



## All-island Obesity News

E-bulletin of the All-island Obesity Action Forum  
Volume 4, Issue 2, March/April 2012

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to this edition of All-island Obesity News. I am delighted to announce that the Forum will host its next workshop on **June 19<sup>th</sup>** in **Riddel Hall, Queens University Belfast**, supported by **safefood**, the Chartered Institute of Physiotherapy Northern Ireland and the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists. The workshop will highlight overweight/obesity as a workplace health issue and showcase the workplace as an important area for the promotion of healthy eating and physical activity. The role of physiotherapists in addressing obesity will also be discussed. Keynote speakers include Professor Tom Cox from the University of Nottingham and Dr Phil Tucker, consulting editor for the 'Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health' and 'Work & Stress'. This event will provide a platform for information sharing, networking and collaboration. Programme and venue details will be circulated over the coming weeks.

As usual the first section of this bulletin contains information directly submitted by Forum members. We would ask you to circulate this among your colleagues and to share your work via this publication by submitting all relevant news items to Emily Kelleher at [obesityforum@safefood.eu](mailto:obesityforum@safefood.eu).

*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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### Update from Forum Members:

#### **Safefood**

##### - **Nutrition Take Away Series**

This February saw the publication of the latest in a series of reviews of takeaway foods and continues safefood's work in helping consumers make more informed choices when eating food that is prepared outside the home. 240 takeaway pizzas of three varieties

from 60 different outlets were analysed and found limited availability of healthier options across pizza outlets, with only 10% of those surveyed offering options such as lower-fat cheese, thin pizza base or additional vegetable toppings. Only 7% offered children's size options. In general, pizzas from take away outlets were higher in calories, salt and fat when compared to the equivalent shop bought pizza. Thin based pizza types were found to be the healthiest across all outlets whereas deep base pizzas were found to contribute significantly more calories per pizza. Read full report on **safefood** website. Read [full report](#) on [www.safefood.eu](http://www.safefood.eu).

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- **Sammy and Sally Grow together**

"Sammy and Sally Grow Together" – a storybook for pre-school children introducing them to healthy food was distributed to all crèches on the island of Ireland. It is the second book in the Sammy & Sally series and limited quantities are available from **safefood**'s helpline 1850404567 or by email to [info@safefood.eu](mailto:info@safefood.eu)

- **Takeaway My Way**

This cookery competition for post primary schools challenges students to take on their takeaway by cooking a healthier, cheaper version of their favourite takeaway dish. The competition, now in its second year, aims to get children thinking about cooking and healthy eating and gives them a creative, fun and practical way to put this into practice. Almost 900 entries were received for this year's competition which is organised with St. Angela's College Sligo. 32 finalists were selected to cook at the all island finals for a panel of judges which included award-winning chef Neven Maguire. More details are available at [www.safefood.eu/Education/Take-Away-My-Way](http://www.safefood.eu/Education/Take-Away-My-Way)

- **6<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> June 2012: The Food Health, Choice and Change Conference, Western Gateway Building, University College Cork**

**safefood**, HRB Centre for Health & Diet and Diet and the Department of Agriculture will jointly host a two day conference exploring the influences and effects of food-related behaviours on our health and discuss approaches to support positive behavioural change. Guest speakers include Jeff French, Chief Executive from Strategic Social Marketing, Martin Caraher, Professor of Food and Health Policy, City University London and Steen Stender Consultant Physician, Gentofte University Hospital. They will be joined by researchers from the island of Ireland including Professor Mary McCarthy, University College Cork and Professor Fionnuala McAuliffe, University College Dublin, who will present their latest findings in the area of food related behaviour, with an emphasis on obesity. **safefood** will also launch new consumer research providing additional insights into food behaviour For more information on the event please contact either Andrew Castles or Julie Carroll at [event@safefood.eu](mailto:event@safefood.eu)

**Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety**

The Framework for Preventing and Addressing Overweight and Obesity in Northern Ireland 2012-2022: 'A Fitter Future For All' was launched on 09 March 2012. This ten year strategy aims to empower the population of Northern Ireland to make healthy choices, reduce the risk of overweight and obesity related disease and improve health and well-being, by creating an environment that supports and promotes a physically active lifestyle and a healthy diet. One of the challenges laid out in the new strategy is to reduce the level of obesity by 4% and overweight and obesity by 3% among adults. Please see link to full report here: [A Fitter Future for All](#).

## Health Services Executive

The [www.getirelandactive.ie](http://www.getirelandactive.ie) website has been shortlisted for 3 categories in the eGovernment Awards and the winners will be announced at an Awards Ceremony in Dublin Castle on April 25<sup>th</sup>. The website, which is a one stop shop for physical activity, was launched in October last year and is going from strength to strength ever since. The event search is proving particularly popular with club members, facilities and organisations posting details of their training and events for free on the site.

