

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE NHLBI DATABASE

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The Nutrition Coding Center has maintained a database called the NHLBI Food Table for use in the Lipid Research Clinic (LRC) and Multiple Risk Factor Intervention Trials (MRFIT) studies sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Originally the NHLBI Food Table was specifically designed for use in calculation of dietary recalls in the LRC and MRFIT programs. Therefore, it contained little in the way of nutrients or food items which are not germane to this use. The Food Table was implemented on a IV Phase computer system using fixed length indexed sequential records and COBOL-68.

In July, 1979, use of the computer system on which the NHLBI Food Table was implemented was discontinued. This meant that the Food Table had to be converted to another computer system. At the same time, it was becoming increasingly clear that the original, specific conception of the NHLBI Food Table was outdated. LRC, MRFIT and the community had needs for nutrient data which could not be supported within the NHLBI Food Table. Therefore, when the database was converted, it was redesigned as a general reference database with provision for unlimited numbers of nutrients, foods, recipes, references, comments and other useful data which would make the database maintained by the NCC adaptable to present needs. The current NHLBI Food Table can be derived from the new reference database. Other specialized databases could also be extended and formatted optimally for specific uses.

The new NCC database has been designed for operation of a Honeywell Level 66 GCOS-III computer system using DMIV (Honeywell's CODASYL database management system) and COBOL-74. The database consists of approximately 50 records and 70 sets (relations between records). The presentation discussed the details of the database and NCC's experience with this database technique.