



All-island Obesity News

E-bulletin of the All-island Obesity Action Forum
Volume 2, Issue 4, July/August 2010

Dear colleagues,

Social media is a rapidly growing means of engaging people on health-related issues. On 16 September, **safefood** is hosting a conference on this topic – [Time to join the online conversation? You are what you tw-eat](#). A number of examples from the island of Ireland will be showcased, including the development and execution of a social media strategy for weigh2live, the online weight loss resource from **safefood** and the Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute. Innovative strategies such as these are required to reach consumers and health professionals alike with complex messages around obesity.

Martin Higgins

*Chief Executive, **safefood** and Chair, All-island Obesity Action Forum*

Minutes of Forum meetings, events and further details about the Forum can be accessed on the [Forum page of the **safefood** website](#).

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If you would like to **subscribe** to or **include any information** in this bi-monthly e-bulletin please email us at obesityforum@safefood.eu.

[Obesity Prevention Steering Group NI Update](#)

The Health Development Policy Branch of the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety issues a newsletter which provides an update on the development of the Obesity Prevention Strategic Framework (OPSF). The latter seeks to tackle the rise in overweight and obesity in Northern Ireland. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter please contact the Health Development Team at hdpb@dhsspsni.gov.uk or by post at: Room C4.12 Castle Buildings, Stormont Estate, Belfast BT4 3SQ.

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GENERAL NEWS

25.08.10: Long-term increase of fat mass after a four week intervention with fast food based hyper-alimentation and limitation of physical activity (Sweden)

The aim of this study was to study long term effects on body composition after a four week intervention with fast food based hyper-alimentation and limited physical activity in young normal weight subjects. One year after the intervention there was an increase of fat mass but unchanged fat free mass. As the change of fat mass was larger than expected from epidemiological studies and as there was no increase of body weight in controls it raises the issue whether there is a long-term effect to increase fat mass of a short period of hyper-alimentation. [Read article](#) in Nutrition & Metabolism.

23.08.10: Public backs NICE's call for clearer labelling on food and drinks products (UK)

Over three-quarters of the public support NICE's recommendation to introduce clear labelling to food and drink products to help identify the levels of salt, sugar and fat in them, a survey by the Faculty of Public Health has revealed. NICE called for the Food Standards Agency's front-of-pack traffic light colour-coded system to be "implemented rapidly" as the national standard for food and drink products sold in England, as part of the guidance on [preventing cardiovascular disease](#), published in June this year. [Read more](#).

14.08.10: Protein supplement could hold key to weight loss, say experts (ROI, Irish Examiner)

A special protein supplement eaten before meals could be the key to eating less and losing weight, scientists said. A team of health and nutrition experts at the Rowett Institute in Aberdeen are looking to develop the supplement, which would make people feel fuller more quickly. [Read article](#) by Lucy Christie.

11.08.2010: Lidl commit to a second year of partnership with IHF (ROI)

Lidl Ireland has been a sponsor of the Irish Heart Foundation since August 2009. We are delighted to announce that they are on-board for another year. Activities included Fit Factor, Fruit and Veg promotion and Happy Families. [Read more](#).

11.08.10: Anger at plans for McDonalds beside D4 school (ROI, Evening Herald, p.26)

McDonalds has sparked anger over plans for a drivethru restaurant beside a Dublin 4 primary school. The fast food giant wants to locate an outlet on Beach Road in Sandymount. But the move has led to a flood of complaints from the local community, as well as political representatives such as Labour's Kevin Humphreys and Maria Parodi. Article by Cormac Murphy.

10.08.10: Large waistline doubles risk of an early death (US)

Researchers in the US examined the association between waist circumference (WC) and mortality among 48,500 men and 56,343 women, 50 years or older, in the Cancer Prevention Study II Nutrition Cohort. A total of 9315 men and 5332 women died between 1997 and the end of follow-up in 2006. After adjustment for BMI and other risk factors, very high levels of WC were associated with an approximately two-fold higher risk of mortality in men and women. The WC was positively associated with mortality within all categories of BMI. [Read abstract](#) in Archives of Internal Medicine.

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10.08.10: Girls hitting puberty earlier as obesity rises: study (US, Reuters)

Girls in the US are hitting puberty at an earlier age with overweight youngsters tending to develop earlier. Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center researchers compared 1,200

girls aged 7 and 8 in Cincinnati, New York and San Francisco with a similar 1997 study. Researcher Frank Biro said rising rates of obesity could be a major reason why girls seem to be developing faster. [Read more](#).

09.08.10: Parents should use portion control to help fight obesity (ROI, Irish Independent - Supplement)

The news that one of the country's biggest chain stores is now selling plus-size school uniforms is yet another wake-up call about the growing problem of obesity among children. The arrival of the larger uniforms in Marks & Spencer is in response to demand from parents desperate to find a uniform to fit. Parents often blame junk food, forgetting that what they are serving up in the home kitchen may be contributing to the problem simply because they are putting too much food on a child's plate. **safe food** has produced a series of tips for adults and children on how to reduce portion sizes and cut unnecessary calorie intake. [Read more](#).

09.08.10: Large pregnancy weight gains may increase child's obesity risk (US)

Women who gain a high level of weight during pregnancy are more likely than women who gain less weight to give birth to high-birth weight infants, which can increase the infants' likelihood of eventually becoming obese. Researchers determined that women who gained more than 53 pounds during pregnancy were twice as likely to give birth to infants heavier than 8.8 pounds (considered to be high birth weight) as women who gained between 18 and 22 pounds. [Read abstract](#) in The Lancet.

09.08.10: Latest increase in US obesity rate will mean more cancers, experts warn (US, Medical News Today)

According to just-released figures from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2.4 million more Americans became obese between 2007 and 2009. Approximately 26.7 percent of the US adult population, or 72.5 million people, are now obese. Experts at the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) said today that this increase may well result in a corresponding increase in the national cancer rate in years to come. [Read more](#).

06.08.10: Rise in childhood obesity is slowing worldwide (UK, New Scientist)

In a dramatic twist in the tale of the world's obesity epidemic, it appears that childhood obesity levels have stopped rising in many rich nations around the world. Some claim it is proof that healthy-eating campaigns are working, while others are concerned that the data hides discrepancies between rich and poor compatriots. This data was presented at the International Congress on Obesity in Stockholm, Sweden, last month. [Read more](#).

06.08.10: PHA uses webcast to promote health messages (NI)

This webcast features Dr Carolyn Harper, Director of Public Health for the Public Health Agency, discussing the Director of Public Health Annual report for 2009. The report outlines some of the main public health challenges in Northern Ireland and highlights a selection of the invaluable work that has been undertaken at grass-roots level to address these. [Read more](#).

03.08.10: Parents 'not at fault if children obese' (ROI, Irish Examiner)

Having an obese child doesn't make one an unfit parent. Nor does failing at helping that child control his or her weight, so long as you try to help. Those are some of the conclusions drawn by a group of child-health experts. [Read article](#) by Dan Buckley.

02.08.10: Personal responsibility health agenda 'welcomed' (UK, BBC News)

The coalition government's stress on personal responsibility for health is being welcomed by experts - but they warn people still need some help in improving their lifestyles. Professor

Alan Maryon-Davis, president of the Faculty of Public Health, said: "Personal responsibility is crucial - but people can be helped to choose the healthier option - especially when it comes to food." [Read more](#).

August 2010: Deprivation and the development of obesity a multilevel, longitudinal study in England (UK)

This study used longitudinal, multilevel data to describe trajectories of BMI for people living in more- versus less-deprived neighborhoods. The researchers concluded that Whitehall II provides longitudinal evidence of socioeconomic differences in weight gain among middle-aged women, indicating that the neighbourhood environment makes a contribution to the development of overweight and obesity. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine.

August 2010: Waist Circumference and All-Cause Mortality in a Large US Cohort (UK)

Researchers examined the association between waist circumference (WC) and mortality among 48,500 men and 56,343 women, 50 years or older, in the Cancer Prevention Study II Nutrition Cohort. After adjustment for BMI and other risk factors, very high levels of WC were associated with an approximately two-fold higher risk of mortality in men and women. [Read abstract](#) in Archives of Internal Medicine.