## Irish Sports Council (ISC)

### - Sports Council Challenge

The Irish Sports Council are running a corporate challenge in May – get your company involved and get your staff more active this summer. Your company could be in with a chance to win a Sports Council Challenge Award! Sign up before April 23<sup>rd</sup>

[http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Participation/Sports\\_Council\\_Challenge/](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Participation/Sports_Council_Challenge/)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRV\\_uqe-1ks](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WRV_uqe-1ks)

### - An Post Cycle Series

Get on your bike this summer and try a fun cycling event – 5 different events around the country with various distances to suit all ages and abilities! Over 13,000 people took part last year. In 2012 the series will take place in Sligo (May 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>), Clare (June 23<sup>rd</sup>), Meath (July 29<sup>th</sup>), Waterford (August 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>) and Cork (September 15<sup>th</sup>).

[http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Participation/An\\_Post\\_Cycle\\_Series/](http://www.irishsportsCouncil.ie/Participation/An_Post_Cycle_Series/)  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEINCGI0C\\_M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UEINCGI0C_M)

## Sports Northern Ireland

The Activ8 2012 programme has now been launched by Sport NI! Everything in this year's Activ8 2012 programme is available **free of charge** for registered schools. The **new website** will allow schools, teachers, children and parents to access information, tips, games and challenges on how to get active, eat well and stay healthy. The **Activ8 Road to London online challenge** encourages schools and individuals to complete the 8,000 mile Road to London via the Torch Relay Route from Land's End to the Olympic Stadium in London. Finally, the **Olympic Challenge Road Show** team is available to visit registered schools providing an opportunity for children to try out and to learn about Olympic sports. To get involved in Activ8 2012, visit the new and fully interactive website at: [www.activ8ni.net](http://www.activ8ni.net) and get ready for the Road to London challenge which starts on 23 April 2012.

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## CAWT – Cooperation and Working Together

### - Opportunity for families to get healthier, fitter and happier together!

The EU INTERREG IVA CAWT Obesity Project is calling on families who want to get healthier, fitter and happier to get in touch. These programmes are fun, action filled and free! All you have to do is contact the organisation below to register your interest. The programmes are for families with children under 5 years and 8-11years. Since September 2011 we have had 78 families through these programmes across the CAWT area. Families have experienced a range of support on healthy eating (e.g. Cook It, supermarket tours, shopping on a budget) and have taken part in a range of activities (e.g. games, group cycling, gymnastics, cardio kickboxing, water games, interactive quizzes, etc.).

Participants find the programme fun and energising. Parents have said that it has allowed them to get organised and active as a family. They have also said that it has made them aware of facilities and activities in their area, which they were not aware of before.

Call now to book a place:

- Craigavon/Lurgan area contact Diane Boyd, Early Years, on 07791334012 or [diane@early-years.org](mailto:diane@early-years.org)

- Or for more information log on to [www.early-years.org/health/](http://www.early-years.org/health/)
- Letterkenny area contact Finghin McClafferty, Letterkenny Youth & Family Service (LYFS) on 00353 (0) 749123078 or [lyfsmeet@gmail.com](mailto:lyfsmeet@gmail.com)
  - Creggan, Waterside and Omagh areas contact George McGowan, Old Library Trust 028 71373879 or [George@olt.ie](mailto:George@olt.ie)
  - Cavan and Monaghan towns and Bailieborough area contact Colette Quigley, Border Counties Childhood Network on 086 7307304 or [Colette.quigley@hse.ie](mailto:Colette.quigley@hse.ie). Or for further information log on to [www.bccn.ie](http://www.bccn.ie)

### **Nutrition and Health Foundation**

#### **- Eat Smart week 2<sup>nd</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

The NHF with MyKidsTime.ie unveiled a Free eBook to mark NHF Eat Smart Week 2012. This Free eBook is the result of an online competition held jointly by the NHF and MyKidsTime.ie in to unveil the healthiest and family friendliest recipes around Ireland. Entrants were encouraged to upload their recipes online where the best seven recipes were handpicked as the simplest yet most nutritious meals for busy parents managing young families. Fronting the campaign launch, busy mum Miriam O'Callaghan unveiled that her family favourite is Char grilled Chicken, Roast Carrots with Orange and Raisin salad. For parents looking to try their hand at Miriam's favourite dish, her recipe is available to download at <http://mykidstime.ie/d/food-recipes/family-recipes>

#### **- Waterford Festival of Food**

This year's [Waterford Festival of Food](#), Dungarvan, is teaming up with the NHF to host a day of free nutrition workshops on Friday 13th April featuring dietitians, and healthy lifestyle role models.

