INTRODUCTION AND AIM OF THE WORK

Protein Energy malnutrition (PEM) is a major health problem especially in developing and undrdeveloped countries. In Egypt Shukry et al (1972) found that the prevalence of malnutrition in Children below 6 years of age ranged from 61 - 71%. He found also that 75% of known causes of death at different stages of childhood could be traced back to malnutrition as a direct or underlying cause.

Interaction between infection and malnutrition is well established, one promoting the other (Scrimshaw 1975). Many aspects of PEM has been extensively studied. The immunological aspect of PEM has recently received much interst. Among the immunological functions that are still in debate is the antibody response to different antigens.

The susceptibility of the malnourished infants to infections and their response to immunization stimulated us to investigate some immunological aspects of the disease. Observations regarding the interaction of malnutrition and the various immune parameters are important for better understanding the aetiology of the increased morbidity and mortality associated with malnutrition.

Works on the immune response occuring in malnourished infants and children as a response to different immunizations were contraversial. Some were advising while others were against the idea of immunization programs in malnourished subjects (Chandra I972,Katz I977 and Ifekwunigwe et al I980) .

The present work was planned to study the antibody response to typhoid antigens in protein energy malnourished children so as to assess the integrity of the humoral system in them towards antigenic stimuli.