



All-island Obesity News

E-bulletin of the All-island Obesity Action Forum
Volume 2, Issue 6, November/December 2010

Dear colleagues,

This edition marks the second anniversary of the All-island Obesity Action Forum. During the past year we have seen our membership grow further and become more diverse; we have hosted two very successful meetings and workshops on the topics of partnership and evaluation; and we have also shared and disseminated information through this e-bulletin. Efforts continue to tackle obesity on the island. We welcome the consultation on *A Fitter Future For All - An Obesity Prevention Framework for Northern Ireland 2011-2021* and would encourage all stakeholders to participate in it.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas and best wishes for 2011. Thank you for your continued support for the Forum.

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](#)

A Fitter Future For All - An Obesity Prevention Framework for Northern Ireland 2011-2021 is currently out for [consultation](#). 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

January 2011: Passport to health: an innovative tool to enhance healthy lifestyle choices (US)

The Obesity Task Force, in the Strong Pediatric Practice at Golisano Children's Hospital, which comprises four nurse practitioners, two nurses, a nutritionist, and one physician, developed and implemented the "Passport to Health" tool in an attempt to encourage providers to assess and work with families around the issues of weight and activity, a need that was identified through chart audits. [Read abstract](#) in J Pediatr Health Care.

09.12.10: European Union public opinion on policy measures to address childhood overweight and obesity (EU)

Results of this study suggest strong consistency among EU countries in support for two policies: providing information to parents and more physical activity in schools. For reducing childhood obesity, more physical activity in schools received the most support followed by education and advertising restrictions. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of Public Health Policy.

01.12.10: The effect of parental feeding behaviours and participation of children in organized sports/activities on child body mass index (Canada)

In this cross-sectional descriptive study, researchers explored the relationship of parental feeding practices and child physical activity levels with measured body mass index (BMI) in a sample of 97 Ontario preschoolers. They conclude this study suggests an association between BMI and parental perceptions, concerns, and practices related to child feeding and organized sports or activities. [Read abstract](#) in Can J Diet Pract Res.

16.12.10: Social influences are associated with BMI and weight loss intentions in young adults (US)

This study examined: (i) whether obesity clusters among young adults and whether social norms do in fact account for the clustering, and (ii) among overweight/obese (OW/OB) young adults, whether number of social contacts trying to lose weight is associated with weight loss intentions and whether social norms for weight loss account for this effect. [Read abstract](#) in Obesity.

15.12.10: Variation in childhood and adolescent obesity prevalence defined by international and country-specific criteria in England and the United States (UK)

The objective of this study was to compare childhood obesity prevalence in England and the United States using different criteria. Participants included 2- to 17-year olds in the Health Survey for England (HSE, n=33,563) and the US National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES, n=14,540) 1999 through 2006. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

08.12.10: Implementation progress report of the Strategy for Europe on nutrition, overweight and obesity related health issues published (EU)

In 2007, the European Commission committed to carry out a review of progress in 2010 on obesity status and on the extent to which its own policies have been brought in line with the objectives of the Strategy (2007-2013). This report aims at taking stock of progress made until now in light of the renewal of the Strategy's objectives until its conclusion in 2013. [Read more.](#)

07.12.10: CMACE releases results of national enquiry into maternal obesity (UK)

The Centre for Maternal and Child Enquiries (CMACE) releases its report *Maternal obesity in the UK: Findings from a national project* after its three-year UK-wide national enquiry into Obesity in Pregnancy. [Read more](#).

07.12.10: Girls more likely than boys to be overweight at age 7 (UK)

Institute of Education researchers who have been monitoring the weights of more than 11,000 UK children born between 2000 and 2002 have calculated that girls are almost 50 per cent more likely than boys to be too heavy at age 7. About one in four girls (23%) was overweight at this age, compared with just over one in six boys (18%). [Read more](#).

06.12.10: HSE launches bariatric medicine service in Galway (ROI)

A dedicated bariatric medicine service for people from the west of Ireland with severe overweight and obesity has been officially launched at Galway University Hospital. Over the last number of years, the hospital has developed a programme for the management of patients with severe obesity requiring medical and surgical intervention. [Read more](#).

02.12.10: Perceived weight status, overweight diagnosis, and weight control among US adults: the NHANES 2003-2008 Study (US)

The aim of this study was to examine the association between perceived overweight status and weight control, discrepancies between perceived and measured weight status, and opportunities for health care professionals (HCPs) to correct weight perception among US adults. The authors conclude that HCPs have unused opportunities to motivate their patients to control and possibly lose weight. [Read advance online abstract](#) in Int. J. of Ob.

02.12.10: Body-Mass Index and Mortality among 1.46 Million White Adults (US)

Researchers found that, in white adults, overweight and obesity (and possibly underweight) are associated with increased all-cause mortality. All-cause mortality was generally lowest with a BMI of 20.0 to 24.9. [Read abstract](#) in NEJM.

01.12.10: Tailored mobile phone text messages as an adjunct to obesity treatment for adolescents.

Researchers examined the use of tailored messages sent to the mobile phones of obese adolescents enrolled in a weight-management programme, as a means of increasing adherence. Interviews revealed that participants were enthusiastic about the intervention and most found the messages to be personally relevant. [Read abstract](#) in Telemed Telecare.

December 2010: Self-perception of weight and its association with weight-related behaviours in young, reproductive-aged women (US)

Researchers questioned over 2,000 women about their size, diet and exercise habits and took measurements. They found that many women were often unaware about whether they were a healthy weight or not. [Read abstract](#) in Obstetrics and Gynaecology.

December 2010: Interventions aimed at decreasing obesity in children younger than 2 years - a systematic review (US)

The authors of this review found that few published studies attempted to intervene among children younger than 2 years to prevent or reduce obesity. Limited evidence suggests that interventions may improve dietary intake and parental attitudes and knowledge about nutrition for children in this age group. [Read abstract](#) in Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med.

December 2010: Raising healthy children - Moral and political responsibility for childhood obesity (Canada)

Childhood obesity and chronic disease rates continue to climb, but policy and programme responses are mainly limited to education and awareness activities. These encourage individuals to make responsible lifestyle choices. Regulation and environmental change have a minor role, as they involve more intrusive roles for government, invading traditionally private domains of nutrition and physical activity. [Read abstract](#) in J. of Public Health Policy.