The nutrition workshops, which take place in the Town Hall, Dungarvan, will guide festival goers on how to achieve and maintain a healthy lifestyle through nutritious food and active living. The workshops are a new feature of the festival which is in its fifth year and which takes place from April 12th to 15th. The day will be split into three free workshops covering the themes Ageing with Good Health, Family Health & Nutrition from Tots to Teens, and Making life better at Work and in your Community.

#### **- Kids Size Me Awards**

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The 2012 Irish Restaurant Awards sees the Kids Size Me initiative\* being included as one of the seven primary awards categories. Nominations for the award were made by the public and also the industry sector. For the Kids Size Me awards, there will be regional winners and all Ireland winner. The All Ireland awards are taking place on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May in Dublin. Members of the NHF are the judges for this award.

### **General News**

#### **28.03.2012: Influence of peers and friends on children's and adolescents' eating and activity behaviours.**

In this article, the authors synthesize the empirical evidence on the influence of peers and friends on youth's eating and physical activity. They argue that the involvement of children's and adolescents' peer networks in prevention and intervention efforts may be critical for promoting and maintaining positive behavioural health trajectories. However, further theoretical and empirical work is needed to better understand the specific mechanisms underlying the effects of peers on youth's eating and physical activity. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**02.04.2012: Practice nurses and obesity: professional and practice-based factors affecting role adequacy and role legitimacy. (UK)**

This qualitative study explored the professional and practice-based factors affecting the role legitimacy and adequacy of practice nurses in managing obese patients. Factors that positively affected nurses' role adequacy and legitimacy were: their belief that obesity management was part of their chronic disease management and health promotion remit; their confidence in their own communication skills and ability to build rapport with patients; having attended training and being supported to take extra time for obesity management. Factors negatively affecting their role legitimacy and adequacy were: their low awareness and use of guidance; lack of knowledge of referral options; limited knowledge and use of non-medical and non-persuasive approaches; perceived lack of expertise in motivating patients, as well as in nutrition, child obesity and assessment; lack of culturally appropriate materials and language barriers; belief that they had limited impact on outcome and that the patient is responsible for lack of success. Read [abstract](#) in Cambridge journals online.

**22.03.12: Associations between eating frequency, adiposity, diet, and activity in healthy weight and centrally obese children 9-10 years (UK)**

The aims of the current study were to determine whether increased eating frequency was associated with improved adiposity in children, and if this was due to differences in dietary and activity behaviours. Cross-sectional data from 1700 9-10-year-olds were analysed to examine associations between eating frequency estimated from diet diaries, measures of adiposity, and activity. Mean eating frequency was 4.3 occasions/day and after adjustment for under-reporting, energy intake, and activity significant relative mean differences of -2.4% for body weight, -1.0% for BMI per increase in eating occasion were found in healthy weight but not centrally obese children. Read [abstract](#) in Pub Med.

**05.04.2012: Depressive symptoms are associated with weight gain among women.**

This study examined whether baseline depressive symptoms are associated with changes in weight, whether baseline adiposity is associated with changes in depressive symptoms, and whether these associations vary by sex. Results showed that women who experience symptoms of depression tend to gain more weight across adulthood than men who experience such symptoms. Whether an individual was normal weight or overweight was unrelated to changes in depressive symptoms across adulthood. Read [abstract](#) in Cambridge journals online.

**March 2012: Accuracy of weight perception, life-style behaviours and psychological distress among overweight and obese adolescents (Australia)**

This study uses a cross-sectional survey of high school students in, conducted in 2008 (n= 7553). Nearly a third of adolescents had incongruity between self-perceived body weight status and body mass index-determined weight category. Compared with boys, girls were less likely to underestimate their body weight (OR: 0.26; 95% CI: 0.25, 0.27) and more likely to overestimate their body weight (OR: 3.4; 95% CI: 3.3, 3.5). Accurate weight perception among overweight and obese adolescents was associated with increased odds of feeling sad or depressed in the past 6months. Read [abstract](#) in Pub Med.

**February 2012: Consumer response to healthy eating, physical activity and weight-related recommendations: a systematic review (Australia)**

The aim of this review was to examine consumer response to weight related guidelines. Most studies examined attitudes towards content, source, tailoring and comprehension of dietary guidelines. Many respondents reported that guidelines were confusing, and that simple, clear, specific, realistic, and in some cases, tailored guidelines are required. Recognition of guidelines did not signify understanding nor did perceived credibility of a source guarantee utilization of guidelines. Read [abstract](#) in Pub Med.

