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COMPLEX HYGIENIC ASSESSMENT OF NUTRITION AND MICRONUTRIENT STATUS OF WORKERS EXPOSED TO CHEMICAL AND PHYSICAL POLLUTING FACTORS OF THE INDUSTRIAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: In modern industrial settings, the risk of adverse effects from chemical and physical pollutants on workers' health is increasing, requiring a comprehensive hygienic evaluation of their nutrition and micronutrient status. The aim of this study was to assess the compliance of workers' actual diets with physiological requirements and to identify deficiencies of essential micronutrients among employees of various industrial enterprises. A comparative analysis was carried out on the energy value, the ratio of macro- and micronutrients, the content of vitamins and minerals in the diet, as well as biochemical indicators of blood. It was found that under the influence of industrial factors, a pronounced nutritional imbalance occurs, characterized by decreased intake of antioxidants (vitamins A, E, C) and microelements (zinc, selenium, iron), which contributes to metabolic and functional disorders. The findings confirm the need for hygienic optimization of workers' nutrition, implementation of preventive programs, and monitoring of micronutrient status to maintain health and working capacity.

Keywords: hygienic assessment, workers' nutrition, micronutrient status, industrial factors, chemical pollutants, physical exposure, preventive medicine.

КОМПЛЕКСНАЯ ГИГИЕНИЧЕСКАЯ ОЦЕНКА ПИТАНИЯ И МИКРОНУТРИЕНТНОГО СТАТУСА РАБОЧИХ ПРИ ВОЗДЕЙСТВИИ ХИМИЧЕСКИХ И ФИЗИЧЕСКИХ ЗАГРЯЗНЯЮЩИХ ФАКТОРОВ ПРОИЗВОДСТВЕННОЙ СРЕДЫ

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АННОТАЦИЯ: В условиях современных производств повышается риск неблагоприятного влияния химических и физических загрязняющих факторов на организм рабочих, что требует комплексного гигиенического анализа их питания и микронутриентного статуса. Целью исследования являлась оценка соответствия фактического рациона физиологическим потребностям и выявление дефицита жизненно важных микронутриентов у работников различных промышленных предприятий. Проведён сравнительный анализ энергетической ценности, соотношения макро- и микронутриентов, содержания витаминов и минеральных веществ в рационе, а также биохимических показателей крови. Установлено, что при воздействии производственных факторов наблюдается выраженный дисбаланс питания, снижение поступления антиоксидантов (витаминов А, Е, С) и микроэлементов (цинк, селен, железо), что способствует развитию метаболических и функциональных нарушений. Полученные данные подтверждают необходимость гигиенической оптимизации питания рабочих, внедрения профилактических программ и контроля микронутриентного статуса для сохранения здоровья и работоспособности.

Ключевые слова: гигиеническая оценка, питание рабочих, микронутриентный статус, производственные факторы, химические загрязнители, физические воздействия, профилактическая медицина.

RELEVANCE: In the context of rapid industrialization and increasing environmental burden, the hygienic assessment of workers' nutrition and micronutrient status has become a priority public health issue. Industrial workers are continuously exposed to complex mixtures of chemical and physical pollutants, such as heavy metals, solvents, dust, noise, and thermal stress, which have cumulative toxic effects on the human body. These occupational hazards can alter metabolic processes, increase oxidative stress, and disrupt the balance of essential vitamins and trace elements, thereby contributing to chronic diseases, premature fatigue, and reduced work efficiency.

Adequate and balanced nutrition plays a decisive role in maintaining the adaptive capacity of the body and resistance to harmful environmental influences. However, numerous studies indicate that workers in industrial settings often have unbalanced diets, insufficient intake of protein, vitamins A, E, C, and group B, as well as essential microelements such as iron, zinc, selenium, and iodine. These deficiencies weaken antioxidant defense mechanisms and increase susceptibility to toxic exposure. Therefore, a comprehensive hygienic study that integrates dietary analysis with biochemical assessment of micronutrient status is necessary to identify early nutritional disturbances and prevent occupationally related health disorders.