August 2010: Obesity prevention and diabetes screening at local health departments (US)

This study assessed whether local health departments (LHDs) were conducting obesity prevention programs and diabetes screening programs, and examined associations between LHD characteristics and whether they conducted these programs. The presence of obesity prevention and diabetes screening programs was significantly associated with LHD structural capacity and general performance. However, the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of both types of programs remain unknown. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Public Health.

August 2010: Understanding parent concerns about children's diet, activity and weight status: an important step towards effective obesity prevention interventions (Australia)

The objective of this study was to identify parents' concerns and attitudes towards children's diets, activity habits and weight status. Insights into parental concerns from the current study may be useful in guiding development of interventions to improve children's nutrition and physical activity habits by framing messages in a way that are most likely to resonate with parents. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

August 2010: The challenges of quantitative evaluation of a multi-setting, multi-strategy community-based childhood obesity prevention programme (Australia)

This study aimed to describe the rationale, development and implementation of the quantitative component of evaluation of a multi-setting, multi-strategy, community-based childhood obesity prevention project (the eat well be active (ewba) Community Programs) and the challenges associated with this process and some potential solutions. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

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30.07.10: Happy Hands training promotes toddler active lifestyles (NI)

Parents attending the 'Happy Hands' parent and toddler group in Newry have received training highlighting the importance of promoting healthy eating and active lifestyles for the under 5s. 'Happy Hands' was established four years ago in Newry by a small group of parents who are deaf or have deaf children. The purpose of the training was to raise

awareness of the 'Healthy Steps for Life' programme, developed by the Southern Investing for Health Partnership (SIHP) and funded by the Public Health Agency. [Read more](#).

30.07.10: 43% of pregnant women overweight or obese (ROI, Irish Medical Times)

At least 28% of pregnant women at one Dublin maternity hospital were found to be overweight, 13% were obese, with 2% morbidly obese, new research has found. A team from the Coombe Women and Infants University Hospital studied 5,824 women who had their BMI calculated in the first trimester. Three per cent were underweight, 54% were normal weight, 28% were overweight, 13% were obese and 2% were morbidly obese. [Read article](#) by Aoife Connors.

30.07.10: Front line against obesity (ROI, Irish Medical Times)

GPs once had an exclusive primary-care role in managing patients' weight. But OTC (Over-The-Counter) medication, and an explosion of commercial motivation and weight-intervention services, has changed this, writes Dr Sinead Murphy. [Read more](#).

30.07.10: Drugs help to curb obesity (ROI, Irish Examiner)

Dramatic effects have been seen from a weight loss recipe that combines anti-addiction drugs with dieting and exercise. A group of obese trial patients put on the programme lost up to 6% of their bodyweight over the course of a year. [Read article](#) by John von Radowitz.

30.07.10: Addiction drugs may boost weight loss (UK)

A combination pill of two drugs used to treat addiction may help people lose weight, say US researchers. The Lancet reports that Naltrexone, commonly used to treat alcoholics and heroin addicts, and the anti-smoking drug bupropion led to greater weight loss than diet and exercise alone. [Read more](#).

30.07.10: UK and India announce joint funding call to combat world's biggest health threat (UK)

The Medical Research Council (MRC) and the Indian Council for Medical Research (ICMR) have announced today a commitment to jointly fund research into chronic non-communicable diseases, a group of conditions responsible for approximately 60 per cent of deaths worldwide. The £4 million initiative will focus on practical interventions to prevent and treat diseases such as diabetes, stroke and heart disease. [Read more](#).

29.07.10: New Online Tool From National Social Marketing Centre Could Help Public Sector Calculate Value For Money (UK, eGov)

Work has begun on the tool, which will enable users to go beyond short-term savings to identify the wider financial impact of behaviour change projects and campaigns. By showing organisations which of their campaigns and behaviour change projects are working and which are not, the tool will help guide decisions on where money should be spent in order to have the best outcomes for patients and the public. [Read more](#).

28.07.10: NHS should use term fat instead of obese, says minister (UK, BBC News)

GPs and other health professionals should tell people they are fat rather than obese, England's public health minister says. Anne Milton told the BBC the term fat was more likely to motivate them into losing weight. She said it was important people should take "personal responsibility" for their lifestyles. But health experts said the word could stigmatise those who are overweight. [Read more](#).

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28.07.10: NICE issues pregnancy weight management guidance, as the number of obese mothers soars (UK)

Obese mums-to-be should be encouraged to lose weight before they become pregnant, in order to reduce the risk of major complications during pregnancy, latest NICE guidance suggests. The new advice on [weight management before, during and after pregnancy](#) comes as the number of obese mothers in England rises, with 15-20 per cent of women now overweight or obese during pregnancy. Read [press release](#).

26.07.10: Diabetes costs 'out of control' (UK, BBC News)

The NHS is spending too much on diabetes drugs say researchers, who found the medicines account for 7% of the UK prescribing budget. A big rise in the number of people with type 2 diabetes in recent years does not fully explain the spiralling costs, say Cardiff University researchers. Dr Chris Currie said the findings suggested that national guidelines are not being followed. [Read more](#).

26.07.10: Marks and Spencer launch plus-size school uniforms (UK)

As more and more children start primary school overweight, retailers are having to expand the waistlines on school uniforms. Marks and Spencer is the latest to join in the growing trend. They have launched a 'Plus' range for super-sized pupils, starting from the age of just four. [Read more](#).

23.07.10: Media has powerful role to play in obesity campaign (ROI, Irish Medical Times)

In this article Dr Donal O' Shea talks about his involvement with the Operation Transformation Programme on RTE and how his appreciation of the media and the manner in which it influences people has grown. Prof Donal O'Shea is a consultant endocrinologist and physician based in St Vincent's University Hospital and St Columcille's Hospital in Dublin. [Read more](#).

23.07.10: Food and Fairness Inquiry published (UK)

Leading figures from industry, the public sector and charities have joined forces to call for fundamental changes in finance, trade and employment to make our food system fairer. Food Justice: the Report of the Food and Fairness Inquiry, finds that farmers, agricultural workers, the environment and consumers are paying a high price for the food we eat. [Read more](#).

23.07.10: Government following 'dangerous path' on obesity, says top doctor (UK, Daily Telegraph)

The new coalition government has set itself on a 'dangerous path' by cosying up to the food industry and failing to tackle the nation's obesity crisis. One of the most senior doctors in the country, Sir Richard Thompson has criticised Health Secretary Andrew Lansley's policies of less regulation and more involvement from food and drinks industry in public health at a time when obesity is threatening to overwhelm the NHS. [Read more](#).

22.07.10: Provision needed for obese pregnant women (ROI, Irish Times)

Providers of maternity services in Ireland need to make provision for the rise in the number of pregnant women who are morbidly obese and who face serious health problems as a result, researchers have said. A study published by researchers at UCD's Centre for Human Reproduction at the Coombe hospital in Dublin showed women who are significantly overweight while pregnant suffer an "alarmingly" high rate of medical complications. [Read article](#) by Elaine Edwards.

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22.07.10: Food Standards Agency publishes latest consumer attitudes tracker survey (UK)

The Food Standards Agency has released the latest results of its quarterly tracker survey, which monitors public opinion and awareness of the Food Standards Agency and key food issues. [Read more](#).

22.07.10: Life expectancy gap in Britain 'widest since Great Depression' (UK)

The poorest people in Britain are twice as likely to die before the age of 65 as the richest - the highest inequality in mortality since the economic depression of the 1930s. The gap between the two has not been greater for the last 80 years, according to a recent study. [Read article](#) in BMJ.

22.07.10: Addressing mom's weight issues is first step towards overcoming childhood obesity (US, Medical News Today)

The information gap and general lack of understanding of obesity's unique and disproportionate impact on women contributes to the challenges of the 65 million American women who are considered overweight or obese, said the Strategies to Overcome and Prevent (STOP) Obesity Alliance Task Force on Women at a meeting on Capitol Hill. [Read more](#).

21.07.10: Maternal overweight and obesity and the risk of preterm birth and low birth weight (Canada)

This is a systematic review and meta-analyses to determine the relation between overweight and obesity in mothers and preterm birth and low birth weight in singleton pregnancies in developed and developing countries. Overweight and obese women have increased risks of preterm birth and induced preterm birth and, after accounting for publication bias, appeared to have increased risks of preterm birth overall. [Read article](#) in BMJ Research.