December 2010: Certification of obesity as a cause of death in England 1979–2006 (Eng)

Authors found an emerging trend of increased certification of obesity as a cause of death in England and concluded that the use of underlying-cause mortality statistics alone fails to capture the majority of obesity deaths. [Read abstract](#) in European Journal of Public Health.

December 2010: Developing a community-based maternal obesity intervention: a qualitative study of service providers' views (UK)

The aim of this study was to explore healthcare professionals' views on the development of multi-component interventions for obese pregnant women. Three key themes emerged: (1) the lack of existing services for obese pregnant women in south-east London; (2) the barriers and challenges that need to be overcome (e.g. ethnic and cultural); (3) the possible components of a new intervention. [Read abstract](#) in BJOG.

December 2010: Improving weight loss outcomes of community interventions by incorporating behavioural strategies (US)

The authors examined whether adding behavioural weight loss strategies could improve the outcomes of a community weight loss campaign. They found that adding behavioral strategies to community campaigns may improve weight loss outcomes with minimal additional cost. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health

December 2010: Tackling childhood obesity - the importance of understanding the context (UK)

Recommendations to tackle major health problems such as childhood obesity may not be appropriate if they fail to take account of the prevailing socio-political, cultural and economic context. Authors describe the development and application of a qualitative risk analysis approach to identify non-scientific considerations framing the policy response to obesity in Denmark and Latvia. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of Public Health.

30.11.10: Healthy lives, healthy people white paper published - Our strategy for public health in England (UK)

The White Paper sets out the Government's long-term vision for the future of public health in England. The aim is to create a 'wellness' service (Public Health England) and to strengthen both national and local leadership. [Read more.](#)

30.11.10: Is obesity associated with emotional and behavioural problems in children? Findings from the Millennium Cohort Study (UK)

Researchers examined cross-sectional and longitudinal associations between obesity and emotional and behavioural problems in a nationally representative sample of young children. They found that childhood obesity is associated with emotional and behavioural problems from a very young age. Obese boys are at particular risk. [Read early view abstract](#) in Int. J. Paed. Ob.

30.11.10: Relative contribution of energy intake and energy expenditure to childhood obesity - a review of the literature and directions for future research (US)

Understanding the relative importance of overconsumption and physical inactivity to excess weight gain among children and adolescents can contribute to the development and evaluation of interventions and policies to reduce childhood obesity. On the basis of the current evidence, there is no consensus on the main driver of secular trends on weight gain among US children and adolescents. [Read online early abstract](#) in International Journal of Obesity.

25.11.10: Newspaper reporting on legislative and policy interventions to address obesity: United States, Canada and the United Kingdom (Canada)

This article analyses the content of articles in major newspapers in the US, Canada, and the UK that discuss legislative and policy measures to control obesity. The aim was to identify and compare measures that attract media attention in the three jurisdictions: the tone of print media coverage, the characterization of obesity, and attitudes toward government interventions to address obesity. [Read online first abstract](#) in Journal of Public Health Policy.

23.11.10: Are mums-to-be being given enough advice on weight management during and after pregnancy?

Women are not receiving proper support and advice on weight management and healthy eating during and after pregnancy, despite recommendations from NICE. The reports are based on [a survey](#) of 6,252 women which was conducted by the Royal College of Midwives in collaboration with the parenting website Netmums. [Read more](#).

20.11.10: Tackling of unhealthy diets, physical inactivity, and obesity - health effects and cost-effectiveness (World)

Researchers present an assessment of public health strategies designed to tackle behavioural risk factors for chronic diseases that are closely linked with obesity, including aspects of diet and physical inactivity. Several population-based prevention policies can be expected to generate substantial health gains while entirely or largely paying for themselves through future reductions of health-care expenditures. [Read abstract](#) in The Lancet.

18.11.10: Childhood obesity: the extent of the problem among 6-year-old Irish national school children (ROI)

The study aimed to provide an assessment of the prevalence of obesity of 6-year-old children in one region of Ireland. Overall, 27% of 6-year-olds were classified as either overweight or obese. A significantly greater proportion of girls are overweight or obese compared with boys (31% compared with 23%). [Read abstract](#) in Child Care Health Dev.

16.11.10: Getting paid to stay healthy (ROI, Irish Times - Supplement, p.8)

Financial incentives could encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles - and save billions in healthcare costs in the process. Health authorities, increasingly aware that the unhealthy behaviour of citizens can add considerably to the healthcare bill, are scrambling to find workable solutions. [Read article](#) by Eleanor Fitzsimons.

16.11.10: Expert says Ireland faces lifestyle disease crisis (ROI, Irish Times - Supplement, p.2)

Ireland is facing a health crisis caused by lifestyle-related diseases, including obesity, heart disease, diabetes and tobacco-related illnesses, an international expert in physical therapy has said. According to the president of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy, Dr Marilyn Moffat, all evidence suggest Ireland cannot consider itself a healthy population. [Read article](#) by Ronan McGreevy.

11.11.10: Childhood obesity is the fuel that fires adult metabolic abnormalities and cardiovascular disease (US)

Mounting evidence linking childhood obesity to an increasing risk of obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and other cardiovascular and metabolic disorders in adulthood is presented in this review article. [Read article](#) in Childhood Obesity.

10.11.10: Association of adolescent obesity with risk of severe obesity in adulthood (US)

Obese adolescents are 16 times more likely to become severely obese by age 30 than their healthy weight or even overweight peers. Researchers found that nearly 40 percent of obese adolescents are expected to become severely obese by age 30, compared to only 2.5 percent of healthy weight and overweight teenagers. [Read abstract](#) in JAMA.

Nov 2010: Approaches to measuring the extent and impact of environmental change in three California community-level obesity prevention initiatives (US)

In this paper, researchers describe the approaches used to measure the extent and impact of environmental change in three community-level obesity-prevention initiatives in California. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Public Health.

November 2010: Recommendations for weight gain during pregnancy in the context of the obesity epidemic (US)

The Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council have issued new guidelines for gestational weight gain as well as recommendations for action and research. The recommendations call for women to begin pregnancy at a healthy weight and to gain within the guidelines, a goal not previously achieved. [Read abstract](#) in Obstet. Gynecol.