The relevance of this research also lies in its practical value for occupational health and preventive medicine. Understanding the interaction between nutrition and industrial risk factors will enable the development of evidence-based recommendations for nutritional optimization, including the introduction of fortified foods, vitamin-mineral supplements, and rational meal planning at workplaces. This approach will not only improve workers' health and performance but also reduce the overall incidence of metabolic, cardiovascular, and immune disorders associated with occupational exposures. Hence, the complex hygienic assessment of nutrition and micronutrient status represents a crucial scientific and practical tool in the modern system of workplace health protection [1].

MATERIALS AND METHODS: This review article is based on an analytical synthesis of scientific publications, regulatory documents, and hygienic guidelines related to occupational health, industrial toxicology, and nutritional hygiene. The literature search was conducted using international databases such as PubMed, Scopus, and Web of Science, as well as regional sources and national sanitary regulations of Uzbekistan and the CIS countries. The inclusion criteria encompassed studies published between 2010 and 2025 that evaluated the nutritional status, dietary patterns, and micronutrient deficiencies among industrial workers exposed to chemical and physical pollutants.

The methodological approach included a comparative analysis of dietary intake data, hygienic standards for nutrient consumption, and biochemical indicators of micronutrient balance. Reports on antioxidant status, oxidative stress markers, and functional health parameters were reviewed to establish associations between occupational exposures and metabolic alterations. Additionally, normative documents such as SanPiN, WHO, and FAO recommendations were analyzed to identify regulatory frameworks for optimal nutrition in industrial environments.

The collected data were systematized to highlight prevailing deficiencies, risk factors, and preventive strategies. Emphasis was placed on identifying evidence-based interventions—including dietary modification, micronutrient supplementation, and workplace nutrition programs—that could enhance the adaptive resilience and overall health of industrial workers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION: Industrial environments are characterized by the presence of numerous harmful agents, including chemical, physical, and sometimes biological factors that directly or indirectly influence workers' health. Continuous exposure to industrial pollutants such as heavy metals (lead, cadmium, mercury), organic solvents, dust particles, and combustion products leads to chronic intoxication, metabolic disturbances, and dysfunction of vital organs. Physical stressors—noise, vibration, elevated temperature, and radiation—further aggravate these effects by increasing oxidative stress, accelerating fatigue, and impairing adaptive mechanisms [2].

These occupational factors alter energy metabolism and disrupt the absorption and utilization of essential nutrients, resulting in deficiencies of vitamins A, E, C, and B group, as well as trace elements such as zinc, selenium, iron, and iodine. Such deficiencies weaken the antioxidant defense system, decrease resistance to toxic exposures, and predispose individuals to cardiovascular, endocrine, and immunological disorders. Additionally, irregular work schedules and limited access to balanced meals contribute to the deterioration of dietary patterns. Workers engaged in physically demanding or hazardous industries often consume high-calorie but nutritionally poor foods, exacerbating the imbalance between energy intake and nutrient quality. Therefore, occupational exposure and nutritional imbalance form a synergistic risk factor for the development of chronic diseases and reduced working capacity.

This research is of high scientific and practical importance, as it integrates aspects of occupational hygiene, preventive medicine, and nutritional science. From a scientific standpoint, the study contributes to understanding the complex relationship between environmental exposures and metabolic regulation, emphasizing the role of micronutrient balance in adaptive responses to industrial stressors. It systematizes existing evidence on nutritional deficiencies among workers and highlights biochemical markers that can serve as indicators of early metabolic disturbances.

Practically, the results can be used to develop evidence-based strategies for improving workers' health through rational nutrition. This includes revising dietary norms for industrial workers, designing workplace meal programs, and introducing fortified foods or vitamin-mineral supplementation to compensate for occupationally induced losses. The implementation of such measures will help reduce morbidity, enhance labor productivity, and ensure long-term preservation of health and working ability in populations exposed to harmful industrial environments. Thus, the study provides a foundation for sustainable occupational health management and public health policy development.

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The nutrition of industrial workers is one of the most important determinants of occupational health, efficiency, and long-term adaptation to environmental and technological stressors. From a hygienic perspective, proper nutrition ensures adequate energy supply, supports detoxification processes, and maintains antioxidant and immune defense mechanisms under continuous exposure to harmful factors. In contrast, an unbalanced diet may intensify the toxic effects of industrial pollutants and accelerate the development of chronic occupational diseases.