20.07.10: Changes to the Food Standards Agency (UK)

The Government has today announced its intention to retain the Food Standards Agency (FSA) with a renewed focus on food safety. The Department of Health will become responsible for nutrition policy in England, and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs will become responsible for country of origin labelling and various other types of food labelling not related to food safety, and food composition policies in England. [Read more](#).

17.07.10: Children in good shape have better appetite control and energy expenditure (EU, Medical News Today)

Adolescents of ages between 12 and 17, with a good physical condition and regular physical activity present increased levels of insulin and leptin, which are hormones involved in the development of diabetes, appetite control and energy expenditure. [Read more](#).

16.07.10: Primary care solution to obesity (ROI, Irish Medical Times)

A recent survey of GPs found that some 64 per cent believed the most important single issue facing Irish medicine was obesity and its health consequences. As a long-term advocate for proactive weight management intervention by family doctors, this outcome was a relief to me. [Read article](#) by Dr John O' Riordan.

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16.07.10: European Union urged to take action on diabetes and other chronic conditions (UK)

A coalition of organisations representing people with chronic conditions is campaigning for the introduction of measures to address poor diet, lack of exercise, excessive use of alcohol and smoking in a bid to improve the health of people across Europe. [Read more](#).

15.07.10: Childhood protection and obesity: framework for practice (UK)

Childhood obesity is an increasing problem, but when does it constitute grounds for a charge of neglect? Russell Viner and colleagues review the evidence and propose a framework for practice. [Read article in BMJ](#).

14.07.10: Slow and steady might not win the weight-loss race (US, Reuters)

If you're trying to lose weight and keep it off, new research suggests you take up a diet and exercise plan that will help you lose a big chunk of weight right off the bat. If long-term weight is what you care about, "it should be recommended ... that people lose a high amount of weight," said Dr. Jeroen Barte, a researcher at the National Institute for Public Health and the Environment in the Netherlands and the lead author of the new research. Barte and his colleagues presented their findings at the International Congress on Obesity in Stockholm, Sweden. [Read more](#).

13.07.10: A low intensity, community based lifestyle programme to prevent weight gain in women with young children: cluster randomised controlled trial (Australia)

The aim of this study was to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of a community behavioural intervention to prevent weight gain and improve health related behaviours in women with young children. Weight gain in women with young children could be prevented using a low intensity self management intervention delivered in a community setting. Self management of health behaviours improved with the intervention. The response rate of 12%, although comparable with that in other community studies, might limit the ability to generalise to other populations. [Read abstract](#) in BMJ.

13.07.10: Weight loss aids debunked (ROI, Irish Examiner)

Food supplements designed to speed up weight loss do not work, experts said yesterday. A range of supplements — including those based on cabbage, fibre and plant extracts — are no better than "fake" dummy pills in helping people slim, they said. Presenting their findings, which have yet to be peer-reviewed, experts from the Peninsula Medical School at the universities of Exeter and Plymouth said there is no evidence the drugs work. [Read more](#).

12.07.10: Weight-loss schemes help patients 'more than the NHS' (UK)

A leading nutritionist says GPs should send obese patients to weight-loss schemes rather than offer NHS help because they will see better results. Dr Susan Jebb of the Medical Research Council found in a study that people in a WeightWatchers programme lost twice as much weight as those with GP care.

WeightWatchers part-funded the study, but Dr Jebb stressed similar schemes would be as effective. [Read more](#).

12.07.10: EU platform for action on diet, physical activity & health is evaluated after five years (EU)

Five years ago, the European Commission created the EU Platform for Action on Diet, Physical Activity & Health, which brought together a variety of concerned stakeholders and challenged them to respond to the rising tide of obesity in Europe. The five-year evaluation carried out by the Evaluation Partnership on behalf of the Public Health Evaluation and Impact Assessment Consortium (PHEIAC) is completed by two case studies on the Platform members' commitments for action in the key areas of [Advertising and marketing to children](#), and [Food/ drink reformulation \(the practice of reducing sugar, salt and/or fat in a product\)](#). [Read report](#).

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12.07.10: Help kids avoid forming unhealthy habits this summer advises the Nutrition and Health Foundation (ROI)

The Nutrition and Health Foundation (NHF) is calling all parents to be vigilant with their children this summer to prevent the vicious cycle of poor eating habits and sedentary lifestyles which leads to weight gain and, ultimately, if left unchecked, the potential for early onset of chronic diseases. [Read more.](#)

12.07.10: Double MRC study proves diet clubs can help in the fight against obesity (UK)

Two new studies from the Medical Research Council (MRC) have shown that people who are referred to commercial weight loss programmes do better than those on standard NHS weight management programmes. [Read more.](#)

11.07.10: Doctors call for 'fat tax' on junk food (UK, Channel 4)

Leading doctors want new restrictions on junk food - including a "fat tax" on products deemed unhealthy. The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health is demanding a whole range of restrictions - from banning fast food outlets from opening near schools, to restricting advertising and sponsorship of sporting events. In their view, it's the only way to tackle Britain's obesity problem. [Read more.](#)

09.07.10: Slimming pills – do the claims add up? (UK, BBC News)

A review of slimming aids, on behalf of the BBC, has concluded there is little or no published medical evidence to support weight-loss claims associated with four of the five products investigated. The products, considered a cross section of the market, included Adios, Biosynergy Hoodia Gordonii, LIPObind, Slim Nite and Alli. [Read more.](#)

07.07.10: Obesity marketing campaign 'cut' (UK)

Government funding of the Change4Life public health campaign is to be withdrawn with the hope the private sector will step in, ministers say. About £50m has been invested in it since the launch in January 2009 in a bid to tackle rising obesity rates. The funds paid for TV ads and a range of marketing materials handed out by schools, hospitals and community halls. But Health Secretary Andrew Lansley said he wanted to see business take on responsibility for the campaign. [Read more.](#)

07.07.10: Health secretary sets out future of public health (UK)

In his first speech on Public Health, Health Secretary Andrew Lansley today set out his vision for a new Public Health Service that will release all of society to work together to get healthy and live longer. The plans to create a healthy nation are centred on a whole new approach which focuses on behaviour change; and which goes beyond constraining the supply of illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and begins to understand and influence the drivers of demand. [Read more.](#)

05.07.10: 'Overweight' boy NHS letter prompts apology (UK, BBC News)

The parents of a boy branded "overweight" have received a letter of apology from the Department of Health. Tom Halton, 11, of Barnsley was told he was overweight after taking part in a national scheme which measured children's body mass index. His parents, Dan and Tracey Halton, said the results letter from Barnsley PCT was offensive and judged their parenting skills. [Read more.](#)

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05.07.10: Obesity among over 65s in UK reflects "lifetime of gaining weight" (UK)

The prevalence of obesity among elderly people in the United Kingdom is higher than among young people, with almost three quarters of those aged between 65 and 74 years classed as obese or overweight. The 40th edition of Social Trends, published by the Office

for National Statistics, shows that in 2008 in England more than three quarters (77.1%) of adults aged between 65 and 74 were obese or overweight, whereas a third (33.5%) of those aged 16 to 24 were. [Read more](#).

02.07.10: Irish women in 30s urged to lose flab to cut stroke risk (ROI)

The Irish Heart Foundation has urged women to reduce their stroke risk by maintaining a healthy weight after US research found that stroke rates have tripled among those aged from late 30s to early 50s. According to the US experts, the obesity epidemic is the likely reason for the sudden rise in female stroke cases which is believed to be counteracting advances in stroke preventive measures. [Read more](#).

01.07.10: Weight of the obesity epidemic: Rising stroke rates among middle-aged women in the United States (US)

Recent US data revealed that among individuals aged 45 to 54 years, women's stroke prevalence was double that of men's. The purpose of this study was to determine if the sex disparity existed previously. The authors found that stroke prevalence among women aged 35 to 54 years has tripled over the past two decades, at the same time remaining stable among men. Prevalence of obesity and three metabolic syndrome components increased; they may be key factors in the increase in women's stroke prevalence. [Read abstract](#) in Stroke.