November 2010: Association of perceived neighbourhood safety on body mass index (US)

Researchers sought to determine whether there is an association between perceived neighbourhood safety and body mass index (BMI). In adjusted analyses, individuals who perceived their neighbourhoods as unsafe had a BMI that was 2.81 kg/m² (95% confidence interval [CI] = 0.11, 5.52) higher than did those who perceived their neighbourhoods as safe. [Read abstract](#) in Am. J. Public Health.

November 2010: Adiposity and cardiovascular risk factors in a large contemporary population of pre-pubertal children (UK)

A high body mass index (BMI) is associated with markers of adiposity and cardiovascular risk factors in children aged 8-12 years, research shows. [Read abstract](#) in European Heart Journal.

November 2010: Global prevalence and trends of overweight and obesity among preschool children (World)

The objective of this study was to quantify the worldwide prevalence and trends of overweight and obesity among preschool children on the basis of the new World Health Organization standards. In 2010, 43 million children (35 million in developing countries) were estimated to be overweight and obese; 92 million were at risk of overweight. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

November 2010: Setting population targets for measuring successful obesity prevention (Australia)

Researchers analyzed the changes in current weight gain that would be required to meet Australian targets. By using transition-based multistate life tables to project obesity

prevalence, they found that meeting national healthy weight targets by 2017 will require a 75% reduction in current 5-year weight gain. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Public Health.

November 2010: Within-population average ranges compared with institute of medicine recommendations for gestational weight gain (US)

Researchers found that, in underweight and normal-weight mothers, adherence to Institute of Medicine criteria was significantly associated with fewer preterm deliveries and small-for-gestational-age births for preterm delivery in normal-weight women. [Read abstract](#) in Obstet Gynecol.

November 2010: New moves-preventing weight-related problems in adolescent girls a group-randomized study (US)

The aim of this study was to evaluate New Moves, a school-based program aimed at preventing weight-related problems in adolescent girls using a school-based group-randomized controlled design. New Moves did not lead to significant changes in the girls' percentage body fat or BMI but improvements were seen for sedentary activity, eating patterns, unhealthy weight control behaviors, and body/self-image. [Read abstract](#) in Am J of Prev Med.

29.10.10: Predictors of increasing waist circumference in an Australian population (Australia)

The aim of this study was to identify predictors of increasing waist circumference (WC) over a 5-year period in a contemporary population of Australian adults. A ≥ 5 % increase of baseline WC occurred in a significant proportion of men and women over the 5-year period. Of the behavioural factors, poor diet quality was the key predictor of the ≥ 5 % increase of baseline WC in this cohort. [Read abstract](#) in PHN.

28.10.10: Is the association of breastfeeding with child obesity explained by infant weight change? (US)

Researchers examined the extent to which infant weight change mediates the association between breastfeeding and adiposity at age 3 years. In linear regression analyses adjusted for mother's educational level, race/ethnicity, smoking, BMI, pregnancy weight gain and birth weight, the BMI z score of fully breastfed children was 0.17 (95% CI: -0.43, 0.09) units lower than never breastfed children. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Pediatr Obes.

27.10.10: Systematic development of a self-regulation weight-management intervention for overweight adults (US)

This paper describes the systematic development of an intervention for the prevention of obesity among overweight adults. The intervention objectives, derived from self-regulation theory, were to establish goal-oriented behaviour. They were translated into a computer-tailored Internet-delivered intervention consisting of four modules. [Read article](#) in BMC Public Health.

26.10.10: The levelling off of the obesity epidemic since the year 1999 - a review of evidence and perspectives (US)

The purpose of this study was to investigate a possible levelling off in the obesity epidemic, by systematically reviewing literature and web-based sources. The findings supported an overall levelling off of the epidemic in children and adolescents from Australia, Europe, Japan and the US. [Read full article](#) in Obes Rev.

26.10.10: Contribution of social marketing strategies to community-based obesity prevention programmes in children (US)

The aim of this paper was to review child and adolescent obesity prevention programmes to determine whether they have included the Social Marketing Benchmark Criteria (BC). They established that the more recent the studies, the greater the number of the BC that seem to have been used. [Read advance online abstract](#) in Int. J. of Obesity.

26.10.10: Long-term impact of overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescence on morbidity and premature mortality in adulthood: systematic review (UK)

The present study aimed to summarize evidence on the long-term impact of child and adolescent obesity for premature mortality and physical morbidity in adulthood. Researchers concluded that a relatively large and fairly consistent body of evidence now demonstrates that overweight and obesity in childhood and adolescence have adverse consequences on premature mortality and physical morbidity in adulthood. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Obes (Lond).

26.10.10: Characterizing the profile of obese patients who are metabolically healthy (Canada)

A unique subset of obese individuals has been described in the medical literature, which seems to be protected or more resistant to the development of metabolic abnormalities associated with obesity. These individuals, now known as 'metabolically healthy but obese' (MHO), despite having excessive body fatness, display a favorable metabolic profile. [Read advance online abstract](#) in Int J of Obes.

26.10.10: Prevalence and secular changes in abdominal obesity in Canadian adolescents and adults, 1981 to 2007-2009 (Canada)

Data for this study were based on three national health surveys conducted in 1981, 1988 and 2007-2009. The prevalence of Canadians with abdominal obesity increased with age and was higher in females than in males. [Read abstract](#) in Obes. Rev.

26.10.10: Predictors of low-income, obese mothers' use of healthful weight management behaviours (US)

The aim of this study was to examine the influence of personal and environmental factors on healthful weight management behaviours mediated through self-efficacy among low-income obese mothers. Women who perceived more importance of eating low-fat/low-calorie food for weight management were more likely to practice multiple behavioral strategies to manage their weight. [Read early view abstract](#) in J Nutr Educ Behav.

25.10.10: Number diagnosed with diabetes rises (UK)

The number of people diagnosed with diabetes in the UK has increased by more than 150,000 to 2.8 million in the past year, warns Diabetes UK today. The data, collected from GP practices, also show the nationwide figure of people registered as obese to have risen to over five and half million, an increase of more than 265,000. [Read more](#).

23.10.10: Gestational weight gain and subsequent postpartum weight loss among young, low-income, ethnic minority women (US)

The aim of this study was to document weight change trajectories that lead to gestational weight gain or postpartum weight loss outside clinical recommendations established by the Institute of Medicine. Only 22% of participants gained gestational weight within Institute of Medicine guidelines. There were 62% that exceeded maximum recommendations-more common among those overweight/obese. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Obstet Gynecol.