Workers employed in industries with chemical, physical, or combined hazards often experience nutritional imbalance due to irregular work schedules, limited access to fresh food, and monotonous dietary choices. Deficiencies in proteins, vitamins (A, E, C, and group B), and essential trace elements (iron, zinc, selenium, iodine) reduce the body's ability to neutralize free radicals and repair tissue damage.

Hygienic assessment of workers' nutrition involves evaluating dietary structure, caloric adequacy, and micronutrient sufficiency relative to physiological demands. The integration of workplace meal planning, micronutrient supplementation, and sanitary control over food quality are essential preventive measures. Ensuring optimal nutrition in industrial settings not only improves health outcomes but also enhances labor productivity and overall occupational safety [3].

Micronutrient Status and Its Role in the Adaptation of the Body to Toxic Exposures

Micronutrients—vitamins, minerals, and trace elements—play a pivotal role in maintaining physiological homeostasis and adaptive responses to environmental stressors. Their significance becomes especially evident in occupational settings, where workers are chronically exposed to toxic chemical and physical agents. Adequate micronutrient status ensures the optimal functioning of enzymatic systems involved in detoxification, antioxidant defense, and energy metabolism. Vitamins A, C, and E, together with trace elements such as selenium, zinc, copper, and manganese, form an integrated antioxidant barrier that protects cellular structures from oxidative damage caused by free radicals and lipid peroxidation products.

When toxic compounds enter the body, they initiate oxidative stress, generating reactive oxygen and nitrogen species. Micronutrients act as cofactors for enzymes such as superoxide dismutase, glutathione peroxidase, and catalase, thereby neutralizing these harmful intermediates. Deficiency of these nutrients weakens the antioxidant system, exacerbating the cytotoxic and genotoxic effects of pollutants. Furthermore, iron, iodine, and B-group vitamins regulate hematopoiesis, thyroid metabolism, and nervous system stability—functions that are often impaired in workers exposed to industrial contaminants.

Chronic deficiency of micronutrients reduces adaptive capacity, increases susceptibility to inflammation and fatigue, and accelerates premature aging processes. Therefore, maintaining an adequate micronutrient balance is a cornerstone of occupational hygiene and preventive medicine. Regular assessment of blood levels of vitamins and minerals, combined with dietary monitoring, enables early detection of subclinical deficiencies and supports the design of targeted nutritional interventions for at-risk groups of workers.

Influence of Chemical Pollutants: Heavy Metals, Organic Solvents, and Dust

Chemical pollutants are among the most hazardous factors in the industrial environment. Heavy metals—such as lead, cadmium, mercury, and nickel—are of particular concern because of their cumulative properties and strong affinity for biological molecules. Once absorbed, these metals interfere with enzymatic systems, displace essential elements (e.g., zinc and calcium), and cause oxidative stress. Lead inhibits heme synthesis and affects the nervous and cardiovascular systems, while cadmium disrupts renal and hepatic function by binding to metallothioneins. Mercury compounds alter mitochondrial activity and compromise the central nervous system.

Organic solvents (benzene, toluene, xylene, formaldehyde, and others) are widely used in manufacturing, painting, and chemical industries. Chronic inhalation of solvent vapors leads to lipid peroxidation of cellular membranes, depletion of antioxidant reserves, and disruption of vitamin metabolism, particularly of vitamins E and B6. Many solvents also impair appetite and gastrointestinal absorption, further aggravating nutritional deficiencies.

Industrial dust—silica, coal, and metallic particles—acts as both a mechanical and chemical irritant. Long-term inhalation provokes chronic inflammation of the respiratory tract, increases oxidative load, and alters trace element balance, particularly by reducing serum selenium and iron. Dust exposure is frequently accompanied by reduced dietary intake of protective nutrients, resulting in a synergistic effect between external toxic load and internal nutritional deficits.

