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Review: Nutrition and an Active Life, W.B. Freire

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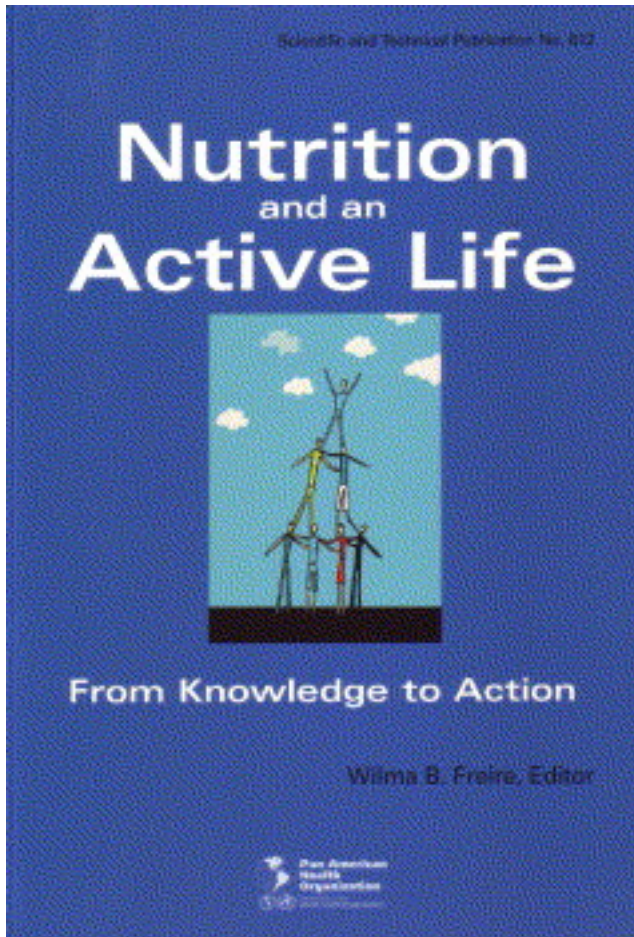
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Nutrition and an Active Life, Freire WB, 2005. From Pan American Health Organization, 525 23rd Street, NW, Washington DC 20037-2895, (202) 974-3699, softcover, 247 pp, printed upon request, ISBN 92-75-11612-1.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) adopted by the United Nations in 2000 have brought the idea of investing in people's health to the very center of the global development agenda. The health-related MDGs have been established as the critical underpinning for the Pan American Health Organization's technical cooperation efforts over the next decade. The series of research findings presented in Nutrition and an Active Life: From Knowledge to Action aim to provide support to the organization's member states in the form of effective and practical working tools as these countries strive to bring national health plans and priorities in line with those of the MDG.

Nutrition and an Active Life: From Knowledge to Action is designed for academic scholars, international nutritionists, practitioners researching nutritional issues in Central and South America, and other nutrition professionals interested in research regarding the nutritional well-being of the residents of Central and South America. The text is divided into 4 sections: policy and program implications of current research, successful interventions for the correction of specific micronutrient deficiencies, integrated strategies at the local level, and integrated strategies at the

national level. Each section contains 2 to 4 well-designed and reviewed research articles to illustrate the concepts presented. The policy and program section includes 2 articles focusing on infant feeding, and the second section includes 2 articles on vitamin A deficiency, 1 on iodine deficiency, and a fourth article on folic acid fortification. The final 2 sections include articles on public health promotion strategies that have yielded positive results in lessening the effects of malnutrition.

Research presented in *Nutrition and an Active Life* is written technically, and it is appropriate reading for those with an advanced education. Charts and graphs are data laden, and they require a thorough understanding of how to interpret research results accurately. The technical nature of the graphical depictions might limit their usability. However, the graphics support the text and are appropriate for the research.

The title of the book, *Nutrition and an Active Life*, may lead readers to believe it is related to physical activity or sports nutrition. Although the book does use information from 3 research studies related to physical activity, it is not the main focus. The overarching theme is how various programs have developed effective and practical working tools to improve the health status of individuals in the Pan American region. Therefore, a more appropriate title would include the main regions in which the research articles were conducted (Central and South America), the spectrum of nutritional topics covered, and their interconnectedness with the Millennium Development Goals adopted by the United Nations in 2000.

The Pan-American Health Organization's *Nutrition and an Active Life: From Knowledge to Action* provides excellent research on early childhood nutrition, breastfeeding, micronutrient deficiency, physical activity, and community nutrition and public policy in Central and South America. This text would be an excellent reference text for researchers studying nutritional issues or public policy in the aforementioned regions. Overall, the research studies presented have strong methodologies with appropriate references and graphics that bring to light some of the health issues currently being studied in Central and South America.

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