



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians
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M e d i a R e l e a s e

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Dietitians act on sat fat

The British Dietetic Association (BDA) says that dietitians will be crucial to the delivery of the Food Standards Agency's new campaign targeting saturated fat launched today.

The BDA welcomes the FSA's 'Sat Fat' campaign and calls on the public to seek out local activities, run by dietitians across the country, that help people make practical and simple steps to reduce the amount of saturated fat in their diets and get the balance right.

Dietitians are already working with community groups to run 'Cook and Eat' sessions – teaching people that healthy eating can be easy and tasty, and many run local award schemes with restaurants and takeaways to improve the availability of healthier choices.

In Barnsley, dietitian Laura Brown runs 'Food Award Barnsley'. Says Laura: "We know that people enjoy eating out or frequently have meals out of the home during their working day. We run 'Food Award Barnsley' where establishments that apply, including sandwich shops, cafes, restaurants and workplace canteens, make changes to their menus to reduce saturated fat, as well as sugar and salt, and make healthier options available for customers. It's been a great success and I think it can really help to make a difference to people's health."

In Bristol, dietitians have been running supermarket 'store tours' for people at risk of heart disease, helping people to make healthy choices and reduce their saturated fat consumption.

In NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde (NHS GG&C), Scotland's largest Health Board, dietitians are actively involved in reducing the saturated fat intake of patients, visitors and staff. Helen Davidson, Catering Strategy Dietitian, said: "NHS GG&C have been actively reviewing patient menus and our caterers' only use polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats in cooking. This has significantly changed the type and amount of fat in our patient meals, and has brought about a reduction in the proportion of saturated fat. In addition we have signed up to the Healthy Living Award which aims to allow staff and visitors to make healthier choices and all of our catering outlets will have this award by the end of March 09."

Dietitian and British Dietetic Association spokesman, Sue Baic said: “Eating too much saturated fat is a recognised risk factor for increased blood cholesterol levels which can put people at greater risk of heart disease. The campaign fits in with the work of dietitians particularly in community health and we welcome the opportunity to work with the FSA to raise awareness of the simple steps that people can take to reduce the amount of saturated fat in their diet and also, importantly, to get the right balance of healthy fats in the diet.

“As registered dietitians we fully support the FSA’s campaign. Our training means we are experts in translating nutrition science into practical advice for people to follow and adopt which is the aim of the campaign. Dietitians play a crucial role in the delivery of campaigns to improve public health nutrition, and PCTs and Health Boards should look to the dietitians working for them to lead on implementing relevant local activities that can be sustained.”

The BDA’s top 5 tips to get the fat balance right are:

- Look for hidden saturated fat in cakes, biscuits and pastries as well as ready meals. Check out the label and choose products that are low in fat (less than 3% or 3g per 100g) and low in saturated fat (less than 1.5g per 100g is low; more than 5g per 100g is high; anywhere in between is medium)
- Choose a handful of nuts, fruit and ‘100kcal snack packs’ rather than crisps and other deep fried snacks
- Be smart about cooking and spreading with fats – grill, dry fry or choose vegetable oils and margarines and low fat spreads with a high monounsaturated or polyunsaturated and low saturated fat content -such as olive, sunflower or rapeseed (vegetable) oil in place of lard , ghee or butter
- Cut down on fatty meat products such as sausages, meat pies and pasties. Look for lean cuts of meat, trim off the fat or choose more poultry, fish (all types) or vegetarian alternatives to meat instead
- Choose low-fat dairy products instead of full fat varieties

Visit the BDA’s website www.bdaweightwise.com for free resources, meal plans, and strategies to improve your nutritional health.

The BDA has a series of fact sheets designed to help people make sense of a whole range of nutrition issues, including fact sheets on “Eating for a healthy heart” and “Fat - getting the balance right”, which are free to download at www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts

Media enquiries to the British Dietetic Association and requests for interviews with dietitians should be directed to our media hotline on **0870 850 2517** or pr@bda.uk.com.

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

Notes to Editors

1. 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.
2. 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