**February 2012: A longitudinal examination of childhood maltreatment and adolescent obesity: Results from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (AddHealth) Study.**

This study aimed to explore the association between childhood maltreatment (e.g., neglect, physical and sexual abuse) and longitudinal growth trajectories of BMI from adolescence to young adulthood. Future research should examine potential mediators or moderators of the longitudinal relation between childhood neglect and adolescent and young adult obesity including impulsivity, depression, and compulsive eating behavior. Read [full text](#) in Elsevier.

**02.04.2012: Short Message Service Reduces Dropout in Childhood Obesity Treatment: A Randomized Controlled Trial.**

The aim of this study was to examine the effect of a Short Message Service (SMS) approach aimed at improving treatment results and reducing dropout rates in a pediatric lifestyle intervention. Results indicate that SMS maintenance treatment (SMSMT) is effective in reducing dropout rates from a pediatric lifestyle intervention. Future research should examine the effectiveness of SMSMT on weight management and related psychosocial variables. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**January 2012: Childhood obesity: parents fail to recognise, general practitioners fail to act. (Republic of Ireland)**

General Practitioners (GPs) have an important role to play in recognition of and intervention against childhood obesity in Ireland. Data were collected prospectively on a cohort of children aged 4-14 and their parents who attended consecutively to a semi-rural group general practice. BMI was only evidently recorded in the clinical records of 1 out of 15 cases of overweight children identified. With parents failing to recognise childhood obesity, GPs have a responsibility in tackling this problem at a family level. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**January 2012: Fitter, healthier, happier families: A partnership to treat Childhood obesity in the West Midlands. (UK)**

The UK Department of Health in the West Midlands (DHWM) with local partners commissioned the MEND (Mind, Exercise, Nutrition. Do it!) 7-13 Programme. The aim was to provide effective and evidence-based obesity treatment programmes, training and resources, whilst working alongside partners from the private, public, voluntary and academic sectors to make services available at a community level on the widest possible scale. MEND is dedicated to reducing global overweight and obesity levels by helping children and their families become fitter, healthier and happier. Read more about the [programme](#) in ELSEVIER. [Go to Top](#)

**08.03.2012: Consumer response to healthy eating, physical activity and weight-related recommendations: a systematic review**

A systematic review was carried out to examine consumer response to weight-related guidelines. Many respondents reported that guidelines were confusing, and that simple, clear, specific, realistic, and in some cases, tailored guidelines are required. There was a lack of studies assessing: the impact of guidelines on behaviour; responses to physical activity guidelines; responses among males and studies undertaken in developing countries. Read [abstract](#) in the Wiley Online Library.

**08.03.2012: Serial Childhood Body Mass Index and Associations with Adult Hypertension and Obesity: the Fels Longitudinal Study.**

This study used data from male and female participants in the Fels Longitudinal Study to estimate childhood BMI growth curves, from which we isolate ages of childhood BMI divergence based upon adult BMI and blood pressure measurements. Study results suggest that Participants with lower bodyweight throughout childhood had lower systolic and diastolic blood pressures in early adulthood. Any relationships between childhood

adiposity and adult bodyweight and blood pressure disappeared by age 60. Read [abstract](#) in Obesity.

**19.02.2012: Psychosocial risk factors, weight changes and risk of obesity: the Copenhagen City Heart Study. (Denmark)**

The purpose of the study was to establish the effects of a range of psychosocial factors on weight changes and risk of obesity. The experience of major life events in childhood, work life and adult life was found to be associated with weight gain and obesity in women, but not in men. Vital exhaustion also seemed to play a role in weight gain and risk of obesity, especially in women. Read [abstract](#) through SpringerLink.

**08.02.2012: Genetic and Environmental Contributions to Weight, Height, and BMI from Birth to 19 Years of Age: An International Study of Over 12,000 Twin Pairs.**

This cross-sectional study examined the genetic and environmental influences on variances in weight, height, and BMI, from birth through 19 years of age, in boys and girls from three continents. Approximately 24,036 children were included in the analyses. Genetics appear to play an increasingly important role in explaining the variation in weight, height, and BMI from early childhood to late adolescence, particularly in boys. These findings emphasize the need to target family and social environmental interventions in early childhood years, especially for females. Read [full text](#) in PubMed.

**November 2011: Treating childhood obesity in primary care.**

The objective of this prospective, cohort study was to assess an intervention for obese children (9-12 years of age) and their families delivered in primary care. The treatment consisted of a calorie goal, self-monitoring of daily food intake, physical activity and sedentary behavior, and other behavior change skills. The study authors concluded that primary care is an appropriate place to identify and treat children with obesity. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**20.02.2012: What factors are associated with excess body weight in Australian secondary school students? Australia.**