Comprehensive hygienic monitoring has shown that workers in metallurgy, chemical production, mining, and mechanical industries demonstrate significantly higher levels of oxidative biomarkers (malondialdehyde, lipid hydroperoxides) and lower antioxidant potential compared with unexposed populations. These findings emphasize that toxic effects of pollutants cannot be fully understood without considering the modifying role of nutrition and micronutrient status [4].

Effects of Physical Factors: Noise, Vibration, Temperature, and Radiation

Physical environmental stressors represent another important group of occupational hazards that influence nutritional and metabolic balance. Prolonged exposure to high noise levels causes neuro-endocrine strain, elevating cortisol and catecholamine secretion, which in turn accelerates the consumption of vitamins C and B-complex involved in stress adaptation. Workers in noisy environments often exhibit early signs of fatigue, insomnia, and diminished cognitive performance, partly related to depleted micronutrient reserves.

Vibration exposure, common among machine operators and transport workers, provokes microcirculatory disturbances and oxidative damage in vascular tissues. Experimental studies have demonstrated that antioxidant supplementation—particularly with vitamins E and selenium—reduces lipid peroxidation and improves endothelial function in vibration-exposed individuals.

Thermal factors are equally significant. High ambient temperatures increase metabolic rate and perspiration, leading to accelerated loss of water-soluble vitamins and electrolytes, such as potassium, magnesium, and zinc. Conversely, cold environments enhance caloric demands and require higher intake of fats and antioxidant nutrients to maintain thermoregulation and immune resistance. In both cases, the imbalance between nutrient intake and physiological expenditure contributes to decreased working capacity.

ISSN NUMBER: 2692 - 5206 Volume 5,October ,2025

Ionizing and non-ionizing radiation also exert profound effects on the human organism. Radiation exposure damages DNA and generates free radicals, increasing the requirement for antioxidants and trace elements involved in repair mechanisms. Micronutrients such as selenium, zinc, and vitamins C and E are known to mitigate radiation-induced oxidative stress by enhancing glutathione-dependent detoxification. Workers in radiological, nuclear, and high-frequency electromagnetic fields therefore require regular nutritional monitoring and prophylactic fortification.

The combined impact of these physical factors often acts synergistically with chemical exposure, producing cumulative stress that accelerates depletion of micronutrient stores. This highlights the necessity of integrated hygienic control that simultaneously evaluates environmental, nutritional, and physiological parameters.

Review of Domestic and International Studies

A growing body of research, both in Uzbekistan and abroad, supports the association between occupational exposure and disturbances in nutritional status. Domestic studies conducted in metallurgical and textile enterprises of Central Asia have revealed that 40–60% of workers experience deficiencies of vitamins A, E, and C, accompanied by reduced levels of zinc and selenium in blood plasma. Similar patterns were observed in chemical plants and cable manufacturing industries, where chronic contact with lead and organic solvents led to impaired antioxidant capacity and increased lipid peroxidation indices.

Internationally, investigations from Eastern Europe, Russia, and China have confirmed that industrial workers are a vulnerable group in terms of micronutrient imbalance. European studies indicate that occupational exposure to cadmium and lead correlates with decreased serum vitamin E and glutathione peroxidase activity. In Korean and Japanese research, supplementation with antioxidant complexes demonstrated measurable improvements in biochemical markers of oxidative stress and immune function among welders and battery plant workers.

WHO and ILO reports emphasize that nutritional interventions in occupational health are often overlooked despite their proven effectiveness in reducing morbidity and enhancing productivity. In Scandinavian countries, pilot programs introducing fortified workplace meals rich in antioxidants and essential minerals resulted in lower rates of respiratory and cardiovascular complaints among exposed personnel. In the United States, longitudinal studies of miners and chemical workers found that correction of dietary deficiencies led to significant reductions in absenteeism and improved overall well-being.

Despite regional variations, all these findings converge on the conclusion that the relationship between toxic exposure and nutrition is bidirectional: pollutants deplete micronutrient reserves, while deficiencies heighten susceptibility to toxins. Consequently, systematic monitoring of nutritional status should be integrated into occupational risk assessment protocols.

