

### 3.6.7 Do not make assumptions

Because the study is directed at obtaining dietary data on individuals, every effort should be made to identify precisely what that particular individual ate or drank. Do not assume that since most people eat or drink in a certain way that every individual does. For example, if the participant mentions "oil" do not assume he/she means the most commonly used oil. If he/she does not know, record "oil, kind unknown". Further clarifying information may be obtained after the interview (See Section 4.8.4 and Section 4.17)

Use the *Food Checklist* and *List of Commonly Forgotten Foods* (in the *Country Addendum*) to ensure that all necessary details for coding have been probed for and recorded.

Special features of each country's cooking and food service, influencing estimation of both composition and portion sizes, are considered in the *Country Addendum* for your country. Please refer to your *Country Addendum* for details.

### 3.6.8 Discourage unrelated conversation

Occasionally a question may lead a participant to reminisce or to relate a lengthy story having little or no relevance to the survey. As a **Dietary Interviewer**, your task is to discourage such irrelevant conversation and keep the discussion focused on the interview. This requires that, while not being brusque or abrupt, you subtly teach the participant how to focus on the questions.

If you maintain a businesslike attitude, acknowledge answers with neutral comments such as "I see" or "OK", and tactfully interrupt rambling and irrelevant answers to bring the conversation back to the question you have asked, the participant will soon learn how to provide relevant answers. If you must interrupt a participant, do it politely, taking care not to antagonize him/her. You might say something like:

"That sounds very interesting, but now what I need to ask is..."

"I see what you mean, but let me repeat (or clarify) that last question..."

### 3.7 Identification and quantification of foods

As the Interviewer, you must elicit and record enough information about each food and drink item to permit accurate coding. This includes quantifying amounts consumed as accurately as possible. You must also be familiar with local customs and terminology, and be able to recognize when to probe for additional information. You must be thoroughly familiar with specific items in the *Country Addendum* food list.

Interviewers need to know the common names of foods and dishes used by the local population; how food is bought -- by weight, volume, brand, and package size; ways of preparing foods; ingredients used in preparation of specific dishes; foods usually eaten in combination; condiments usually added at table or in preparation; common snack foods and between-meal beverages. The *Country Addendum* for each country gives detailed information on these items.

Information required for each food occasion is:

- time of day the food was eaten;
- where the food was eaten;

This information is not entered in the computer but it is helpful for stimulating the participant's memory during the dietary interview and in collecting clarifying information.

The information required for each food item is:

- name of the food item or the name of the "dish" as reported by the participant (e.g., tuna fish salad, tempura);
- description of the food (e.g., if home-cooked, then recipe or main ingredients, and cooking method; if purchased, then from where, brand name, whether fat-reduced, low-calorie, low-salt, diluted or undiluted);
- actual amount of the food item consumed in units described by the participant.
- whether the food was reported in raw, cooked, "as purchased" or "edible portion" amounts.
- how the food was prepared (method of cooking);
- type of fat used in the recipe or in preparation;
- type of sauce used, if any;
- condiments added in kitchen and/or at table;
- if meat, description of type and cut; whether raw or cooked; "as purchased" or "edible portion"
- if fish, name of fish;

- for bread, type (e.g. whole grain, refined flour, fat containing);
- recipe, if available, or list of ingredients, and number of servings and size of servings.

Make sure all questions relating to each item consumed have been asked. For example, if chicken has been eaten, ask whether or not the skin was eaten, whether it was light or dark meat or both, whether it was eaten with a sauce or gravy and--if so--type. This information is critical for assessment of nutrient and food group intake. For example, if chicken was eaten with skin rather than without, this can make a large difference in the amount of calories and fat consumed.

Detailed instructions are given in the *Country Addendum*.

For food mixtures, soups, stews, and stir-fry dishes prepared at home, try to get information on type and quantities of ingredients used and method of cooking, also fraction of the recipe the participant consumed, and whether any ingredient was not consumed. While collecting this information, again think about items that are often used in typical dishes; if these are not mentioned, ask about them (in a neutral way).