22.10.10: An overview of ethical frameworks in public health: can they be supportive in the evaluation of programs to prevent overweight? (Netherlands)

Ethical public health frameworks may be helpful in evaluating programs or policy for overweight prevention. Authors give an overview of the purpose, form and contents of such public health frameworks and investigate to which extent they are useful for evaluating programs to prevent overweight and/ or obesity. [Read full paper](#) in BMC Public Health

22.10.10 Obesity and Diabetes in Mothers and Their Children: Can We Stop the Intergenerational Cycle? (US)

While higher maternal weight entering pregnancy is related to several adverse pregnancy outcomes, some of the strongest and most compelling data to date have linked pre-pregnancy obesity to gestational diabetes mellitus (GDM). [Read abstract](#) in Curr Diab Rep.

21.10.10: Type 2 diabetes in younger adults: the emerging UK epidemic (UK)

There is an emerging epidemic of type 2 diabetes (T2DM) in younger adults. They represent an extreme phenotype: likely to be obese, lead a sedentary lifestyle, have a strong family history of T2DM, be of black or minority ethnic origin, and come from less affluent socioeconomic groups. [Read abstract](#) in Postgrad Med J.

21.10.10: Climate change study published by Food Standards Agency (UK)

The Food Standards Agency has today published a report looking at possible implications of climate change on food policy in the UK. [Read more.](#)

20.10.10: Early intervention of eating- and weight-related problems (US)

The dramatic increases in rates of pediatric obesity has created a mounting need for psychologists and other mental health care providers to play a significant role in the assessment and treatment of youth with eating- and weight-related problems. [Read abstract](#) in J Clin Psychol Med Settings.

20.10.10: A prospective study of weight development and behavior problems in toddlers: the Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study (Norway)

Researchers investigated whether child behavior problems and body mass index are associated in toddlers and whether overweight is a risk for behavior problems or vice versa. They found that the association between behavior problems and body mass index found in older children did not appear in toddlers up to age 36 months. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Public Health.

19.10.10: First Steps for Mommy and Me: A Pilot Intervention to Improve Nutrition and Physical Activity Behaviours of Postpartum Mothers and Their Infants (US)

Researchers found that a program of brief focused negotiation by pediatricians, individual coaching by health educators using motivational interviewing, and group parenting workshops tended to improve infant feeding, sleep and media exposure, but had less impact on mothers' own health-related behaviors. [Read abstract](#) in Matern Child Health J.

17.10.10 Counseling overweight patients: analysis of preventive encounters in primary care (Germany)

The aim of this study was to analyze general practitioners (GPs) encounters with overweight and obese patients in primary care to test the hypothesis that patients with a BMI $>30\text{kg/m}^2$ would have longer consultations focusing on lifestyle-related issues like nutrition and physical activity than those with a BMI $<30\text{kg/m}^2$. Researchers found that GPs rarely use the check-up program to conduct lifestyle consultations with obese patients. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Qual Health Care.

15.10.10: Short sleep duration and obesity among Australian children (Australia)

The objective of this study was to cross-sectionally examine the relationship between sleep duration and obesity in Australian children aged 5 to 15 years. Overall, parents of 3495 children aged 5-15 years. The prevalence of obesity was 7.7% (8.9% in boys, 6.6% in girls). The association between short sleep (<9 hours) and obesity was stronger in the younger age group. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Public Health.

14.10.10: Nestle breaches Change4Life guidelines (UK, SustainWeb)

Children's health campaigners say that snack food companies are undermining government efforts to encourage healthy eating after it was revealed that food giant Nestlé is misusing branding from the government's £75m Change4Life anti-obesity campaign to promote its high-sugar products. [Read more](#).

14.10.10: Stress and Adiposity: A Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Studies (UK)

The aim of this analysis was to bring together results from published, longitudinal, prospective studies examining associations between psychosocial stress and objectively measured adiposity in a meta-analysis. The authors conclude that psychosocial stress is a risk factor for weight gain but effects are very small. [Read early view abstract](#) in Obesity.

11.10.10: Light at night increases body mass by shifting the time of food intake (US)

To determine whether a causal relationship exists between nighttime light exposure and obesity, researchers examined the effects of light at night (LAN) on body mass in male mice. The authors conclude that the results suggest that low levels of light at night disrupt the timing of food intake and other metabolic signals, leading to excess weight gain. [Read abstract](#) in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

10.10.10: Obesity a health crisis for women of all classes (ROI, Irish Times, p.14)

More bad news. A new survey suggests - I said, suggests - that rich Irishwomen are after getting very fat. The Socioeconomic Gradient of Obesity in Ireland by David Madden makes for fascinating if Father fractured reading. [Read article](#) by Ann Marie Hourihane.

10.10.10: Meta-analysis identifies 13 new loci associated with waist-hip ratio and reveals sexual dimorphism in the genetic basis of fat distribution (Global)

Researchers conducted a meta-analysis of 32 genome-wide association studies for waist-hip ratio (WHR) adjusted for body mass index, following up 16 loci in an additional 29 studies. They identified 13 new loci. Seven of these loci exhibited marked sexual dimorphism, all with a stronger effect on WHR in women than men. [Read abstract](#) in Nature Genetics.

09.10.10: Effects of Diet and Physical Activity Interventions on Weight Loss and Cardio-metabolic Risk Factors in Severely Obese Adults (US)

The aim of this study was to determine the efficacy of a weight loss and physical activity intervention on the adverse health risks of severe obesity. The researchers concluded that a lifestyle intervention involving diet combined with initial or delayed initiation of physical activity resulted in clinically significant weight loss and favourable changes in cardio-metabolic risk factors. [Read abstract](#) in JAMA.

07.10.10: Predictors of obesity in childhood, adolescence, and adulthood in a birth cohort (US)

This study aimed to determine how characteristics of pregnancy, birth, and early infancy are related to offspring obesity at three critical developmental periods. Maternal pregnancy smoking status, gestational weight gain, and weight gain in infancy were found to have

long-term effects on offspring. Maternal obesity was the strongest predictor of obesity at all times studied. [Read abstract](#) in *Matern Child Health J*.