Limitations of Existing Research and Scientific Gaps

Although numerous studies have explored aspects of occupational exposure and nutrition, several limitations and scientific gaps remain. First, many investigations are cross-sectional in nature, providing only a snapshot of nutritional status without capturing dynamic changes over time. Longitudinal cohort studies that track micronutrient fluctuations during prolonged exposure are rare.

Second, methodological inconsistencies complicate comparison of results. Different laboratories employ varying biochemical assays, reference ranges, and dietary assessment tools, leading to heterogeneous data. There is a pressing need for standardized protocols that combine dietary surveys with biomarker analysis to achieve accurate and reproducible results.

Third, most studies focus on individual pollutants or single nutrients, neglecting the complex interactions between multiple exposures and nutrient networks. For instance, the combined effect of heavy metals and thermal stress on antioxidant balance has received little attention, despite its practical relevance. Multivariate models and systems biology approaches could provide deeper insights into these interrelations.

Another significant gap lies in intervention studies. While observational data demonstrate correlations between deficiencies and health outcomes, experimental trials evaluating the efficacy of dietary or supplement-based interventions in industrial populations are limited. Developing and testing such programs under real workplace conditions would generate valuable evidence for preventive strategies.

Moreover, socio-economic and behavioral determinants of nutrition among workers—such as meal timing, accessibility of healthy food, and cultural dietary habits—are rarely analyzed. Integrating social and behavioral sciences into occupational hygiene research could enhance the practical applicability of findings.

Finally, few publications address the specific context of Central Asian industrial environments, where climatic conditions, dietary traditions, and regulatory frameworks differ from those of Europe or North America. Localized studies are essential for formulating region-appropriate recommendations and for updating national hygienic norms and SanPiN standards related to workplace nutrition.

In summary, although the scientific foundation for understanding the link between industrial exposure and micronutrient imbalance is expanding, comprehensive, interdisciplinary, and region-specific research is still insufficient. Addressing these gaps through collaborative studies will enable the development of integrated health protection systems that combine environmental control, nutritional monitoring, and evidence-based preventive nutrition programs for industrial workers.

Generalized Data on Actual Nutrition of Industrial Workers

Studies conducted in different branches of industry consistently demonstrate that the actual nutrition of workers rarely meets the physiological standards required for adequate adaptation to occupational stress. In heavy industries such as metallurgy, construction, chemical manufacturing, and mining, energy expenditure is high, yet the diet often lacks proportional nutrient density. Workers commonly consume high-calorie meals dominated by refined carbohydrates and fats, while the content of high-quality protein, fresh vegetables, and fruits remains insufficient. The dietary pattern is frequently monotonous, with low diversity and irregular meal timing due to shift work and limited access to canteens or catering services.

Nutritional surveys from Eastern Europe and Central Asia reveal that the daily intake of animal protein among industrial workers averages 50–60 g—approximately 30 % below recommended norms—while consumption of milk products and fresh produce is 40–50 % lower than physiological requirements. As a result, the intake of essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals fails to compensate for the elevated metabolic turnover induced by occupational exposures. Furthermore, industrial canteen menus are often designed to meet caloric needs rather than micronutrient balance, neglecting the protective function of vitamins and antioxidants that could mitigate toxic stress. Socioeconomic constraints, limited food variety near industrial zones, and insufficient nutritional education exacerbate these imbalances.

Frequency and Severity of Vitamin and Micronutrient Deficiencies

Comprehensive biochemical assessments indicate a high prevalence of latent or overt micronutrient deficiencies among workers exposed to industrial pollutants. Deficiencies of vitamins A, C, E, and group B (especially B1, B6, and B12) are the most widespread, followed by shortages of trace elements such as zinc, selenium, iodine, and iron. According to regional studies in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Russia, 60–70 % of workers in chemical and metal industries demonstrate plasma vitamin C levels below the physiological threshold, and approximately half show decreased serum selenium and zinc concentrations.

Vitamin A and E deficiencies are particularly concerning because of their antioxidant roles. In populations exposed to heavy metals or organic solvents, reduced α-tocopherol and retinol concentrations correlate with increased lipid peroxidation markers, indicating depletion of antioxidant reserves. Iron-deficiency anemia is also common, affecting up to one-third of female workers and 15–20 % of male workers, primarily due to inadequate dietary iron and interference from lead or cadmium exposure, which impairs iron absorption. Selenium deficiency has been linked with reduced glutathione peroxidase activity, predisposing workers to oxidative tissue damage and impaired immune responses.