30.06.10: Oz snaps back over airbrushed photos (ROI, Irish Independent)

Magazines in Australia could be forced to carry disclaimers on any photographs that have been airbrushed after the government unveiled a new strategy to tackle negative body image and eating disorders. Under a code of conduct for the fashion industry, magazines must agree to refrain from heavy retouching of body parts, including the common practices of lengthening legs and trimming waistlines. Where photographs have been altered, the images must carry a disclaimer. [Read article](#) by Bonnie Malkin.

29.06.10: Adult obesity rates rose in 28 states, and fell in just one, USA (US, Medical News Today)

Twenty eight US states saw obesity rates still rising last year, while the only place to experience a decline was the District of Columbia (D.C), F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future 2010, according to a report from the Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). In 38 US states more than 25% of the adult population is obese. 19 years ago the number of US states with an obesity rate of over 20% was zero. [Read more](#).

28.06.10: Half of women 'risking miscarriage' due to weight (UK, The Independent)

Half the women of reproductive age in the UK are damaging their chances of having a baby by allowing themselves to get too fat, it was claimed today. The scale of the problem was highlighted by an IVF study which found that being overweight doubled the risk of women miscarrying. This was despite each patient having a healthy, potentially viable embryo transferred to her womb after successful fertilisation. [Read more](#).

24.06.10: Lifestyle intervention reduces preschoolers' body fat, improves fitness (US, Medical News Today)

Migrant children are at increased risk of obesity, but a new study shows that a program teaching multiple lifestyle changes to predominantly migrant preschoolers and their parents helps the children reduce body fat and improve fitness. The results were presented at The Endocrine Society's 92nd Annual Meeting in San Diego. [Read more](#).

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23.06.10: Fatness leads to inactivity, but inactivity does not lead to fatness: a longitudinal study in children (UK)

Scientists have questioned the assumption that a lack of exercise causes fatness in children. The study suggests that physical inactivity appears to be the result of fatness, instead of its cause. Researchers said findings indicate that nutrition, rather than exercise, is the best way of tackling childhood obesity. [Read abstract](#) in the Archives of Disease in Childhood.

23.06.10: Association between adiposity in midlife and older age and risk of diabetes in older adults (US)

This study aimed to examine the relationship between adiposity, changes in adiposity, and risk of incident type 2 diabetes in adults 65 years of age and older. Findings show that among older adults, overall and central adiposity, and weight gain during middle age and after the age of 65 years are associated with risk of diabetes. [Read abstract](#) in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

19.06.10: Smoking and obesity among top 10 factors in strokes (ROI, Irish Independent, p.4)

Ten risk factors including high blood pressure, smoking, and obesity have been linked to 90pc of strokes, according to an international study involving Irish researchers. The study was published yesterday in 'The Lancet' medical journal and involved Dr Martin O'Donnell, of NUI Galway, and Canadian researchers. [Read more](#).

16.06.10: Studies suggest politics is key to tackling widespread obesity (UK, Medical News Today)

Politicians could do more to tackle the spread of obesity, a new series of studies suggests. The research findings, collated in a book 'Geographies of Obesity' co-edited by Dr Jamie Pearce of the University of Edinburgh's School of GeoSciences, suggests that changes to the environments in which people live have contributed to a rise in obesity, with increased use of cars, lack of local green space and an abundance of cheap, high-calorie foods. [Read more](#).

16.06.10: Sexuality and obesity – a gender perspective (France)

Obese single women are four times more likely to have an unplanned pregnancy than women of a healthy weight, despite having sex less often. They are also 63 per cent less likely to seek contraception advice, 66 per cent less likely to take the Pill and generally view sex as less important, researchers found. Obese women were five times more likely to have met their partner online, and were more likely to have an obese partner than women of a healthy weight. [Read abstract](#) in the British Medical Journal.

11.06.10: New measures to combat obesity epidemic (ROI, Irish Medical Times, p. 8)

Members of the IMO and the Northern Ireland branch of the British Medical Association (BMA) held a meeting with representatives of the European Parliament last week (June 1) to discuss new measures to combat obesity, including a ban on advertising processed foods on television before 9pm. [Read more](#).

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10.06.10: Statement by Minister Mary Harney T.D. at the launch of the Report on the Cardiovascular Health Policy 2010-2019 (ROI)

The Minister for Health and Children, Mary Harney, T.D. launched the Report of the Cardiovascular Health Policy Group, Changing Cardiovascular Health: Cardiovascular Health Policy 2010-2019. The Group had been established by the Minister to develop a policy framework for the prevention, detection and treatment of cardiovascular diseases, including

stroke, which would ensure an integrated and quality assured approach in their management. [Read more.](#)

08.06.10: Maternal obesity linked to infant wheezing (ROI, Irish Times Supplement, p.2)

Maternal obesity could have a direct impact on the immune response of the child, a Dutch study has found. A survey of just under 5,000 mothers and their infants has found that mothers with an unhealthy body mass index (BMI) value reported higher levels of wheezing in their infants. Article by Beth O' Donoghue. [Read more.](#)

07.06.10: Bad habits damage health of workers and UK economy – one in four take no breaks during working day (UK)

New research from the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy (CSP) shows that one in four people (25 per cent) in the UK regularly work all day without taking a break and are thereby putting their health at risk. The CSP, which launches its Fit for Work campaign, says UK workers are increasing their risk of chronic musculoskeletal disorders (such as on-going back pain), obesity, cancer, depression, heart disease, diabetes type 2 and stroke through poor working practices. [Read more.](#)

07.06.10: NHS 'should pay people' to lose weight (UK, Daily Telegraph)

Paying people up to £3,000 to lose weight is more successful than traditional diets and should be rolled out across the NHS, it has been claimed. The founder of the controversial Pounds for Pounds scheme said that people who are paid according to how much weight they lose and if they keep it off are more successful than those on traditional diets. [Read more.](#)

04.06.10: Studies prove multiple benefits of worksite health programs (US, Medical News Today)

Two separate worksite health interventions significantly improved employees' health and fitness levels, as presented in a pair of studies at the American College of Sports Medicine's 57th Annual Meeting. In the first study, 12 overweight or obese, sedentary office workers volunteered to have treadmill workstations installed in their offices for nine months. The second worksite health study examined the effects of a comprehensive worksite health program for a larger employee sample size (157), open to both normal-weight and overweight workers, most of whom were leading sedentary or low-activity lifestyles. [Read more.](#)

02.06.10: Doctors across Ireland urge EU action on obesity (IOI)

Members of the British Medical Association (BMA) and Irish Medical Organisation (IMO) will meet with representatives of the European Parliament to urge policy makers to work together to tackle the rise in obesity levels. Both the IMO and the BMA (NI) are calling on EU Commissioners for Health to lead the way in establishing public health policy that is fit for purpose and based on the common values and principles that underpin all EU healthcare systems. [Read more.](#)

June 2010: The predicted effects of chronic obesity in middle age on medicare costs and mortality (US)

The relationships between individuals' characteristics in middle age and subsequent Medicare costs and mortality were estimated from the linkage of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey I Epidemiologic Follow-up Study to Medicare administrative records (1991-2000) and mortality information (1971-2000). Chronic obesity in middle age increases lifetime Medicare costs relative to those who remained normal weight. [Read abstract](#) in Medical Care. [Back to top](#)

30.05.10: Aviva stadium part of European Healthy Stadia initiative (ROI)

Based on its initiatives Aviva Stadium has become a member of the European Healthy Stadia Programme. The European Healthy Stadia Programme is sponsored by the World Heart Federation and UEFA. Aine Brady, TD, Minister for Older People and Health Promotion, congratulated Aviva Stadium on their involvement with the Programme. [Read more](#).

Recently published research in obesity journals

Obesity: A Research Journal

- [Volume 18, Issue 8 \(August 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 18, Issue 7 \(July 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 18, Issue 6 \(June 2010\)](#)

International Journal of Obesity

- [Volume 34, Issue 8 \(August 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 34, Issue 7 \(July 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 34, Issue 6 \(June 2010\)](#)

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NUTRITION NEWS

19.08.10: More spent on high-fat sweet foods during Celtic Tiger years, study finds (ROI, Irish Times)

Irish households spent less on meat, eggs and fish during the Celtic Tiger years while there was a significant increased spend on high-fat sweet foods, new research has shown. Teagasc researchers at Ashtown Research centre looked at expenditure on food in the 10-year period to 2004 when disposable income for the household doubled from EUR583 to EUR1,002. [Read article](#) by Sean MacConnell.

