

Tasmanian Urinary Iodine Survey of School Children 2011

What we found

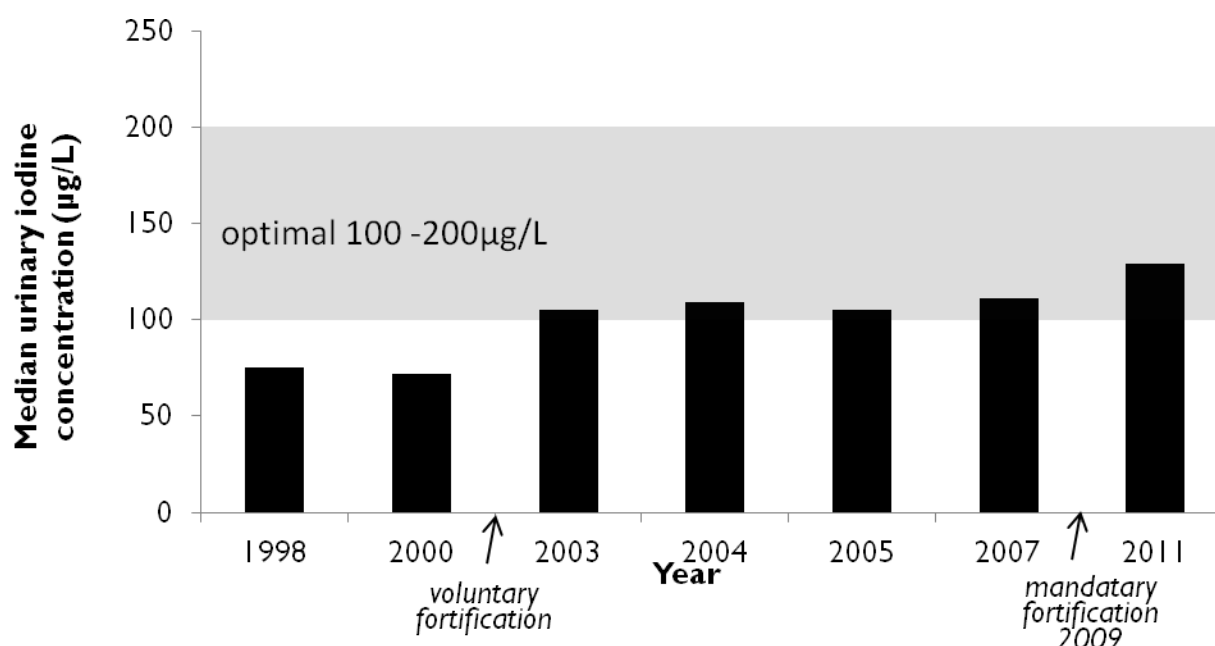
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During 2011 your school was involved in an important survey to measure how much of the essential nutrient iodine is in our diets.

A total of 320 children from 35 primary schools in Tasmania gave us a small urine sample. These samples were tested for iodine and the combined results suggest that the Tasmanian population is now getting enough iodine from food (see below graph). It's interesting what we can find out from wee samples.

Iodine is an essential nutrient we need in very small amounts for the normal development of the brain and nervous system. Iodine comes from the food we eat, including dairy milk, bread and seafood. The amount in other foods like cereals and vegetables varies depending on where they are grown.

Progressive improvement in iodine nutrition in Tasmania 1998–2011



Tasmania became the first state in Australia to work towards improving iodine levels in 2001. The baking industry was asked to replace the salt used in bread making with iodised salt, on a voluntary basis. This initiative became mandatory across the country in 2009.

These surveys are an important part of our ongoing program to ensure Tasmanians get the optimal level of iodine from their food. We anticipate further surveys will be undertaken in the future and look forward to the ongoing participation of Tasmanian children, schools and their communities.

For more information please contact Public Health Nutrition, Population Health on 6222 7731 or email public.health@dhhs.tas.gov.au