This cross-sectional survey aimed to examine the prevalence of overweight and obesity in Australian secondary school students and identify factors associated with excess adiposity. Data were analysed for 12 188 students. Students engaging in low levels of physical activity (OR, 1.21; 95% CI, 1.08-1.36; P = 0.001), more time in small-screen recreation (OR, 1.18; 95% CI, 1.05-1.32; P = 0.005), and short sleep duration (OR, 1.22; 95% CI, 1.05-1.41; P = 0.008) also had higher odds of being overweight or obese. Read [full text](#) from Medical Journal Australia. [Go to Top](#)

**November 2011: BMI and attitudes and beliefs about physical activity and nutrition of parents of adolescents with intellectual disabilities.**

The purpose of this study was: (1) to evaluate the beliefs, attitudes and behaviours associated with nutrition and physical activity of parents with adolescents with intellectual disabilities (ID); (2) to determine if these variables related to the body mass index (BMI) of the adolescents and the parents' BMI; and (3) to investigate if the parents' perception of their child's weight status was accurate. Results suggested that efforts need to be made to provide parents of adolescents with ID tailored information about how they can assist their child in managing their weight. This information should emphasise to parents the important part they play as role models and as providers for healthy choices for physical activity as well as nutrition. Read [abstract](#) on Wiley Online Library.

**15.02.2012: The Association between Ante- and Postnatal Depressive Symptoms and Obesity in Both Mother and Child: A Systematic Review of the Literature.**

9 studies examined the association between postnatal depressive symptoms and maternal obesity; three were cross-sectional and six were longitudinal. 5 studies were found examining ante- and postnatal depressive symptoms and childhood obesity, four longitudinal and one cross-sectional. Further longitudinal and prospective research, incorporating objective measures of BMI and validated measures of depression, is warranted. Read [abstract](#) in Science Direct.

**17.02.2012: Views of the Scottish general public on community pharmacy weight management services: international implications. Scotland**

This cross-sectional study was carried out to describe the views of the Scottish general public on the provision of weight management services via community pharmacies. Overall, results found that respondents appear to be receptive to the idea of accessing weight management services through community pharmacy but a perceived lack of privacy, poor knowledge of pharmacists' skill level and of public health services available to them may explain the reluctance in the uptake of such services to date. Read [abstract](#) via SpringerLink.

**February 2012: What is the clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of using drugs in treating obese patients in primary care? A systematic review.**

This review was carried out to evaluate the clinical effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of three pharmacological interventions in obese patients. Overall, the results show that the active drug interventions are all effective at reducing weight and BMI compared with placebo. The economic results show that, compared with placebo, the treatments are all cost-effective when using a threshold of £20,000 per QALY, and, within the limitations of the data available, sibutramine 15 mg dominates the other three interventions. Read [full text](#) from Health Technology Assessment.

**28.02.2012: Carers' perspectives of a weight loss intervention for adults with intellectual disabilities and obesity: a qualitative study. (Scotland)**

This qualitative study explored perceptions of carers supporting adults with ID, as they participated in a 6-month multi-component weight loss intervention using semi-structured questionnaires. It identified specific facilitators and barriers experienced by carers during the process of supporting obese adults with ID to lose weight. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**27.02.2012: UK obesity: Is diet or surgery the best cure? – BBC News, UK.**

With one in 30 of the UK population now classed as morbidly obese, the NHS is spending increasing amounts on weight-loss stomach surgery. While some NHS trusts continue to fund such surgeries for people with life-threatening obesity, others prefer to take a different approach. Read [full article](#) on BBC news website. [Go to Top](#)

**January-February 2012: Weighing the evidence for an association between obesity and suicide risk.**

This review looked at the heterogeneous data concerning the relationship between obesity and suicide, while also critically examining recent reports describing the incidence of fatal suicide events after bariatric surgery. Authors suggest that a positive association between obesity and suicide has been observed more frequently than a negative or absent association. This implies that obese individuals are indeed at an increased risk of suicide. This risk seems to persist despite treatment of obesity with bariatric surgery. Read [full text](#) in Elsevier.

**24.02.2012: Waist circumference adjusted for body mass index and intra-abdominal fat mass.**

This study studied the prediction of abdominal subcutaneous fat mass (ASFM) and IAFM by WC alone and by addition of BMI as an explanatory factor. Authors concluded that the prediction of IAFM by WC is not improved by addition of BMI. Read [full text](#) in PLOS one.

**01.03.2012: The application of an occupational health guideline reduces sedentary behaviour and increases fruit intake at work: results from an RCT.**

This RCT was carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of a draft occupational health practice guideline aimed at preventing weight gain on employees' physical activity, sedentary behaviour and dietary behaviour and on body weight-related outcomes. The intervention showed significant effects on sedentary behaviour at work and on fruit intake. No significant intervention effects were found for physical activity, sedentary behaviour in leisure time or during weekend days, snack intake and body weight-related outcomes. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**January 2012: Effect of obesity on falls, injury, and disability.**

The aim of this longitudinal population based study was to examine the effect of obesity on the inclination of older adults to fall, sustain a fall-related injury, and develop disability in activities of daily living (ADLs) after a fall. Results showed that obesity appears to be associated with greater risk of falling in older adults, as well as a higher risk of greater ADL disability after a fall. Obesity (BMI  $\geq 40$  kg/m<sup>2</sup>) may reduce the risk of injury from a fall. Further investigation of the mechanisms of obesity on falls and related health outcomes is warranted. Read [full text](#) in Wiley online journals.