10.08.10: Health Service Executive (HSE) cooks up a plan to get parents involved in schools (ROI, Evening Herald)

Irish parents could soon be cooking up a storm in our schools if a pilot nutrition programme gets the go-ahead. A HSE official has revealed that Irish parents may receive cooking lessons alongside their children as part of a programme expected to be rolled out across the country this autumn. CookIt! was first introduced in Northern Ireland as a community project, and it proved so successful that the Health Promotion division of the HSE launched a preliminary study in 2007. [Read more](#).

08.08.10: Restaurants and pubs may be forced to reveal calorie counts (UK, Daily Telegraph)

Restaurants, take-aways and pubs could be forced to print menus calculating the calories in meals under government plans to combat obesity. Andrew Lansley, the Health Secretary, has signalled he will change the law if food businesses do not respond to attempts to introduce a voluntary industry system. The Food Standards Agency is trialling a scheme in which about 20 restaurant chains, including Real Greek and Pret A Manger, provide calorie counts of all dishes on their menus. [Read more](#).

04.08.10: Kellogg's announce cut in sugar in their cereals (UK, BBC News)

Kellogg's is reducing the sugar content in a range of its breakfast cereals by 15%. The move comes after criticism that high levels of sugar, salt and fat in cereals are contributing to childhood obesity. The change will happen next year in four of the company's Coco Pops brand. [Read more](#).

03.08.10: Weight and metabolic outcomes on a low-carbohydrate versus low-fat diet (US)

Low-fat and low-carbohydrate diets can be equally effective at helping obese adults shed weight over the longer term, but cutting carbs may have an advantage when it comes to some heart risk factors. [Read abstract](#) in Annals of Internal Medicine.

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02.08.10: Junk food diet puts children at higher risk of allergies (UK, Daily Telegraph)

Children who have junk food diets are at greater risk of allergies as well as obesity, according to a new study. Scientists compared youngsters from a rural African village who had diets rich in fibre with another group living in Florence in Italy and found a dramatic difference. The African children had less obesity-linked bacteria and a greater abundance of fatty acids which protect against inflammation causing asthma, eczema and other allergic reactions. [Read more](#).

02.08.10: National Diet and Nutrition Survey corrections to year one results (UK)

The Food Standards Agency has published a revised version of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey's year 1 report. [Read more](#).

02.08.10: Nutritional labeling and point-of-purchase signs influence healthy food choices (US, Medical News Today)

Poor diet and physical inactivity leading to obesity are poised to overtake tobacco use as the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. With over 30% of U.S. adults obese, the significant adverse health effects of obesity (including heart disease and diabetes) are widespread throughout the country. [Read more](#).

August 2010: Meat consumption and prospective weight change in participants of the EPIC-PANACEA study (EU)

The objective of this research was to assess the association between consumption of total meat, red meat, poultry, and processed meat and weight gain after five years of follow-up. Total meat consumption was positively associated with weight gain in men and women, in normal-weight and overweight subjects, and in smokers and non-smokers. With adjustment for estimated energy intake, an increase in meat intake of 250 g/d would lead to a 2-kg higher weight gain after five years. Positive associations were observed for red meat, poultry, and processed meat. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

August 2010: The effect of fiscal policy on diet, obesity and chronic disease: a systematic review (World)

A systematic review of the literature was conducted to assess the effect of food taxes and subsidies on diet, body weight and health. The authors conclude that food taxes and subsidies have the potential to contribute to healthy consumption patterns at the population level. However, current evidence is generally of low quality and the empirical evaluation of existing taxes is a research priority, along with research into the effectiveness and differential impact of food taxes in developing countries. [Read article](#) in the Bulletin of the WHO.

26.07.10: Restaurants drop out of calorie count scheme (UK, Caterersearch.com)

The majority of hospitality operators that took part in a Food Standards Agency (FSA) trial of labelling menus with calorie information have failed to commit to the scheme. The trial, which launched last summer, saw 18 of the UK's largest restaurants, sandwich chains and workplace caterers printing calorie counts next to products on the shelves, on menus or next to tills. [Read more](#).

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26.07.10: Junk food advertising needs watershed ban (UK, Daily Telegraph)

All adverts for junk food should be banned from being aired on television before the watershed, health campaigners have declared. Their call came after a study suggested the ban on advertising sugary, fatty foods during children's television programmes had not been as successful as hoped. [Read more.](#)

16.07.10: Governments must control food marketing to children (UK)

Measures to restrict the advertising of unhealthy foods to children should be set by governments and not by industry, says the author of a review funded by the European Union. According to Tim Lobstein, director of policy at the International Association for the Study of Obesity (IASO), there has been significant progress in the last six years in curbing the marketing of unhealthy foods to kids, but "there's chaos within the details". Lobstein presented the findings of the EU PolMark study, which was coordinated by IASO, at the International Congress on Obesity, held in Stockholm, Sweden. [Read more.](#)

15.07.10: Restaurant becomes first to put calories on menu (UK, Daily Telegraph)

A leading restaurant chain in London, the Real Greek, has become the first to put full calorie information on its menus, in a bid to help diners on a diet. The restaurant chain, which has six outlets in London, has become the first to adopt a voluntary scheme promoted by the Food Standards Agency to give restaurant diners as much information as shoppers buying their weekly groceries. [Read more.](#)

15.07.10: Major fast food chains significantly decrease trans fats in cooking oils (US, Medical News Today)

Five major fast food chains have significantly decreased trans fats in the oils they use to cook food, according to new research from the University of Minnesota School of Public Health. [Read more.](#)

14.07.10: Eating for two could condemn new mothers to life of obesity (UK, Daily Telegraph)

Researchers have discovered that too much weight gained during the gestation of a baby more than quadruples the risk of women being overweight decades later. That in turn could lead to increased risk of diabetes, heart disease and other problems associated with being overweight. [Read more.](#)

08.07.10: 'More pupils' eat school lunches (UK, BBC News)

There has been a rise in the number of children eating school lunches in England, data suggests. But this still leaves less than half of primary pupils and just over a third of secondary pupils eating school lunches, the School Food Trust says. Take-up in primaries was 41.4%, up 2.1 percentage points on 2008-9, and 35.8% in secondaries, up 0.8 percentage points, it adds. [Read more.](#)

08.07.10: Jamie Oliver calls for more funding to back school meals revolution (UK, The Guardian)

Jamie Oliver is urging ministers to put more money into school meals as official figures show growing numbers of pupils are eating the healthy dinners his campaign inspired. The benefits to children's health should prompt more government investment, said Oliver. Short-term financial pressures should not threaten the provision of nutritious school food, he added. [Read more.](#)

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07.07.10: No anti-junk food laws, health secretary promises (UK, The Guardian)

Beer companies, confectionery firms and crisp-makers will be asked to fund the government's advertising campaign to persuade people to switch to a healthier lifestyle and, in return, will not face new legislation outlawing excessively fatty, sugary and salty

07.07.10: EU health food claims law begins to bite (UK, BBC News)

Health foods would be nothing without the claims they make on the packaging. But some claims might soon vanish, due to a European regulation which demands that health food companies come up with the scientific evidence to back their labelling. [Read more.](#)

07.07.10: Top doctor calls for urgent action on salt and fats in food (UK, The Guardian)

One of Britain's top doctors has accused the food industry of being "profoundly irresponsible" for adding unhealthy amounts of fat and salt to its products. Lindsey Davies, the new president of the UK Faculty of Public Health, wants ministers to bring in legal minimum health standards for food if manufacturers do not undertake dramatic action to strip out harmful ingredients such as transfats and excess salt. [Read more.](#)

06.07.10: Toying with kids' diets (ROI, Irish Times - Supplement)

McDonald's is at the centre of a threatened lawsuit over its 'unfair and deceptive' marketing of toys to children. Pester power is the bane of parents' lives as they come up against the marketing of food that targets children by, for example, the inclusion of a toy with a McDonald's Happy Meal. Now Washington-based consumer advocacy group, the Centre for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI), has threatened to file a lawsuit against the fast food chain, saying that it "unfairly and deceptively" markets toys to children. [Read article](#) by Colette Sheridan.

