

Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF)

Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) is a medical intervention to improve the nutritional consumption of children. With a special focus on Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM). RUTF is a packaged paste of proteins, vitamins, calcium and mineral supplements. This paste can be given to children aged between six months and six years.

Background of Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food (RUTF)

The Global Hunger Index report 2020 has placed India at **94th** position among 107 countries, much behind Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nepal.

RUTF contains all nutrients needed for the recovery of such SAM children. This can be a practical solution to at least 2 million children outside the hospitals and medical facilities. On the other hand, with the aim of Make in India, it can make RUTF manufacturers streamline with the program and bring it on par with international quality standards as per the specifications of UNICEF and WHO.

In India, Project POSHAN was implemented by National Health Mission 2015-16, which treated about 10,000 SAM children along the state of Rajasthan. Thus such examples prove various steps taken by the states proactively to address the needs of SAM children.

Henceforth the benefits of the RUTF need more intensive research. This can also bring in the development of guidelines and toolkits to counsel families on nutrition and feeding practices. In turn, it works as a soft power to educate the community on preventive measures against malnutrition and also about food culture, sanitation and gender disparity. Finally, Anganwadis can act as a connecting channel between the government health facilities and the target population. Nevertheless, this can be a potential program to the mainstream country's goal towards achieving the Sustainable development goal.

Information about RUTF

Therapeutic foods consist of protein, carbohydrate and vitamins. They are usually made by mixing all grinding ingredients together. This method would eliminate the issue of spoilage considering the fact that the package is done without using water

Some therapeutic foods require the addition of water before administering, while others can be consumed as-is.

Ready to use therapeutic food within the person's own home for the treatment of severe acute malnutrition in children under five years of age may be effective at improving weight gain and

recovery when compared to alternative dietary approaches. The effectiveness of ready to use therapeutic food on potential relapses or on overall mortality is not clear.