06.10.10: MEPs and health professionals call for urgent action to tackle chronic diseases (UK, Medical News Today)

Members of the European Parliament are calling on the Presidency of the EU and Member States to tackle urgently the problem of chronic non-communicable diseases that are responsible for 86% of all deaths in the WHO European Region. [Read more](#).

05.10.10: The relationship between body size and mortality in the linked Scottish Health Surveys: cross-sectional surveys with follow-up (Scotland)

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between body mass index (BMI), waist circumference (WC) or waist-hip ratio (WHR) and all-cause mortality or cause-specific mortality. Researchers conclude it might be prudent not to use BMI as the sole measure to summarize body size. [Read abstract](#) in *Int J Obes (Lond)*.

01.10.10: What explains the American disadvantage in health compared with the English? The case of diabetes (US)

The older American population has much higher rates of diabetes than the English population—a differential not yet explained, but this population also has higher waist circumference at each level of BMI than does the equivalent group in England. [Read abstract](#) in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health*.

01.10.10: Parental perception of overweight and underweight in children and adolescents (Norway)

The aim of this study was to compare the parental perception of overweight and underweight in their children to objective criteria. Seventy per cent of overweight/obese children and 40.8% of underweight children were perceived having normal weight by parents. [Read abstract](#) in *Acta Paediatr*.

October 2010: Availability of data assessing the prevalence and trends of overweight and obesity among European adolescents (EU)

The aim of this study was to review recent data on objectively measured overweight/obesity in national representative samples of European adolescents. Researchers concluded that objectively measured data on national representative samples of adolescents appear scattered, and there is a large heterogeneity with respect to the quality and comparability of available data. [Read abstract](#) in *PHN*.

October 2010: Associations between parental and offspring adiposity up to midlife: the contribution of adult lifestyle factors in the 1958 British Birth Cohort Study (UK)

Participants in the 1958 British Birth Cohort Study and their parents ($n = 9346$) were examined. Maternal and paternal BMI were positively associated with offspring BMI in both childhood and mid-adulthood, and the strength of the association did not diminish with offspring age. [Read abstract](#) in *Am. J. Clin. Nutr.*

October 2010: Obesity in pregnancy: a major healthcare issue (UK)

The prevalence of maternal obesity is rising, up to 20% in some antenatal clinics, in line with the prevalence of obesity in the general population. Maternal obesity poses significant risks for all aspects of pregnancy. This review aims to discuss these risks with a view to suggesting management to ensure the best outcome for both the mother and the offspring. [Read abstract](#) in *Postgrad Med J*.

Recently published research in obesity journals

International Journal of Obesity

- [Volume 34 Issue 2s \(December 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 34 Issue 12 \(December 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 34, Issue 11 \(November 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 34, Issue 10 \(October 2010\)](#)

Obesity: A Research Journal

- [Volume 18, Issue 12 \(December 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 18, Issue 11 \(November 2010\)](#)

Obesity Reviews

- [Volume 11, Issue 12 \(December 2010\)](#)
- [Volume 11, Issue 11 \(November 2010\)](#)

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NUTRITION NEWS

January 2011: Influence of parents and friends on children's and adolescents' food intake and food selection (US)

The objective of this study was to compare the effects of mothers and friends on children's and adolescents' energy intake from sandwiches and from healthy and unhealthy snacks and dessert foods. Male and female children consumed less energy from unhealthy snacks when in the presence of their mothers than when in the company of their friends. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

13.12.10: Barack Obama signs child nutrition and anti-hunger law (UK, BBC News)

US President Barack Obama has signed into law an effort to improve child nutrition and combat rising obesity. The new law promotes healthier school lunches and funds meal programmes for poor children. [Read more](#).

13.12.10: Effects of serving-high sugar cereals on children's breakfast eating behaviour (US)

Results of this study demonstrate the potential negative effects of serving high-sugar cereal to children and how it affects their consumption of cereal, added sugar, and fruit during breakfast. In addition, they demonstrate that children like and will eat low-sugar cereals as an alternative. [Read abstract](#) in Pediatrics.

10.12.10: Association between timing of introducing solid foods and obesity in infancy and childhood - A systematic review (UK)

The aim of this systematic review was to investigate current evidence to determine whether the timing of introducing solid foods is associated with obesity in infancy and childhood. No clear association between the age of introduction of solid foods and obesity was found. [Read abstract](#) in Matern Child Nutr.

07.12.10: Council agrees on new labelling rules for food (EU)

The Council in charge of Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer affairs (EPSCO) reached political agreement, at first reading, on a draft regulation on food information to consumers. This new piece of legislation is aimed to ensure that food labels carry essential information in a clear and legible way, enabling here with consumers to make informed and balanced dietary choices. [Read more](#).

07.12.10: Examining the relationships between family meal practices, family stressors, and the weight of youth in the family (US)

The purpose of this research was to examine the relationships between positive family meal practices, family stressors, and the weight of youth and to examine parental weight status as a moderator of these relationships. The authors suggest that the home environment may affect the weight of children in the family, and the effect is more pronounced in families with at least one overweight parent. [Read abstract](#) in Ann Behav Med.

07.12.10: Health in the EU - Nutrition deemed a growing challenge for health in the EU and beyond (EU)

Over half the EU adult population is now overweight or obese according to the "Health at a Glance: Europe 2010" report published by the European Commission and the OECD today. The rate of obesity has more than doubled over the past 20 years in most EU Member States. [Read more](#) or [download report](#).

05.12.10: New research from CASH reveals high levels of salt in the family favourite: A Sunday roast (UK)

Consensus Action on Salt and Health (CASH) looked at nearly 600 roast dinner products and found that you and your family could be consuming excessively high levels of salt in your Sunday roast. The quick and easy options such as ready-stuffed joints may help save time but can be full of unnecessary salt. [Read more](#).

December 2010: Effect of breast-feeding on weight retention at 3 and 6 months postpartum - data from the North Carolina WIC Programme (US)

Researchers investigated the effect of breast-feeding on postpartum weight retention. Breast-feeding was inversely associated with weight retention at 6 months postpartum in this large, racially diverse sample of low-income women. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

December 2010: Should we use popular brands to promote healthy eating among children? (Iceland)

LazyTown is an entertainment brand with a focus on healthy lifestyle, aimed at making health education entertaining. The aim of the present study was to assess whether children perceive food to taste better with a LazyTown label on the wrapping compared with the original packaging. The findings add to past research by demonstrating children's preferences for child-oriented wrappings rather than regular wrapping. [Read abstract](#) in Public Health Nutrition.