**January 2012: Preventing and treating childhood obesity: time to target fathers. (Australia)**

This longitudinal Study of Australian Children (LSAC) examined the long-term effects of having one overweight or obese parent on child weight status and determine whether these effects vary according to parent sex. Results showed that parent body mass index (BMI) was significantly correlated with child BMI, but there was no evidence of sex-specific associations between parent and child BMI correlations. It also reported that children with overweight or obese fathers are at a higher risk of becoming obese. This suggests that interventions are urgently required to test the efficacy of treating overweight fathers as a key strategy for childhood obesity prevention and/or treatment. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**29.02.2012: Occupational burnout, eating behavior, and weight among working women.**

This RCT aimed to investigate associations between occupational burnout, eating behaviour, and weight among working women. It found that women experiencing burnout at baseline had significantly higher scores in emotional eating (EE;  $P = 0.002$ ) and uncontrolled eating (UE;  $P = 0.001$ ) than did those without burnout. Read [abstract](#) in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition.

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**29.02.2012: The effect of current and lifetime alcohol consumption on overall and central obesity. (Portugal)**

This study, involving 2366 participants, was carried out to evaluate the association between current and lifetime alcohol consumption, and overall and central obesity in adults of an urban Portuguese population. Results showed that independent of social and behavioural features, current and lifetime alcohol consumption were positively associated with overall and central obesity, in both women and men. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**November 2011: Screening for obesity in reproductive-aged women.**

Although obesity screening and treatment are recommended by the US Preventive Services Task Force, 1 in 5 women are obese when they conceive. Although obesity

screening has not been studied specifically in women of reproductive age, there are compelling reasons to prioritize screening in this population. Women of childbearing age who are obese are at increased risk of infertility, miscarriage, and other adverse pregnancy outcomes. Authors concluded that screening of reproductive-aged women is an essential part of broadening efforts to reduce the effect of the obesity epidemic. Read [full text](#) in Preventing Chronic Disease.

**January 2012: Childhood obesity and risk of the adult metabolic syndrome: a systematic review.**

This systematic review aimed to investigate the relationship between childhood obesity and a range of metabolic risk factors during adult life. Little evidence was found to support the view that childhood obesity is an independent risk factor for adult blood lipid status, insulin levels, metabolic syndrome or type 2 diabetes. The majority of studies failed to adjust for adult BMI and therefore the associations observed may reflect the tracking of BMI across the lifespan. Read [full text](#) in International Journal of Obesity.

**[Nutrition News](#)**

**February 2012: Predictors of nutrition label viewing during food purchase decision making: an eye tracking investigation.**

This study monitored adults viewing sixty-four food items on a computer equipped with an eye-tracking camera as they made simulated food purchasing decisions. Participants looked longer at labels for 'meal' items like pizza, soup and yoghurt compared with fruits and vegetables, snack items like crackers and nuts, and dessert items like ice cream and cookies. Nutrition label viewing is related to food purchasing, and labels are viewed more when a food's healthfulness is ambiguous. Read [abstract](#) in Cambridge Journals.

**February 2012: Improving the effectiveness of nutritional information policies: assessment of unconscious pleasure mechanisms involved in food-choice decisions.**

In this review, research in cognitive experimental psychology and neuroscience provides the basis for a critical analysis of the role of pleasure in eating behaviours. An assessment of the main characteristics of nutritional policies is provided, followed by recent findings showing that food choices are guided primarily by automatic emotional processes. Read [abstract](#) on Wiley Online Library.

**September 2011: Assessing food appeal and desire to eat: the effects of portion size & energy density.**

Study authors investigated the subjective ratings for food appeal and desire to eat when exposed to food pictures in a fed sample (n=129) using the computer paradigm ImageRate. Results support the hypothesis that individuals differentiate between food appeal and desire to eat foods when assessing these ratings using the same type of metric. Read [full text](#) in International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity.

**February 2012: Association between eating out of home and body weight.**

Food choices when eating out are usually high in energy content, which contributes to excessive energy intake. This systematic review assesses the association between out-of-home eating and body weight in adults over 18 years of age. All but one of the prospective cohort studies and about half of the cross-sectional analyses found a positive association between out-of-home eating and body weight. The results of the present analysis suggest that in future studies fast-food restaurants and other out-of-home dining venues should be analyzed separately, assessments based on a single 24-h recall should be avoided, and controls for at-home choices (which were not included in any of the studies reviewed) are necessary to evaluate this association. Read [abstract](#) on Wiley Online Library.