### 3.8 Use food models and other aids to estimate quantities

*Food models and other aids* are used to assist participants in estimating quantities of food and drink consumed. Participants are seldom able to estimate quantities accurately without assistance. Standard containers, spoons, bowls, and cups are useful for reference if they are commonly used in the study population. Pencil and paper may be useful for drawing irregular shapes. In some countries real food may also be used, especially non-perishable items such as grain, sugar, salt,

or oil. The participant then estimates amount used and the interviewer weighs or measures it directly. Food models are realistic life-size plastic replicas of common foods; photographs also are useful.

Show the participant an array of food models, and plates and dishes for displaying them, as portions appear different depending on size of container. Allow the participant to make selections without your guidance.

A list of standard food models, other aids and detailed instructions on their use are given in your *Country Addendum*.

### 3.9 Review the 24-hour dietary recall with the participant

When the participant has finished recalling all food and drink taken during the previous 24 hours, and amounts and added ingredients have been estimated and recorded, ask the participant to review the recall with you, so that you can be sure you have understood all the information he/she has given. Then read all items and amounts you have recorded. **Pause after each item to allow time for a response.** After each meal ask "And did you have anything else at this time?" This step provides an opportunity to correct errors, and sometimes it prompts the participant to remember missing items. Refer to your *Country Addendum* for details and materials used to conduct the review.

Remember that omission of any items or incomplete details for coding individual food items affect estimates of total nutrients consumed by the participant. No amount of statistical treatment of the data can capture foods missed or improperly identified during the interview. The recall is the primary source of data and must be conducted with utmost care.

### 3.10 Other information collected during the dietary recall

The dietary recall interview is also used to obtain information on changes in usual diet, use of dietary supplements, and 7-day alcohol intake, that is, alcohol intake on the day described in the 24-hour recall and on the 6 previous days. Forms and instructions for obtaining these data are contained in your *Country Addendum*.

### 3.11 Arrange to get clarifying information

If in the course of the interview the participant is unable to report details of food intake that might be clarified by the cook, ask the participant if he/she is agreeable to having the Dietary Interviewer contact the cook. Depending upon the cultural context, either arrange for a convenient time for the Dietary Interviewer to telephone or visit the home/canteen cook, or ask the participant to give the Food Inquiry to Cook form to the cook at home or in the canteen and return it the following day or mail it back in the self addressed stamped envelope you have provided.

If, in the course of getting information from the home cook, there is disagreement between what the participant reported and what the home cook says about the participant's intake, you must not:

- change participant estimate of amount of food eaten;
- change any food item that the participant recalled;
- change your opinion of the reliability of the data collected during the interview.

If the participant mentions a dish that is different from what the family cook remembers, do not change the dish. You may collect clarifying details on the participant's dish by asking the family cook how he/she usually prepares the dish recalled by the participant.

### 3.12 Ending the Interview

All people who give their time for an interview are entitled to courteous and tactful treatment. Try to leave participants with the feeling that they have taken part in an interesting and worthwhile experience — one they are willing to repeat.

Thank the participant. Make arrangements for him/her to return for the next recall (until the fourth recall has been completed). Ask the participant not to change his/her usual dietary habits. Ask him/her to pay attention to how foods were cooked and what ingredients were added.

### 3.13 Check your work

After you have completed the interview, you are to check your work. This is an important part of your job as a Dietary Interviewer. The main purposes of checking are to:

- Review all sections of the interview to assure complete and accurate information.
- Learn from mistakes so they are not repeated. There is an educational value in checking. Many Dietary Interviewers feel that interviewing procedures are more meaningful after the first few interviews. Checking improves quality of your interviews for the remainder of the study, as well as catches errors. Checking, therefore, is part of both learning and quality in a research study.
- Add your comments. These may help to understand a response or an interview as a whole. Document notes concerning the participant, the interviewing situation, or anything else that you feel might help in the correct interpretation of the interview.