06.07.10: Danes impose 25% tax increases on ice cream, chocolate, and sweets to curb disease (Denmark)

The Danish government has imposed tax increases of 25% on ice cream, chocolate, and sweets and will also increase taxes on soft drinks, tobacco, and alcohol products in a bid to reduce the burden on public health services and to tackle obesity, heart disease, and other illnesses. The 25% increase, which came into effect on 1 July, was proposed in November 2009 in the Danish Ministry of Taxation's paper Tax Reform 2010. [Read article](#) in BMJ.

05.07.10: UCD scientist to lead study focused on diet and genes (ROI, Irish Times)

A University College Dublin scientist is to lead a major international research consortium that will study personalised nutrition, devising a person's ideal diet based on their genetic make-up. The nine million Euro four-year study will test whether it is possible to make nutritional choices by reading a person's genes. [Read more](#) or visit www.food4me.org.

01.07.10: Training on Nutrition and Health Claims and Food Supplements (ROI)

In April and May, the FSAI hosted seven interactive training workshops on nutrition and health claims and food supplements for environmental health officers and staff in public analyst's laboratories. The interactive training workshops provided an overview of nutrition labelling requirements, the framework to the nutrition and health claims legislation, among others. Support material developed for the workshops is available the FSAI website. [Read more.](#)

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July 2010: Impact of neighbourhood food environment on food consumption in children aged 9-10 years in the UK SPEEDY study (UK)

Researchers determined relationships between distance to and density of food outlets on children's food choice. Distance to and density of food outlets were both associated with

children's food choice, although the impact appeared to be small and the relationship complex. However, the effects of individual foods combined could be important, particularly as even small differences in intake can impact on body weight over time. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

July 2010: Television food advertising and the prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity: a multicountry comparison (Int)

This study aimed to estimate the contribution of television (TV) food advertising to the prevalence of obesity among 6–11-year-old children in Australia, Great Britain (England and Scotland only), Italy, The Netherlands, Sweden and the United States. The contribution of TV advertising of foods and drinks to the prevalence of childhood obesity differs distinctly by country and is likely to be significant in some countries. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

July 2010: Improving the food environment in UK schools: Policy opportunities and challenges (UK)

This research explores the factors influencing schools' decisions and children's food choices in relation to vending machines. Although unhappy with the current quality of school food, staff and pupils criticised initiatives to restrict unhealthy foods. It appears that achieving a healthier school environment is a long-term project involving multiple strategies of education and incentives, as well as regulation. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of Public Health Policy.

25.06.10: 'Bossy' lunch box advice rejected (UK, BBC News)

Many parents see schools as "bossy" or "interfering" when they tell them what they can and cannot put in their children's lunch box, Ofsted warns. Instead parents in England wanted more advice on how to prepare healthier packed lunches, inspectors said. They said heads often felt uneasy about issuing edicts on lunch boxes. [Read more](#).

22.06.10: 'Traffic light' food labelling rejected by EU parliament (ROI, Irish Times - Supplement, p.2)

Four Fine Gael MEPs have voted with the majority in the European Parliament to defeat proposals for a new "traffic light" system of food labelling designed to combat rising levels of obesity. The MEPs, Sean Kelly, Mairead McGuinness, Jim Higgins and Gay Mitchell, voted with their colleagues on the EPP group against the proposal, which would have seen a red, amber and green colouring code placed on food packets according to the levels of calories, sugar, salt and fat they contain. [Read article](#) by Paul Cullen and Pamela Duncan.

22.06.10: CSPI to Sue McDonald's If It Continues Using Toys to Market Junk Food to Children (US)

A nutrition watchdog group will sue McDonald's if the fast-food chain continues to use toys to promote Happy Meals. According to the nonprofit Center for Science in the Public Interest, using toys to lure small children into McDonald's is unfair and deceptive marketing and is illegal under various state consumer protection laws. CSPI today served McDonald's a notice of its intent to sue, fulfilling a legal requirement of several states in which CSPI might bring the lawsuit. [Read more](#).

22.06.10: Cutting salt and fat levels in food could save up to 40,000 lives, says NICE (UK)

Up to 40,000 deaths from heart disease and stroke could be prevented each year by reducing the levels of salt and saturated fat in our food, latest guidance from NICE suggests. [Read guidance](#).

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19.06.10: IBEC food director applauds EU's rejection of 'traffic light' labelling (ROI, Irish Examiner)

Europe got it right on all counts with its decisions on anti-obesity health promotional food labelling, according to one leading food industry figure. Paul Kelly, director with IBEC's Food and Drink Industry Ireland (FDII), has welcomed this week's endorsement by MEPs of the voluntary Guideline Daily Amount (GDA) labelling, which is currently visible on 78% of Irish packaged foods. [Read article](#) by Joe Dermody.

18.06.10: Survey reveals shocking levels of salt in your barbecue (UK)

In the largest survey of its kind, CASH surveyed 603 barbecue food products such as burgers, sausages, crisps, salads and dips from the seven leading supermarkets and the leading brands. The research highlighted just how much salt is unknowingly being eaten when you have a barbecue. The survey found that a 'typical barbecue meal' could add up to as much as 12.11g of salt – more than double your daily recommended maximum of 6g a day. [Read more.](#)

18.06.10: Consumption of vegetables, cooked meals, and eating dinner is negatively associated with overweight status in children (US)

To evaluate potential associations between diet- and physical activity-related lifestyle patterns and obesity indices in a cohort of children, a multidimensional lifestyle pattern including the consumption of vegetables, cooked meals, and eating dinner, was negatively associated with all obesity indices, even after adjustment for potential confounders and exclusion of low energy reporters. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of Pediatrics.

17.06.10: Traffic light food labelling rejected by MEPs (ROI, Irish Examiner)

Consumer groups have voiced dismay after MEPs rejected the most popular form of food nutrition labelling — a "traffic-light" colour coding system already in wide use. Instead the European Parliament voted for an alternative system of Guideline Daily Amounts (GDAs), in the wake of intense food industry lobbying. [Read article](#) by Geoff Meade.

17.06.10: Point-of-purchase price and education intervention to reduce consumption of sugary soft drinks (US)

Researchers investigated whether a price increase on regular (sugary) soft drinks and an educational intervention would reduce their sales. Sales of regular soft drinks declined by 26% during the price increase phase. This reduction in sales persisted throughout the study period, with an additional decline of 18% during the combination phase compared with the washout period. [Read abstract](#) in the American Journal of Public Health.

16.06.10: IHF criticises Food Industry pressure following today's vote on food labelling (ROI)

The Irish Heart Foundation is shocked and extremely disappointed at the outcome of a vote by the majority of MEPs on food labelling at the European Parliament today (16 June) which voted against traffic light labeling, a simple system to explain nutrient content to consumers. [Read more.](#)

16.06.10: Food labels that fight the flab (UK, The Independent)

A joint letter from the British Heart Foundation, Cancer Research UK, Children's Food Campaign, Diabetes UK and the National Heart Forum has been published in the Independent, calling for MEPs to support a single front of pack labelling scheme. [Read more.](#) [Back to top](#)

15.06.10: EUR1bn campaign to block food labelling (ROI, Irish Examiner)

The food industry has spent EUR1 billion lobbying politicians to block an easy-to-understand labelling system, according to an expert group. Consumer groups and surveys say that a

'traffic light' system — showing shoppers at first glance how high the food is in sugar, salt and fats — is the easiest to understand. But the massive food industry prefers a system based on percentages per portion, that Labour MEP Nessa Childers and consumer bodies say leaves shoppers perplexed. [Read more](#).

14.06.10: MEP calls for 'traffic light' food labelling (ROI, Irish Times)

Alcoholic drinks should have labels which show the sugar and calories contained in the products, an Irish MEP has said ahead of an EU vote on food labelling. Nessa Childers is calling on her fellow Irish MEPs to support a "traffic light" food labelling system, in a vote in the EU Parliament later this week. If adopted, food products across Europe will be required to carry a "traffic light" colour code indicating the levels of calories, sugar and fats contained in their products. [Read article](#) by Pamela Duncan.