Micronutrient deficiencies seldom occur in isolation; rather, they form complex, interrelated patterns that weaken the organism's resilience. Combined shortages of antioxidants and trace elements intensify susceptibility to chemical toxicity and accelerate fatigue, hypertension, and metabolic dysregulation. Such findings underline the importance of integrating biochemical screening into occupational health surveillance to detect subclinical deficiencies before they manifest as disease [5].

Relationship between Occupational Factors and Metabolic Changes

The metabolism of industrial workers is profoundly influenced by exposure to physical and chemical hazards. Inhalation of heavy-metal particles or solvents triggers enzymatic responses that increase the demand for metabolic cofactors. Detoxification processes in the liver rely on NADPH-dependent enzymes and glutathione conjugation pathways, which consume large amounts of vitamins C, B2, B6, and E. Consequently, prolonged exposure without nutritional compensation results in depletion of these nutrients and secondary metabolic stress.

Studies demonstrate that workers exposed to lead or cadmium exhibit elevated levels of lipid peroxidation products and decreased antioxidant enzyme activity. Simultaneously, their carbohydrate and lipid metabolism shows pronounced deviations: increased triglycerides, impaired glucose tolerance, and reduced HDL cholesterol. These alterations reflect the oxidative modification of enzymes involved in energy regulation. Chronic noise exposure, temperature extremes, and shift work further exacerbate endocrine imbalances by elevating cortisol and catecholamines, which modify insulin sensitivity and nutrient utilization.

Metabolic profiling of workers in high-temperature environments shows higher resting metabolic rates and greater urinary excretion of magnesium, potassium, and water-soluble vitamins, leading to early signs of electrolyte imbalance and fatigue. Cold exposure, in contrast, stimulates lipid oxidation and demands additional antioxidant support. Thus, occupational factors induce metabolic adaptations that, if unsupported by proper nutrition, evolve into maladaptive states and chronic pathologies such as metabolic syndrome, anemia, and immunodeficiency.

Influence of Antioxidants on the Level of Oxidative Stress

Oxidative stress is a central mechanism through which occupational pollutants exert their deleterious effects. It arises from an imbalance between reactive oxygen species (ROS) generation and the body's antioxidant defense capacity. Antioxidants—both enzymatic (superoxide dismutase, catalase, glutathione peroxidase) and non-enzymatic (vitamins A, C, E; selenium; zinc; flavonoids)—play an essential role in neutralizing free radicals and protecting cellular structures.

Numerous experimental and epidemiological studies confirm that workers exposed to heavy metals, organic solvents, or radiation experience a significant decline in antioxidant potential. Supplementation with antioxidants has been shown to restore biochemical equilibrium and reduce markers of oxidative damage. For instance, controlled trials among welders and battery-plant employees receiving combined vitamin E (200 mg/day) and vitamin C (500 mg/day) demonstrated a 25–30 % reduction in malondialdehyde levels after eight weeks of intervention. Selenium supplementation similarly improved glutathione peroxidase activity and reduced oxidative DNA lesions.

Antioxidants not only counteract direct oxidative injury but also stabilize cell membranes, modulate immune responses, and enhance the detoxification capacity of hepatic enzymes. Polyphenolic compounds derived from fruits and vegetables—such as quercetin, resveratrol, and catechins—have shown synergistic effects with classical vitamins, suggesting that a diet rich in natural antioxidants offers broader protection than synthetic supplementation alone. Therefore, ensuring adequate antioxidant intake is an indispensable element of preventive nutrition for industrial workers.

Preventive Approaches within Occupational Health Systems

Preventive strategies aimed at optimizing workers' nutrition must combine hygienic regulation, medical supervision, and educational initiatives. The first level involves establishing scientifically justified dietary norms for different categories of industrial work based on energy expenditure and exposure intensity. These norms should specify not only caloric intake but also quantitative requirements for proteins, fats, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals.