If, in reviewing the recall, you discover that you did not collect sufficient information from the participant, he or she may be contacted on the same day or, if necessary, on the next day for further information.



### 3.14 How to handle interview problems

#### 3.14.1 Participant brings his/her own record

If the participant keeps a record of his/her intake and brings it to an interview, explain that you plan to use the list as a guide in the recall, but you must still do the 24-hour dietary recall because information must be collected in the same way for all participants. Then proceed with the interview.

#### 3.14.2 Participant cannot remember

If the participant cannot remember some of his/her intake, try different probing techniques:

- refer to activities of the previous day;
- ask if he/she ate in a canteen or restaurant;
- mention a variety of common dishes and staples, but be careful not to lead the participant to an answer.

If the participant cannot remember two or more meals, the recall is to be coded as unreliable. See rules in the *Manual of Operations* for participant replacement.

### 3.14.3 Objections to questions

- Assume the burden of communication; take the blame for misunderstandings. If a participant fails to grasp the meaning of a question, state that perhaps you did not deliver it clearly and repeat the question, with re-wording as deemed useful. Do not allow the participant to feel that questions were too difficult for him/her to answer.
- If the participant is angry, reluctant, or impatient about a single question or a series of questions, cite "the study leaders." Blame the project for objectionable material, not the participant for objecting.
- Respond in a non-defensive tone as though you have heard the objection before. Don't get angry or argue with the participant. Explain that each question is important for the research and we need complete answers about all foods eaten.

### 3.14.4 Impatience with the length of the interview

- If a participant is anxious to finish the interview and says so, say, "I need only a few more minutes of your time. Your answers are important to us, and we'd like to have all of them."

### 3.14.5 Participant wants a nutritional/dietary evaluation

- Do not identify yourself as a nutrition specialist. Introduce yourself as a person who will be collecting the data according to the instructions in the study protocol, e.g., "My name is Janet Jones and I will be doing your dietary recall this visit . . ." If the participant asks for advice, tell them that you cannot offer advice. If your center is using a dietary evaluation as an incentive, tell the participant that he/she will receive a report when data correction at your center has been completed for all participants.

#### Section 4. Dietary Interview Forms, and Aids

Dietary interview forms and aids are contained in your *Country Addendum*. A list of these materials is below.

Form Name	Form Code	Language	Color
1. <i>Dietary Recall Form Part A</i>	D1F D2F D1R D2R	Local	Yellow Green Blue Pink
2. <i>Dietary Recall Form Part B</i>	D1F D2F D1R D2R	Local	Yellow Green Blue Pink
3. <i>Vitamin, Mineral, Tonic or Other Supplement</i>	V1F V2F V1R V2R	Local	Yellow Green Blue Pink
4. <i>Alcohol Questionnaire</i>	A1F A1R	Local	Yellow Blue
5. Food checklist		Local	White
6. "Did you remember?" card			
7. List of foods commonly eaten together		Local	White
8. <i>Local Site New Food Request Form</i>		Local	White
9. <i>Food Inquiry to Cooks Form</i>		Local	White
10. <i>Missing Nutrients Request Form</i>		English	White
11. <i>US New Food Request Form</i>		English	White
12. <i>Evaluation of Tape Recorded Interview</i>		English	White
13. <i>Site Dietary Interview Tracking Form (Non-U.S.)</i>		Local	White
14. <i>Site Dietary Interview Tracking Form (U.S.)</i>		English	White
15. <i>Site Nutritionist Data Management Report</i>		Local	White
16. <i>Country Nutritionist Data Management Report</i>		English	White
17. <i>Quality Control Report (country level)</i>		English	White
18. <i>Supplement Ingredient Form (U.S. only)</i>		English	White