12.06.10: Fast food takeaway near Shadwell school halted (UK, BBC News)

A decision to allow a fast food takeaway to be set up near a school with a healthy eating policy has been quashed by the High Court. It ruled that Tower Hamlets council had acted unlawfully when it gave the go-ahead for the business to open close to Bishop Challoner School in Shadwell. Members were wrongly directed not to take account of the school's proximity in their decision, the court ruled. [Read more](#).

09.06.10: Outcry over plans not to extend free school meals (UK, BBC News)

Campaigners against child poverty have attacked plans not to extend free school meals provision in England. Ministers are shelving a scheme devised under Labour to widen entitlement to free meals to more low income families. The scheme, due to start this September, could have given free meals to 500,000 more families. [Read more](#).

05.06.10: Characteristics of food industry web sites and "advergaming" targeting children (US)

UC Davis public health researchers have found that children, who are already saturated with television messages about unhealthy food choices, are the targets of a new medium used to sell high-fat, high-sugar foods: advergaming. Advergaming is an entertaining blend of interactive animation, video content and advertising, exposing children for extended periods of time to online messages that primarily promote corporate branding and products. [Read abstract](#) in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behaviour.

04.06.10: Food Standards Agency provide advice to make healthy eating your world cup goal (UK)

As the build-up to the World Cup gets into full swing, the Food Standards Agency is offering tips on how to combine watching hours of football with making choices about healthier eating. [Read more](#).

02.06.10: European Commission provides update on status of nutrition and health claims (EU)

The European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) has published information on a number of areas concerning nutrition and health claims: [Health Claims - Comments to the Commission on EFSA's opinions](#) and [Community Register of nutrition and health claims made on food - Authorized health claims & Rejected health claims](#).

June 2010: Acute partial sleep deprivation increases food intake in healthy men (France)

Acute partial sleep deprivation increases plasma concentrations of ghrelin and decreases those of leptin. The objective of this study was to observe modifications in energy intake and physical activity after acute partial sleep deprivation in healthy men. One night of

reduced sleep subsequently increased food intake and, to a lesser extent, estimated physical activity-related energy expenditure in healthy men. These experimental results, if confirmed by long-term energy balance measurements, suggest that sleep restriction could be a factor that promotes obesity. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY NEWS

September 2010: Walking pace, leisure time physical activity, and resting heart rate in relation to disease-specific mortality in London: 40 years follow-up of the original Whitehall study (UK)

The objective of this study was to examine the association of leisure time physical activity, walking pace and resting heart rate with disease-specific mortality in a prospective cohort study by reporting updated analyses of an earlier report the researchers produced with the British epidemiologist, Jerry N. Morris (1910–2009). They found that higher levels of physical activity indexed by the various markers therein appeared to confer protection against a range of mortality outcomes. [Read abstract](#) in the Annals of Epidemiology.

11.08.10: Hundreds of playground schemes mothballed (UK, BBC News)

Hundreds of community playground schemes in England are being axed or scaled back because of government cuts. Education Secretary Michael Gove has frozen grants to 122 councils for building and running up to 1,300 schemes, many designed by youngsters. Only schemes where construction has already started are to be allowed. The government said it had inherited unrealistic spending commitments. [Read more](#).

04.08.10: Cities are lagging behind on cycling schemes (UK)

Major cities around Britain are still lacking proper cycling infrastructure and innovative thinking on cycling schemes, the Faculty of Public Health (FPH) has said. Cities such as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield and Edinburgh should follow the London model of a cycle hire scheme and should consider more investment in other schemes that will encourage people to cycle to work and school, said FPH Vice-President, Dr John Middleton. [Read more](#).

02.08.10: Fitness, fatness, and systolic blood pressure: Data from the Cooper Center Longitudinal Study (US)

In this study, researchers at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center assessed the relative contribution of body mass index (BMI) and cardiorespiratory fitness to SBP in a large, healthy population. When comparing lifestyle risk factors BMI and cardiorespiratory fitness, BMI was a more important factor in predicting SBP. Importantly, only modest fitness levels among normal-weight individuals were associated with the lowest systolic blood pressure estimates. [Read abstract](#) in the American Heart Journal.

20.07.10: Active play is important for children's physical activity (UK)

Active play makes a significant contribution to children's physical activity and could play an important part in the health of future generations, a new study has found. The paper, "The contribution of active play to the physical activity of primary school children" by Rowan Brockman and colleagues in the Department of Exercise, Nutrition and Health Sciences at the University of Bristol, is published in Preventive Medicine. The study has been funded by a grant from the British Heart Foundation. [Read article](#) in Preventive Medicine.

01.07.10: New FPH mental health report calls for more use of walks in parks to treat mental illness (UK)

Safe, green spaces may be as effective as prescription drugs for treating mild to moderate forms of depression and anxiety according to a new report. Whilst anti-depressants are generally most effective for the severely depressed, the report suggests that people with milder forms of depression generally improve with access to green space and open air. The report, *Great Outdoors: How Our Natural Health Service Uses Green Space to Improve Wellbeing*, also shows that living and working close to green spaces and being able to enjoy them safely can reduce crime and increase productivity in the workplace. [Read more.](#)

29.06.10: Public transport is good for your health and your wallet, according to scientists (UK, Daily Telegraph)

Taking the train, tram or bus instead of your car increases physical activity so much that the average person drops more than six pounds in as little as a year. The findings suggest that increasing the use of public transport could improve health and lower obesity levels. [Read more.](#)

28.06.10: Bicycle Riding, Walking, and Weight Gain in Premenopausal Women (US)

The objective of this research was to assess the association between bicycle riding and weight control in premenopausal women based on a 16-year follow-up study of 18,414 women in the Nurses' Health Study II. Weight change between 1989 and 2005 was the primary outcome, and the odds of gaining more than 5% of baseline body weight by 2005 was the secondary outcome. Bicycling, similar to brisk walking, was associated with less weight gain and an inverse dose response relationship exists, especially among overweight and obese women. [Read abstract](#) in the Archives of Internal Medicine.

28.06.10: Physical activity in the UK – a unique crossroad? (UK)

Recent objective evidence from England and the USA suggests that low physical activity is the most prevalent chronic disease risk factor, with 95% of the adult population not meeting the modest physical activity guidelines. In the UK, the annual cost of physical inactivity has been estimated at £8.2 billion, whereas the annual cost of smoking has been estimated at £1.5 billion, alcohol at £3.0 billion and obesity at £4.2 billion. However, despite this enormous burden on our public health and finances, the relative importance of physical inactivity as a primary cause of many chronic diseases is largely neglected within modern medicine and by health strategy. [Read abstract](#) in the British Journal of Sports Medicine.

17.06.10: Active People Survey Four: Quarter Two results (Eng)

Results from the latest four quarters of the Active People Survey (rolling 12 months), April 2009 to April 2010, can be downloaded from the listed documents. These include overall adult sport participation, and weekly participation rates in Sport England's NGB funded sports. [Read more.](#)

14.06.2010: EMHF calls on the EU to get active on sport and health (EU)

The European Men's Health Forum (EMHF) is calling on the EU and member states to mark International Men's Health Week 2010 (14-20 June) by getting active on men's health – and helping men get active too. Under the Lisbon treaty, the EU is now developing its first ever policy on sport. The EMHF are asking that it include a strong social marketing element designed to raise awareness of the link between being physically active and being healthy. [Read more.](#)

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04.06.10: One million more men: The men's health forum physical activity and sport challenge: A policy statement for National Men's Health Week 2010 (UK)

The Men's Health Forum is challenging government, the NHS, local government, sport organisations, charities and others to work together to help one million more middle-aged men in England achieve the Chief Medical Officer's minimum recommended levels of physical activity by 2012. This document outlines the Men's Health Forum's policy recommendations to tackle the problem of physical inactivity in men. [Read more.](#)

03.06.10: Physical activity levels in kids and young adults may predict future heart health (US, Medical News Today)

Young people who don't exercise enough may show early signs of cardiovascular health problems, according to a study presented at the American College of Sports Medicine's 57th Annual Meeting in Baltimore. Adults who have low levels of physical activity often have "arterial stiffness" - a precursor of cardiovascular disease development. New research finds that youth may suffer from the same condition. [Read more.](#)

29.05.10: John Treacy launches "Be Heart Wise, Take Regular Exercise" Campaign (ROI)

To help people to start to become more active to improve their heart health, the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists (ISCP) are launching their annual Move4Health Campaign, entitled "Be Heart Wise, Take Regular Exercise" on the 29th & 30th May at the National Community Games Finals in Athlone. [Read more.](#)

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RESOURCES/PUBLICATIONS

England: New from the National Obesity Observatory

[Bariatric surgery for obesity](#) – this paper describes the most commonly performed bariatric surgery procedures in the UK, and discusses the efficacy of the various forms of bariatric surgery as a treatment option for obesity. It also presents available data on levels of bariatric surgery activity in England.

