

## Dietetic practice: the past, present and future



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### Abstract

The history of dietetics can be traced as far back as the writings of Homer, Plato and Hippocrates in ancient Greece. Although diet and nutrition continued to be judged important for health, dietetics did not progress much till the 19th century with the advances in chemistry. Early research focused on vitamin deficiency diseases while later workers proposed daily requirements for protein, fat and carbohydrates. Dietetics as a profession was given a boost during the Second World War when its importance was recognized by the military. Today, professional dietetic associations can be found on every continent, and registered dietitians are involved in health promotion and treatment, and work alongside physicians. The growing need for dietetics professionals is driven by a growing public interest in nutrition and the potential of functional foods to prevent a variety of diet-related conditions.

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