part-time coach through digital methods for an average gym-goer (iii) Working as a fitness streaming programmer (iv) Become a certified supplements and granular nutritionist (v) Join as a nutritionist at Sports Authority of India and various other public and private sports establishments.

Food Science Technologist: If you feel you have a scientific temper of research and like experimenting and have an analytical brain along with the interest in nutrition and diet then this field is just for you. The scope of the field is as follows: (i) Work as a Food Scientist in R&D centres of various types of food industries (ii) Work as a Food Auditor/Food Quality Controller (iii) Work as a food analyst/food sensory evaluator (iv) Work as a Research Associate with the Food Industry (v) Work as a Consultant in FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India).

INCOME

The field of nutrition is a versatile one. You can earn according to your skills and experience. The average starting salary of an experienced dietitian can range from average 5 lacs per annum and above. The salary of health and fitness coaches depends on what kind of clients they are dealing with. If you are aiming to work under government and non government organizations, you have wide access to exposure and satisfactory income. Nutrition bloggers can earn in lakhs if the content and quality of their blog reaches optimum number of readers. If you are a freelancer and working with clients on online portals and media, then you have feasibility and flexibility to earn much more since this opens the doors to various kinds of clients offering a wide range of wages.

In a nutshell, the career in nutrition is an emerging field with a lot of opportunities unfolding as the administration as well as the general public are becoming more and more vigilant about health and nutrition and their impact on the country's economy as well as at the individual, family and community level.

(The author is a career consultant and NEET coach. He can be reached at prateek.singhtalks@gmail.com). Views expressed are personal.