December 2010: Penetration of nutrition information on food labels across the EU-27 plus Turkey (EU)

More than 37,000 products were audited in a total of 84 retail stores. On average, 85% of the products contained back-of-pack (BOP) nutrition labeling or related information (from 70% in Slovenia to 97% in Ireland), versus 48% for front-of-pack (FOP) information (from 24% in Turkey to 82% in the UK). [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

December 2010: Child adiposity and maternal feeding practices: a longitudinal analysis (UK)

Researchers investigated the direction of the association between parental feeding practices and children's adiposity in a longitudinal study. The results were more consistent with a "child-responsive" model whereby a mother's choice of feeding practice is influenced by her child's weight status rather than her feeding practices influencing the child's weight gain. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

25.11.10: Diets with high or low protein content and glycemic index for weight-loss maintenance (EU)

In this large European study, a modest increase in protein content and a modest reduction in the glycemic index led to an improvement in study completion and maintenance of weight loss. [Read abstract](#) in NEJM.

18.11.10: The neighbourhood food environment and adult weight status - estimates from longitudinal data (US)

Researchers found that for residents of urban areas, the neighborhood density of small grocery stores was positively and significantly related to obesity and body mass index. [Read abstract](#) in American Journal of Public Health.

18.11.10: Parents' beliefs about appropriate infant size, growth and feeding behaviour: implications for the prevention of childhood obesity (UK)

This study aimed to explore UK parents' beliefs concerning their infant's size, growth and feeding behaviour and parental receptiveness to early intervention aimed at reducing the risk of childhood obesity. Researchers found a number of barriers to early intervention with parents of infants at risk of developing obesity. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Public Health.

17.11.10: New research results on EU consumers' perceptions of food-related risks (EU)

According to a new Eurobarometer survey published, those who are concerned about possible food-related risks tend to worry more about chemical contamination of food rather than bacterial contamination or health and nutrition issues. The poll also showed most Europeans have confidence in national and European food safety agencies as information sources on possible risks associated with food. [Read more](#).

16.11.10: New Irish research on food labelling (ROI)

Against a background of ongoing debate on Front of Pack food labeling in the European Commission, Council and Parliament, Irish shoppers strongly endorsed traffic light colours combined with Guideline Daily Amounts (GDA), according to research published by the Irish Heart Foundation, National Youth Council of Ireland and the Irish Cancer Society. [Read more](#).

16.11.10: 'Traffic-light' nutrition labelling and 'junk-food' tax: a modelled comparison of cost-effectiveness for obesity prevention (Australia)

This study compares the cost-effectiveness of conservative scenarios for two commonly proposed policy-based interventions: front-of-pack 'traffic-light' nutrition labeling and a tax on unhealthy foods. The authors found that policy-based population-wide interventions are likely to offer excellent 'value for money' as obesity prevention measures. [Read abstract](#) in Int J Obes (Lond).

16.11.10: Does maternal feeding restriction lead to childhood obesity in a prospective cohort study? (US)

The objective of this study was to examine the longitudinal association between maternal feeding restriction at age 1 and body mass index (BMI) at age 3 and the extent to which the association is explained by weight for length (WFL) at age 1. The authors found that maternal feeding restriction was associated with children having a higher BMI at age 3 before, but not after, adjusting for WFL at age 1. [Read abstract](#) in Arch Dis Child.

12.11.10: McDonald's and PepsiCo to help write UK health policy (UK, The Guardian)

The Department of Health is putting the fast food companies McDonald's and KFC and processed food and drink manufacturers such as PepsiCo, Kellogg's, Unilever, Mars and Diageo at the heart of writing government policy on obesity, alcohol and diet-related disease. [Read more](#).

10.11.10: US adolescents get a fifth of their calories from fast food, study finds

A study of the 12 largest fast food chains in the United States has criticised the energy, sugar, fat, and sodium content in the foods they market to children. [Read more](#).

05.11.10: New safefood research reveals the majority of the Irish population are consuming too much salt (ROI)

The research study, commissioned by **safefood**, is the most extensive of its kind to date in the adult Irish population. The aim of the study was to provide accurate and well-validated estimates of dietary salt intake in the Irish population. It found that dietary salt intake in the Irish population remains unacceptably high, with an overwhelming majority of the ROI population (86% of men and 67% of women) consuming salt at levels well in excess of the current 6 grams per day target as advocated by health professionals. [Read more](#).

02.11.10: Obesity prevention and personal responsibility: the case of front-of-pack food labelling in Australia (Australia)

This article argues that although policies that aim to educate consumers about the nutritional content of food are welcome, they are only one part of a broader basket of policies that are needed to make progress on obesity prevention and public health nutrition. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Public Health.

01.11.10: Survey to see how healthy Irish pre-school children are (ROI)

Led by Professor Mike Gibney and his team at the University College Dublin Institute of Food and Health, in collaboration with research teams at University College, Cork and the University of Ulster, Coleraine, the survey will establish what foods pre-school children are currently eating and how these affect their health. [Read more](#).

November 2010: Eating patterns and overweight in 9- to 10-year-old children in Telemark County, Norway: a cross-sectional study (Norway)

The aim of this study was to describe the eating patterns of 9- to 10-year-old schoolchildren, and to investigate the relationship between overweight and eating patterns. The main finding was that, although family characteristics influenced both the prevalence of overweight and overall dietary behaviour, independent associations were evident between eating patterns and overweight. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

November 2010: Maternal perception of the causes and consequences of sibling differences in eating behaviour (UK)

The aim of this study was to explore mothers' perceptions of differences between their children in the eating behaviour domain. Mothers frequently identified differences in appetite and food preferences between their children, which they attributed largely to genetic factors. The overall pattern was one of flexible responsiveness to each child. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

November 2010: Effect of a relatively high-protein, high-fiber diet on body composition and metabolic risk factors in overweight women (New Zealand)

The aim of this study was to compare the effects of dietary advice including moderate increases in protein and fiber without specifying energy intake with standard low-fat, high-

carbohydrate dietary recommendations on body composition and metabolic risk factors. An *ad libitum* diet relatively high in both protein and fiber improved body composition and metabolic risk factors compared with standard dietary advice. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