**15.03.2012: The availability of snack food displays that may trigger impulse purchases in Melbourne supermarkets. (Australia)**

This study aimed to examine the availability of snack food displays at checkouts, end-of-aisle displays and island displays in major supermarket chains in the least and most socioeconomically disadvantaged neighbourhoods of Melbourne. As a result of the high availability of snack food displays, exposure to snack foods is almost unavoidable in Melbourne supermarkets, regardless of levels of neighbourhood socioeconomic disadvantage. Results of this study could promote awareness of the prominence of unhealthy food items in chain-brand supermarkets outlets. Read [full text](#) in BioMed Central.

**August 2011: Where has all the chocolate gone? A national survey assesses the effects of recent legislation to improve the nutritional quality of English secondary-school vending. (UK)**

This study assessed the effect of the Government legislation of 2007 on improving the quality of school food. The study found that this legislation has achieved significant change towards improving the quality of English school vending, with the unintended consequence of reducing provision. Read [abstract](#) in Cambridge journals.

**26.01.2012: Nutrition standards in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. Final rule. (US)**

This final rule requires most schools to increase the availability of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free and low-fat fluid milk in school meals; reduce the levels of sodium, saturated fat and trans fat in meals; and meet the nutrition needs of school children within their calorie requirements. They are expected to enhance the diet and health of school children, and help mitigate the childhood obesity trend. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

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**December 2011: Parental feeding behaviours and motivations. A qualitative study in mothers of UK pre-schoolers. (UK)**

Parental feeding behaviours are considered major influences on children's eating behaviour. This study obtained interview and diary data on specific feeding behaviours and underlying motivations from 22 mothers of predominantly healthy weight 3-5 y olds in the UK. These findings suggest that in order to engage parents of currently healthy weight children, obesity prevention advice should aim to satisfy their primary motivations (practicality, health), and be framed as helping parents to respond sensitively and appropriately to different children's characteristics. Read [abstract](#) in Elsevier.

**February 2012: Socio-economic differences in takeaway food consumption among adults.**

This cross-sectional survey aimed to examine socio-economic differences in the frequency and types of takeaway foods consumed. Compared with their more educated counterparts, the least educated were more regular consumers of overall takeaway food and fruit or vegetable juice and less regular consumers of sushi. For the 'less healthy' items, the least educated more regularly consumed potato chips, savoury pies, fried chicken and non-diet soft drinks; however, the least educated were less likely to consume curry. Read [abstract](#) in Cambridge Journals.

**[Physical Activity](#)**

**February 2012: Weight status associations with physical activity intensity and physical self-perceptions in 10- to 11-year-old children (UK)**

The study examined associations between children's weight status, physical activity intensity, and physical self-perceptions. Data were obtained from 409 children (224 girls) aged 10-11 years categorized as normal-weight or overweight/obese. After

controlling for the effects of age, maturation, and socioeconomic status vigorous physical activity was significantly associated with normal-weight status among boys (OR = 1.13,  $p = .01$ ) and girls (OR = 1.13,  $p = .03$ ). Read [abstract](#) in Pub Med.

**March 2012: Physical activity in sleep apnea and obesity-personal incentives, challenges, and facilitators for success.**

The purpose of this study was to explore aspects of engagement in physical activity in persons with obstructive sleep apnea and overweight. The identified challenges and facilitators concerned a spectrum of emotional and contextual aspects, as well as diseases and physical symptoms. Read [abstract](#) in Taylor & Francis online.

**September 2011: Systematic review of sedentary behaviour and health indicators in school-aged children and youth.**

The aim of this systematic review was to determine the relationship between sedentary behaviour and health indicators in school-aged children and youth aged 5-17 years. 232 studies including 983,840 participants were included in the review. Results show that watching TV for more than 2 hours per day was associated with unfavourable body composition, decreased fitness, lowered scores for self-esteem and pro-social behaviour and decreased academic achievement. It concluded that there is a large body of evidence from all study designs which suggests that decreasing any type of sedentary time is associated with lower health risk in youth aged 5-17 years. Read [full text](#) in International Journal of Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity.

