



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians
5th Floor, Charles House, 148/9 Great Charles Street Queensway, Birmingham B3 3HT
Tel: 0121 200 8080 Fax: 0121 200 8081



M e d i a R e l e a s e

10 June 2005

NUTRITION BITES AT THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

The British Dietetic Association Annual Conference takes place from 14 to 16 June 2005 in Cardiff, and high on the agenda will be the issues of nutrition and cancer, an update on the Atkins diet, nutritional care of the terminally ill, changes to weaning advice and tackling the obesity problem in adults and children, which is now spiraling out of control.

Professor Tim Key, Professor of Epidemiology with Cancer Research UK at the Radcliffe Infirmary in Oxford and Cancer Research UK, will be presenting the most up-to-date evidence linking diet with cancer. Says Professor Key: "After smoking, diet is believed to be the next most important determinant of cancer risk, but the effects of diet on cancer are still not well understood. Both obesity and alcohol definitely increase the risk for developing several types of cancer, while diets high in red and processed meat and low in high-fibre foods probably increase the risk for colorectal (large-bowel) cancer."

As well as increasing the risk of cancer, obesity is associated with a wide range of severe health consequences including psychological ill-health, and an increase in risk factors for heart disease, diabetes and sleep disturbances. Both children and adults are at risk of obesity and its associated conditions and Professor Peter Kopelman, Vice Principal and Professor of Clinical Medicine at Barts and the London, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry, will be addressing the hot topic of managing obesity in the 21st century. To protect the body against undernutrition, the defence against over-consumption is weak, since evolution determined it an advantage for the body to store energy as fat.

Website: <http://www.bda.uk.com>

According to Professor Kopelman, the first strategy when trying to manage obesity should be primary prevention: dietary restriction and increased physical activity; adjunctive drug therapies may be appropriate in those at high risk of obesity-related diseases, and surgical treatment may be indicated in those with severe obesity, but they are not the solution.

Also on the topic of weight loss, Helen Truby will give an update on 'Atkins' and other commercial-type diets, with the suggestion that commercial diets can have health benefits, but that 'low-carb' diets work by simply reducing total calorie intake, and are no better, nor no worse, than low fat diets in terms of long-term weight effects. However, according to Dr Truby, more research is needed to establish the potential effects of 'low-carb' diets on cardiovascular disease risk and on bone health.

In terms of childhood obesity, specialist dietitian and research fellow Paul Sacher, of the Institute of Child Health, and Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, will be exploring the treatment options, focusing on an innovative integrated programme entitled 'MEND' (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition and Diet). Preliminary results have shown that the MEND programme is a promising way of tackling overweight and obesity, focusing on a foundation of healthy living for the entire family. Says Paul Sacher: "There is a dearth of evidence for what works in terms of actually preventing and tackling childhood obesity within the family setting. Although childhood obesity is a priority area now, very little money is available to fund this crucial work."

The conference will also address other major areas of work in which dietitians are involved, including those working with people who are terminally ill. Dealing with patients who are terminally ill can be demanding, but nutrition plays a crucial role in palliative care. The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) issued guidelines in 2004 on improving supportive and palliative care for adults with cancer and dietitian Cherry Vickery, a specialist in this field, will be presenting practical pointers about the role of the dietitian in palliative care, sharing her expertise on this sensitive issue.

In addition, there will be a poster presentation session with some exciting and interesting new research. One presentation investigates a way for midwives to screen pregnant women at risk of poor nutrition in pregnancy. Currently, there is no effective tool available for midwives to assess the dietary intake of

pregnant women. A nutritional screening tool was developed with a simple scoring system, indicating whether a woman required advice from a dietitian. The screening tool was able to identify women at risk of low intakes of protein, B vitamins, including folate, and calcium.

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. BDA C 2005 will be held at The Thistle Hotel, Cardiff on 14th, 15th and 16th June 2005. More details, including a full copy of the programme, can be found on the BDA website at www.bda.uk.com

2. Further information on the conference is available from:

Dr Frankie Phillips National PR Officer, The British Dietetic Association.
Tel: 01626 362473, Mobile: 07958 715222, Email: pr@bda.uk.com

3. The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for registered dietitians in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is the nation's largest organisation of food and nutrition professionals with over 5,000 members. About two-thirds of members are employed in the National Health Service. The remaining members work in education, industry, research, sport settings or freelance.

Registered dietitians hold the only legally-recognisable graduate qualification in nutrition and dietetics. They are experts in interpreting and translating the science of nutrition into practical ways of promoting nutritional well-being, disease treatment and the prevention of nutrition-related problems. Their advice is sound and based on current scientific evidence.

Registration, awarded by the Health Professionals Council, is an indication that a dietitian is fit to practise and is working within an agreed statement of conduct.

For further details about the British Dietetic Association, please visit our website: www.bda.uk.com

June is Weight Wise at Work month
Choose Healthy Work Habits

www.bdaweightwise.com