November 2010: Vitamin D deficiency and anthropometric indicators of adiposity in school-age children - a prospective study (US)

Researchers investigated the associations between vitamin D serostatus and changes in body mass index, skin-fold-thickness ratio, waist circumference, and height in a longitudinal study in children from Bogota, Colombia. They found that vitamin D serostatus was inversely associated with the development of adiposity in school-age children. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

November 2010: Associations between Children's Appetitive Traits and Maternal Feeding Practices (UK)

This study explored associations between child eating behaviors and maternal feeding practices. As predicted, maternal restriction was associated with child food responsiveness ($P<0.001$), and maternal pressure to eat was associated with child satiety responsiveness ($P<0.001$), slowness ($P=0.03$), and fussiness ($P=0.01$). Child enjoyment of food was associated with lower maternal pressure to eat ($P=0.01$). [Read abstract](#) in JADA.

November 2010: SMART lunch box intervention to improve the food and nutrient content of children's packed lunches: UK wide cluster randomised controlled trial (UK)

Government standards are now in place for children's school meals but not for lunches prepared at home. The aim of this trial is to improve the content of children's packed lunches. The SMART lunch box intervention, targeting parents and children, led to small improvements in the food and nutrient content of children's packed lunches. [Read abstract](#) in Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

November 2010: Sugar-sweetened beverages and risk of metabolic syndrome and type 2 diabetes - A meta-analysis (US)

People who regularly consume sugary drinks have a significantly greater risk of developing diabetes types 2 or metabolic syndrome, researchers from the Harvard School of Public Health. [Read abstract](#) in Diabetes Care.

November 2010: Nutrition in infancy and long-term risk of obesity: evidence from 2 randomized controlled trials (EU)

Researchers investigated the effect of early growth promotion on later body composition in 2 studies of infants born small for gestational age. They showed that a nutrient-enriched diet in infancy increased fat mass later in childhood. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

November 2010: Consumption of vegetables, cooked meals, and eating dinner is negatively associated with overweight status in children (Greece)

The aim of this study was to evaluate potential associations between diet- and physical activity-related lifestyle patterns and obesity indices in a cohort of children. Five lifestyle behavioral patterns were identified. The "dinner, cooked meals and vegetables pattern," was negatively associated with all obesity indices. [Read abstract](#) in J Pediatr.

28.10.10: Scientists call for tighter regulations on food adverts during children's TV viewing (UK)

Psychologists at the University of Liverpool have called for tighter advertising regulations after a study revealed unhealthy foods are more likely to be advertised during children's peak viewing times than at any other point in the broadcasting schedule. The researchers,

in partnership with the Cancer Council, Australia, studied 12,618 food advertisements from 11 countries and found that 67 per cent endorsed unhealthy food. [Read more](#).

21.10.10: Eating Frequency is Associated With Energy Intake but Not Obesity in Midlife Women (US)

The purpose of this study was to examine associations between overweight/obesity and behavioral factors, including eating frequency, in a cross-sectional national sample of midlife women ($n = 1,099$). Eating frequency, snacking frequency, breakfast consumption, eating after 10 PM and consuming meals with children or other adults were not significantly associated with overweight/obesity. [Read early view abstract](#) in Obesity.

21.10.10: Consumer awareness of fast-food calorie information in New York City after implementation of a menu labelling regulation (US)

The authors assessed consumer awareness of menu calorie information at fast-food chains after the introduction of New York City's health code regulations to display food-item calories on menus and menu boards. Since enforcement began, approximately 1 million New York adults have seen calorie information each day. [Read abstract](#) in Am. J. Public Health.

20.10.10: Adherence to the Mediterranean diet, long-term weight change, and incident overweight or obesity: the Seguimiento Universidad de Navarra (SUN) cohort (Spain)

Researchers studied the association between adherence to six previously published scores used to assess the adherence to the Mediterranean diet and weight change. They also assessed the risk of relevant weight gain (≥ 5 kg) or the risk of developing overweight or obesity. Participants with the lowest adherence (≤ 3 points) to the Mediterranean dietary score (MDS) exhibited the highest average yearly weight gain. [Read abstract](#) in Am J Clin Nutr.

20.10.10: Effects of a low-glycemic load diet in overweight and obese pregnant women: a pilot randomized controlled trial (US)

Researchers examined the effects of a low-glycemic load (low-GL) diet in overweight and obese pregnant women. They randomly assigned 46 overweight or obese pregnant women to receive a low-GL or a low-fat diet. They found that a low-GL diet resulted in longer pregnancy duration, greater infant head circumference, and improved maternal cardiovascular risk factors. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

19.10.10: EFSA delivers advice on further 808 health claims (EU)

Scientific experts on EFSA's Panel on Dietetic Products, Nutrition and Allergies (NDA) have adopted opinions on 808 'general function' health claims taking into consideration all available scientific data. With this third series of opinions, EFSA has assessed to date 1,745 claims from a list of 4,637 health claims compiled by Member States and the European Commission. [Read more](#).

18.10.10 Taxing junk food: applying the logic of the Henry tax review to food.

The recent review of taxation in Australia - the Henry tax review - has recommended that the federal government increase the taxes already levied on tobacco and alcohol. Tobacco and alcohol taxes are put forward as the best way of reducing the social harms caused by the use and misuse of these substances. The Henry tax review rejects the idea of taxing fatty foods. [Read abstract](#) in MJA.

14.10.10: An examination of the relationship between breakfast, weight and shape (UK)

Breakfast has long been recommended as part of a healthy diet and, for some time, evidence has been accumulating that people who eat breakfast regularly are slimmer than those who skip breakfast. This article examines the supporting evidence for this claim, in both adults and children. [Read abstract](#) in British Journal of Nursing.

14.10.10: Food and drink sponsorship of children's sport: who pays? (Australia)

This study aimed to determine the nature and extent of food and beverage sponsorship of children's sport. Fifty percent of food company sponsorship arrangements did not meet criteria for healthy sponsors. [Read abstract](#) in Health Promotion International.

