

73rd WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Agenda Item A73/4



International Society of
Nephrology

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STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY OF NEPHROLOGY

Honorable chair, distinguished delegates,

Given the strong association between poor maternal, fetal and child nutrition, and an increased risk of kidney disease in adult life, the International Society of Nephrology welcomes the adoption of the World Health Organization Decision EB146(20) on maternal, infant and young child nutrition.

Poor maternal health and nutrition before and during pregnancies can have adverse consequences on the development of the fetal kidney and can reduce the newborn's final nephron number. Low birthweight and prematurity, which occur in 15% and 9.6% of livebirths, are affected substantially by maternal nutrition and health during pregnancies. These factors, alongside rapid childhood weight gain, are associated with increased risk of hypertension and kidney disease later in life¹.

The ISN notes that the global rates of malnutrition remain alarmingly high, in particular amongst children. Globally, in 2019, 144 million children under five were affected by stunting, 47 million were affected by wasting, and 38 million were overweight². Malnutrition has severe consequences on both the physical and mental wellbeing of children, preventing them from fully developing and exposing them to higher risks of developing NCDs.

Accordingly, we call upon Member States and the WHO to:

- Prioritize the development of policies and programs that improve maternal and childhood health and nutrition worldwide in order to reduce low birthweight, prematurity and overweight which, in turn, reduce the global burden of hypertension and kidney disease in adult life.
- Increase women's access to antenatal and postnatal care, including prompt maternal education to optimize childhood nutrition and activity to prevent obesity.
- Accelerate progress on targets for NCDs & SDG 2.2 on malnutrition by implementing measures to fight undernutrition and diet-related NCD and obesity targets.

¹ Luyckx, Valerie A; Bertram, John F; Brenner, Barry M; Fall, Caroline; et al. Effect of fetal and child health on kidney development and long-term risk of hypertension and kidney disease. The Lancet, Volume382, Issue 9888, P273-283, July 20, 2013

² UNICEF/WHO/The World Bank Group joint child malnutrition estimates: levels and trends in child malnutrition: key findings of the 2020 edition