**November 2011: Treadmill workstations: a worksite physical activity intervention in overweight and obese office workers.**

This study was undertaken to determine if a treadmill-workstation (TMWS) increases physical activity (PA) and influences anthropometric, body composition, cardiovascular, and metabolic variables in overweight and obese office-workers. It was found that the additional PA energy expenditure from using the TMWS favourably influenced waist and hip circumferences and lipid and metabolic profiles in overweight and obese office-workers. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**March 2012: The Elasticity of Time: Associations Between Physical Activity and Use of Time in Adolescents.**

The purpose of this article was to examine the cross-sectional cross-elasticity relationships for use of time domains in a sample of Australian adolescents. Every additional hour committed to physical activity was associated with 32 minutes less screen time. This relationship was more pronounced in obese adolescents (-56 minutes screen time) compared with normal (-31 minutes) and overweight (-27 minutes) adolescents. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

**November 2011: Physical (in) activity over 20 y in adulthood: associations with adult lipid levels in the 1958 British birth cohort. (UK)**

Data from the 1958 British birth cohort ( $n=7824$ ) were examined to investigate associations between physical (in)activity at different life-stages and lipids in mid-adulthood, examining the role of potential confounding and mediating factors, such as adiposity. The study concluded that activity and sedentary behaviour at different adult ages were associated with HDL-cholesterol and triglycerides in mid-adulthood. Associations were partly mediated by other life-style factors and by BMI. Read [abstract](#) in atherosclerosis.

**14.12.2011: Physical activity, walking and leanness: An analysis of the Northern Ireland Sport and Physical Activity Survey (SAPAS).** Northern Ireland. 4563 adults participated in this cross-sectional survey of physical activity behaviour. In addition to increasing the amount of walking and the percentage of people walking regularly, public health messages encouraging an increase in walking pace may be

valuable to increase the proportion of the population meeting physical activity guidelines and gaining associated health benefits. Read [abstract](#) from Science Direct .

### **February 2012: Interaction of perceived neighborhood walkability and self-efficacy on physical activity.**

This cross-sectional study investigated the interaction of self-efficacy and perceived neighbourhood walkability in predicting neighbourhood-based physical activity and how this relationship varied by gender and body mass index. Participants completed a detailed 7-day physical activity log booklet, along with a questionnaire that included measures of neighbourhood walkability, self-efficacy, and several socio-demographic items. It was concluded that physical activity research and promotion efforts should take into account both environmental and personal factors and the interrelationships between them that influence active living. Read [abstract](#) in PubMed.

## **Resources/Publications**

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### **Overweight and obese adults - lifestyle weight management**

The National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) are developing new guidelines on lifestyle management services for overweight and obese adults and children and young people. The guidance will be developed using the NICE public health programme process. The expected date of issue for the guidance is October 2013. Further information is available from the [NICE website](#).

### **February 2012: Obesity and Alcohol: and overview.**

This paper aims to provide a brief overview of current understanding of the key issues related to obesity and alcohol in the following areas:

- Alcohol consumption and energy intake
- Patterns and levels of drinking
- Alcohol, obesity and liver cirrhosis
- Alcohol dependency and obesity
- Obesity, alcohol and gender.

Read [full report](#) from National Obesity Observatory.

## **Forthcoming Events**

**24<sup>th</sup> April 2012:** Royal College of Physicians of Ireland, No. 6 Kildare Street, Dublin 2. [Clinical Updates: Obesity](#). The Royal College of Physicians of Ireland is pleased to announce the next Clinical Update meeting in Obesity. The programme will include the following topics:

- Obesity - the imperative for prevention
- Beyond BMI - how to clinically assess the obese patients
- What therapeutic options should we use to manage severe obesity?
- Managing overweight and obesity in primary care

**26 April 2012:** Early Years – the organisation for young children is offering families the chance to take part in a fantastic, **FREE**, 12 week 'UP4IT' programme, known locally as the Family Health Initiative. This programme encourages families with children aged 8-11 to eat healthier and become more active together. The next programme will commence on the 26<sup>th</sup> April in Thomas Street Methodist Hall, Portadown, at 6.00pm. To find out more about this programme and book your space, please call Diane Boyd on

07791 334012 or the Early Years office on 028 8554 9416 or check the following link <http://www.early-years.org/health/8-11.php>

**11<sup>th</sup> May 2012: *Growing Up in Ireland*** will host a Data Workshop to promote and support the use of **both** the Child Cohort and Infant Cohort datasets on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2012 from 10am to 1pm at the offices of the Economic and Social Research Institute in Dublin. Those interested in attending should contact [guiworkshop@esri.ie](mailto:guiworkshop@esri.ie) and *indicate which dataset, Child Cohort (9 Years) or Infant Cohort (9 Months) they are most interested in*. Places are strictly limited and allocated on a 'first-come first-served' basis. There is no registration fee for the workshop.

**19<sup>th</sup> September 2012:** the Nutrition and Health Foundation will be hosting its 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar in the Gibson Hotel. More details will be circulated when available.

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

### **All Island Obesity Action Forum Members**

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