



Media Release

6 June 2007

For Immediate Release

Food Addiction and Health Claims – News from The British Dietetic Association

Food addiction – does it really exist or is it simply a habit? Do health claims on foods really stand up to scrutiny? Can what a child eats really affect behaviour?

Answers to these questions are now available in the latest hot topics and fact sheet releases from the BDA.

Expert dietitians have taken a look at the evidence on food and addiction and highlighted that food cravings should be considered within the normal variations of appetite control merging with the psychological processes of control and restraint within the social and cultural markers of appropriate intakes of foods. In addition, a new food fact sheet on diet and behaviour in children has looked at the current evidence on factors in the diet which might have an influence on children's behaviour.

Dr Frankie Phillips, registered dietitian and The British Dietetic Association (BDA) spokesperson says: "Reports in the media often tell us that changing a child's diet can improve their behaviour, improve their concentration, and even make them more intelligent.

"Unfortunately there are no magic nutritional pills to take, but the evidence suggests that enjoying regular meals and a healthy balanced diet helps a child to have the best chance at optimal mental and behavioural performance. "

The hot topics and food facts produced by the BDA are designed to keep the facts about diet, food and nutrition at the fore, avoiding the confusion that can arise when unqualified individuals make claims which are not supported by current scientific opinion and evidence.

The title 'dietitian' is legally protected by the Health Professions Council (HPC). Dietitians are expert in both the science and the communication of nutrition, and HPC registration ensures that dietitians are safe and competent to practice, adhere to a strict code of ethics, and must maintain their professional status through continued professional development. Most dietitians are also members of their professional body, The British Dietetic Association.

The British Dietetic Association has a website dedicated to promoting scientifically sound nutrition advice that everyone can trust, and provides a dedicated hot line just for journalists to speak to qualified dietitians and get to the real facts, avoiding misleading and potentially dangerous advice being given to the public.

For the clear experts in nutrition call the hotline on **0870 850 2517** or go to www.bda.uk.com and visit the press centre for the latest food fact sheets on behaviour and diet, and on cholesterol-lowering foods with stanols and sterols. New hot topics, including a review on food and addiction, and health claims about foods. Remember, you can trust a dietitian to know about nutrition.

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Notes to Editors

1. Media enquiries to The British Dietetic Association and requests for interviews should be directed to 0870 580 2517 (9am – 5pm Mon – Fri) or to pr@bda.uk.com
2. 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 nearly 6,000 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.
3. 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.
4. 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 websites: www.bda.uk.com, www.bdaweightwise.com , www.teenweightwise.com