



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians
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Media Release

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DIETITIANS DEBATE HOT NUTRITION ISSUES IN BELFAST

This week sees the UK's biggest gathering of experts in diet and nutrition gathering and debating the hottest topics in nutrition in Belfast: Are elderly men at risk of poor health because they can't cook? Does exam stress make students crave sugar? Is better community nutrition and improved hospital food coming to Northern Ireland? Do dietitians think functional foods are actually functional or futile? And after a lot of bad press, why are carbs important?

These questions, along with other hot nutrition topics, are all being discussed at the British Dietetic Association's Annual Conference, in Belfast from 19th – 21st June.

Among the speakers discussing a wide range of current issues relating to food and health will be representatives from the government, industry, academia and the NHS.

The conference will also feature a key announcement from the British Dietetic Chairman, Judith Catherwood, calling for urgent action in response to the BDA's own manifesto - **Make Nutrition Matter** - launched at the opening speech of the Conference on Tuesday 19th June.

Conference Nutrition News Nuggets

Carbs – friend or foe?

Carbohydrates make up a significant part of the diet for most people in the UK but a lot of recent research has focussed on how the glycaemic index (GI) can influence the actions of carbs in the body.

One area of particular interest has been diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Professor Gary Frost of

the University of Surrey explains the evidence when he delivers the prestigious Elsie Widdowson lecture: "Dietary Carbohydrates: from cells to man".

Probiotics: functional or futile

As our supermarket shelves become increasingly stocked with products which allege to make us extra healthy, is the price premium justified and do they actually make a difference to wellbeing? Catherine Collins, Chief Dietitian from St George's Hospital in London, asks whether probiotic products have a role in disease management and do they confer any health benefit in terms of nutritional content.

Making Nutrition Matter in Northern Ireland

The role of nutrition in prevention of disease and the importance of good nutrition in aiding a speedy recovery from illness has never been higher on the political agenda across the UK. In Northern Ireland, the role of the dietitian has never been more crucial in helping to meet some of the targets for improving hospital food provisions and tackling the escalating rates of obesity, diabetes and childhood malnutrition. Dietitians Pauline Mulholland from Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust, Belfast and Heather Dunlop from the Northern Health and Social Care Trust will be highlighting some of the initiatives that are taking place to make a difference in Northern Ireland in both the community and the hospital settings.

Sound bites

Short poster presentations at the conference promise to give a flavour of major pieces of research to come. This year, presentations include a look at the effects of stress associated with exams on aspects of dietary intake, and the eating patterns and diets of elderly men living alone to examine whether, given the expected rise in the number of elderly people and those living alone, this is a particularly vulnerable group in the population.

- Ends -

Notes to Editors

1. The British Dietetic Association Awards Conference will be held at The Europa Hotel in Belfast, on 19th – 21st June 2007.
2. The conference programme is available at www.bda.uk.com. Journalists wanting more information, or to arrange interviews with speakers, should contact Dr Frankie Phillips on 01626 362473 or 07908 712277. Email: pr@bda.uk.com or Pippa Rimmer at the conference press office on 07957 355416
3. A small number of press passes are available for those wishing to attend the conference: contact details as above for more information and to arrange a press pass.
4. Copies of the BDA's manifesto - 'Make Nutrition Matter' will be available on the Association's website www.bda.uk.com from Tuesday 19th June. A call to action will be announced and the Chairman is available for interview by contacting the conference press office on 07957 355416
5. 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 websites:

www.bda.uk.com

www.bdaweightwise.com

www.teenweightwise.com