[Review of dietary assessment methods in public health](#) – this report provides a descriptive summary of tools to measure dietary intake and dietary behaviours – exploring the application, reliability and validity of the various tools.

[Obesity and life expectancy](#) – this paper briefly outlines key findings of studies investigating the impact of obesity on life expectancy.

[Data Sources: knowledge of and attitudes towards healthy eating and physical activity](#) - this paper identifies and describes the main sources of national-level data on knowledge of, and attitude towards healthy eating and physical activity in adults and children in England.

[National Child Measurement Programme: Changes in children's body mass index between 2006/07 and 2008/09](#) - This report presents analysis of the first three years of National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP) data, and highlights any statistically significant differences that can be detected across survey years in the BMI of English children aged 4 to 5 and 10 to 11 years.

[Data Sources: knowledge of and attitudes towards healthy eating and physical activity](#)
This paper identifies and describes the main sources of national-level data on knowledge of, and attitude towards healthy eating and physical activity in adults and children in England. Descriptions are provided for the available sources of data, the methods used for their collection and their limitations. The focus is on data that are systematically and regularly collected from the national population and are in the public domain.

[2009/10 Quarter 4 Quality Outcomes Framework \(QOF\)](#) data released

The QOF is a voluntary annual reward and incentive programme for all GP surgeries in England. The QOF clinical register on obesity was started in 2006/7 and is based on patients

aged 16 and over with a BMI greater or equal to 30 recorded in the previous 15 months. Current prevalence figures are unadjusted by age, subject to practice and patient compliance and do not capture non-registered or non-attending patients.

England: Sport England/London Health Observatory (free login required):
[Promoting Activity Tool - Sport & Activity Planning Tool](#)

EU: Summary report of the plenary meeting of the EU platform for Diet, Physical Activity and Health, Brussels, 4 May 2010 held in Brussels on 04 May 2010 is now available. [Read report.](#)

EU: [Eight Plenary meeting of the High Level Group on Nutrition and Physical Activity, Brussels, 10 February 2010 - Summary report](#)

IOI: Healthy Food for All launches Directory of Community Food Initiatives
The aim of the [Online Directory for Community Food Initiatives](#) (CFIs) Directory is to connect all CFIs helping low-income groups across the island of Ireland. To include details about your CFI/work, you can complete an [online form](#).

IOI: safefood insights

The [third issue](#) of this quarterly newsletter from **safefood** is now available. If you would like more information about any of the articles featured, or to sign up to receive future copies of insights, please contact us by email at safefoodnewsletter@safefood.eu.

ROI: CSTAR, the Health Research Board (HRB)-funded Centre for Support and Training in Analysis and Research launches its new website - www.cstar.ie

The site provides a comprehensive source of information about CSTAR and the services offered including short courses and one-to-one statistical advice consultations. It also features many links to statistical resources that will help the health research professional build their knowledge and confidence in this specialist area.

UK: New NICE guidance on [weight management before, during and after pregnancy](#)

UK: Department of Health report - [Maximising the appeal of weight management services](#)

UK: Medical Research Council diet and physical activity measurement toolkit
Funded by the Medical Research Council, this online [diet and physical activity measurement toolkit](#) aims to assist researchers, funding bodies, and others who are interested in measuring diet and physical activity.

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[CAMPAIGNS/INITIATIVES](#)

ROI: Red Alert! Irish Heart Month, September 2010 - Heart attack and stroke combined is biggest killer in women

A new campaign to raise awareness among women of their risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) begins this September led by the Irish Heart Foundation and supported by the HSE. The campaign will focus on specific issues for women including recognition of signs and symptoms of heart attack and stroke, healthy lifestyle behaviours and appropriate management of weight, high blood pressure and high cholesterol as well as the impact of menopause on women's heart health. In 2008 nearly 5,000 Irish women died from CVD but unfortunately, as in other countries, most women remain unaware of their risk of this major

killer. For more information on Irish Heart Month visit www.irishheart.ie/goredforwomen or telephone Eimear Cotter on 01-6685001 or email heartmonth@irishheart.ie.

IOI: weigh2live...update

The next phase of advertising for the **safefood** weigh2live weight-loss website tool launched 23 August on television across the island of Ireland for four weeks. This coincides with cinema advertising and an outdoor poster campaign. Two sections for Weigh2Live on facebook are also being developed one is called *My Weigh2live* and the second is *Weigh2live Together* and both will be rolled out on September 07. In these sections people who are losing weight can either access the weigh2live tracking tools through a personalized My weigh2live tab, use their existing social networks as a private source of peer support and/or come together to discuss their experiences and encourage and support one another. An app which can be used on mobile phones is also in development which will allow people to access the tools like the diary tracker, the activity tracker etc in an easier and more efficient way. For more information visit www.safefood.eu/weigh2live.

IOI: Little steps to eating well and being active...update

The next phase of radio advertising for the Little Steps campaign with the Health Service Executive is due to commence on 27 September. This radio campaign will also coincide with television advertising for three weeks using the 2008 campaign television and radio commercials. A five-week cinema campaign, commencing 30 July and aimed at family/children's summer blockbuster films, has also been booked. Surplus campaign leaflets for Little Steps will be distributed in ROI as part of the "Which Way" education resource being developed by the HSE. For more information visit www.littlesteps.eu.

IOI: Funding available for dietitians and nutritionists

safefood is funding a limited number of applications from dietitians and nutritionists on the island of Ireland through its Nutrition Exchange Programme. This programme offers individuals the opportunity to broaden their knowledge and expertise, while the collaborative nature enhances communication and cooperation in the nutrition field. The next deadline date for applications is 15 September 2010. [Read more.](#)

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

ROI: National Nutrition Surveillance Centre recruiting Nutritionists

The NNSC is recruiting nutritionists to work on the second round of the WHO European Childhood Growth Surveillance Initiative. Nutritionists are required to carry out fieldwork in schools measuring the heights, weights and waist measurements of children. All nutritionists would be trained in anthropometric measurements and data collection that follow a standardised protocol drawn up by the WHO. This work would commence in October 2010 for a ten-week period. For further information contact Trish Heavey at patricia.heavey@ucd.ie.

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TENDERS

UK: Researchers needed for Food Standards Agency's social science research framework

The Food Standards Agency is looking for organisations and individuals to apply to be part of a framework that will carry out social science research to support the development, monitoring and evaluation of food policy. [Read more.](#)

UK: Food Standards Agency tendering for the provision of secondary analysis and advice to explore longitudinal data on food related issues (PAU 304)

The Food Standards Agency wishes to commission a project for provision of secondary analysis and advice to explore longitudinal data on food related issues. This project will advance the FSA's understanding of people's attitudes and behaviours in relation to food issues drawing on existing literature and datasets. [Read more.](#)

IOI: safefood seeks Knowledge Network Facilitators

In 2004, **safefood** established a number of research networks on specific food safety themes in order to facilitate an integrated approach to food safety research and establish a Network of food safety professionals on the island of Ireland (IOI). **safefood** now wishes to expand this approach to further enhance the integration of the food safety and food behaviour capacity on IOI. A key objective of this new approach is to maximise the potential of the networks by broadening participation to a wider range of professional groups working in the area of food safety and food behaviour on the island. [Read more.](#)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Visit the **safefood** website to view a [calendar of forthcoming events.](#)

ALL-ISLAND OBESITY ACTION FORUM MEMBERS

Full details of [members](#) can be found on the Forum page of the **safefood** website.

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