At the enterprise level, regular medical examinations should include nutritional assessments—dietary surveys, anthropometry, and laboratory evaluation of micronutrient status. Such monitoring enables early correction through individualized diet plans or targeted supplementation. Worksite canteens should be guided by hygienic principles of menu planning, including diversification of food sources, limitation of saturated fats, and mandatory inclusion of vegetables, fruits, and dairy products.

In addition, occupational health services should implement educational programs to raise workers' awareness of balanced nutrition, hydration, and the role of antioxidants in combating occupational stress. Collaboration between hygienists, nutritionists, and management is essential to ensure that preventive measures are economically feasible and culturally acceptable.

From a public-health perspective, fortification of staple foods (flour with iron and folic acid, salt with iodine, and oil with vitamin A) remains an effective population-level intervention. The integration of nutritional counseling into mandatory safety training further enhances compliance and sustainability [6].

Examples of Successful Nutritional Rationalization Programs in Industry

Several industrial enterprises worldwide have demonstrated the feasibility and effectiveness of workplace nutrition programs. In Finland and Sweden, companies with high physical workloads introduced the "Healthy Canteen" initiative, providing balanced lunches with increased portions of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. After one year, participants showed improved serum vitamin C and folate levels, decreased absenteeism, and enhanced self-reported vitality.

In Russia and Belarus, pilot projects in metallurgical plants implemented menu adjustments enriched with fermented dairy products, vegetable oils, and vitaminized beverages. These measures resulted in a 20 % reduction in respiratory infections and improved antioxidant enzyme activity among employees. In Uzbekistan, experimental programs at cable and textile enterprises offered fortified meals and micronutrient supplements during high-temperature seasons, which led to significant reductions in complaints of fatigue, headaches, and cardiovascular strain.

Asian countries have also pioneered large-scale supplementation strategies. In South Korea, routine distribution of multivitamin-mineral complexes to welders reduced plasma lead levels and oxidative biomarkers. Similarly, in China, dietary interventions rich in selenium and vitamin E improved immune status and decreased markers of oxidative DNA damage among coal miners.

The success of these programs underscores several key principles: continuous monitoring, integration with occupational safety policies, and involvement of both management and workers in nutritional planning. Economic analyses have shown that every dollar invested in workplace nutrition yields three to five dollars in productivity gains through reduced sick leave and improved concentration.

Overall, empirical evidence confirms that inadequate nutrition and micronutrient deficiencies are widespread among industrial workers, amplifying the harmful effects of occupational exposures. Chemical and physical stressors disturb metabolic processes and accelerate oxidative stress, while insufficient antioxidant protection worsens health outcomes. Preventive measures—ranging from dietary optimization to antioxidant supplementation—significantly improve physiological adaptation and labor performance. The most successful enterprises are those that

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institutionalize nutrition within occupational health systems, ensuring both scientific supervision and practical accessibility for workers.

CONCLUSION: The conducted analytical review demonstrates that the nutritional status of industrial workers is a critical determinant of their health, adaptability, and professional longevity. Exposure to chemical and physical pollutants significantly alters metabolic processes, increases oxidative stress, and leads to pronounced deficiencies of essential vitamins and microelements. These deficiencies weaken antioxidant defenses, impair detoxification mechanisms, and reduce resistance to occupational hazards. The evidence consistently indicates that unbalanced diets and insufficient micronutrient intake exacerbate the toxic effects of industrial exposures, creating a cycle of cumulative health deterioration.

Ensuring adequate and balanced nutrition is therefore a fundamental component of occupational hygiene and preventive medicine. Regular monitoring of workers' dietary habits and biochemical markers, combined with scientifically based nutritional interventions, can prevent or mitigate adverse health outcomes. The implementation of rational workplace meal programs, fortification of staple foods, and antioxidant supplementation has proven effective in improving wellbeing and productivity. Future strategies should integrate nutrition into comprehensive occupational health policies, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration between hygienists, nutritionists, and employers. Optimizing the nutritional environment of industrial workers will not only enhance their physiological resilience but also contribute to sustainable workforce health and economic efficiency.

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