14.10.10: An examination of the relationship between breakfast, weight and shape (UK)

Breakfast has long been recommended as part of a healthy diet and, for some time, evidence has been accumulating that people who eat breakfast regularly are slimmer than those who skip breakfast. This article examines the supporting evidence for this claim, in both adults and children, and discusses the importance of a healthy diet and plenty of exercise. [Read abstract](#) in Br. J. Nurs.

08.10.10: New York takes new aim at sugary drinks (US, Reuters)

New York expanded its anti-obesity campaign with a proposal to ban the use of food stamps to buy sugary drinks, drawing beverage industry complaints that it is another government attempt to tell people how to behave. [Read more](#).

06.10.10: Skipping breakfast – longitudinal associations with cardio-metabolic risk factors in the childhood determinants of adult health study (Australia)

Researchers show that skipping breakfast in both childhood and adulthood is associated with a larger waist circumference, increased cardiometabolic risk factors, poorer diet quality, and unhealthy lifestyle behaviors. [Read abstract](#) in AJCN.

05.10.10: Sugar-sweetened beverage intake and overweight in children from a Mediterranean country (Portugal)

Researchers sought to assess the association between sugar-sweetened beverage (SSB) consumption and overweight in children. They concluded that the intake of SSB was not associated with increased risk of overweight in Portuguese schoolchildren. [Read abstract](#) in PHN.

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PHYSICAL ACTIVITY NEWS

06.12.10: Physical activity during youth sports practice (US)

This study found that on average, kids enrolled in soccer, baseball or softball exercised heavily for only 45 minutes during practice - 15 minutes less than the amount recommended by national guidelines. Among girls who played softball, only 2 percent got at least 60 minutes of strong exercise during practice. [Read abstract](#) in Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.

01.12.10: £2.2m facility opened at Shaftesbury Community and Recreation Centre (NI)

The new and improved Shaftesbury Community and Recreation Centre was officially opened with special VIP guest Mary McAleese, President of Ireland. A total investment of £2.2m has been utilised to provide a wide range of new facilities to enhance the service provision to

the local community. Also on hand to celebrate the occasion were the project funders Sport Northern Ireland, the Department of Social Development and the Department of Education. [Read more](#).

December 2010: Physical activity in US youth - effect of race/ethnicity, age, gender, and weight status (US)

Using data from two NHANES surveys, researchers found that females and older youth were the least active groups. Obese youth were generally less active, but this did not hold uniformly across race/ethnic groups. Cultural or biological factors could moderate the association between PA and obesity in youth. [Read abstract](#) in Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise.

29.11.10: Objectively measured physical activity in pregnancy: a study in obese and overweight women (UK)

Researchers conducted a longitudinal observational study of physical activity (PA) intensity, type and duration using objective and subjective measurement methods. They concluded that overweight and obese pregnant women can achieve and maintain recommended levels of PA throughout pregnancy. [Read early view abstract](#) in BMC Pregnancy Childbirth.

28.11.10: Children will be given shopping vouchers for walking to school (UK, Daily Telegraph)

Children will be given shopping vouchers for walking to school under a radical Government plan to combat obesity. Under the scheme children will receive Topshop vouchers and cinema tickets for travelling to school on foot. [Read more](#).

24.11.10: Obesity risk from cuts to school sports funding according to Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (UK)

Cuts to funding for school sports risk undermining efforts to combat obesity, the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy has warned. The government plans to scrap the £162 million school sports partnerships programme, which pays coordinators to organise clubs, fixtures and competitions. [Read more](#).

16.11.10: National exercise proven to be cost effective in Wales according to Chartered Society of Physiotherapists (UK)

A national exercise referral scheme in Wales is proving a cost effective method of managing chronic diseases, a randomised controlled trial shows. Exercise referral has been in operation in Wales since 2005, and is used to help people reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases, such as chronic heart disease and depression. [Read more](#).

08.11.10: Associations between children's physical activities, sedentary behaviours and family structure: a sequential mixed methods approach (UK)

This mixed method paper explored the effect of family structure on children's physical activities and sedentary pursuits. The results indicated that boys and girls from single parent families spent more time in sedentary activities during the week and at the weekend ($P < 0.01$) when compared with their intact couple family counterparts. [Read abstract](#) in Health Educ. Res.

04.11.10: Adolescent's physical activity levels and relatives' physical activity engagement and encouragement: the HELENA study

The aim of this article is to examine the association between adolescents' physical activity (PA) levels and their relatives' PA engagement and encouragement. Adolescents (52.3% girls) aged 12.5–17.5 years were gathered from the HELENA study. Analysis of covariance

showed that relatives' PA encouragement was more strongly associated with adolescents' PA levels than relatives' PA engagement. [Read abstract](#) in EJCN.

28.10.10: Physical activity patterns using accelerometry in the National Weight Control Registry (US)

The National Weight Control Registry (NWCR) was established in 1993 to examine characteristics of successful weight-loss maintainers. The aims of this study were to obtain objective assessments of physical activity in NWCR subjects and compare this to physical activity in both normal-weight and overweight controls. There were no significant differences between the three groups in the amount of non-bout MVPA. [Read early view abstract](#) in Obesity.

21.10.10: Minister Hanafin launches major research study on children's participation in sport and physical activity (ROI)

The Irish Sports Council published a major research study which provides a national database of physical activity, physical education and sport participation levels of children and youth in Ireland. The study found high engagement with sport and physical activity in 2009: 83% of primary school and 64% of post-primary students engage in sport outside school, 63% of primary school and 73% of post-primary students participate in Extra Curricular Sport, while 31% of primary school and 40% of post-primary students walked or cycled to school. [Read more](#).

18.10.10: Interventions to promote cycling: systematic review (UK)

The aim of this study was to determine what interventions are effective in promoting cycling, the size of the effects of interventions, and evidence of any associated benefits on overall physical activity or anthropometric measures. The authors conclude that community-wide promotional activities and improving infrastructure for cycling have the potential to increase cycling by modest amounts. [Read abstract](#) in BMJ.

16.11.10: Commuting and health in Cambridge: a study of a 'natural experiment' in the provision of new transport infrastructure (UK)

Researchers have taken the opportunity presented by a 'natural experiment' in Cambridgeshire, UK to establish a quasi-experimental study of the effects of a major transport infrastructural intervention on travel behaviour, physical activity and related wider health impacts. [Read abstract](#) in BMC Public Health.

16.10.10: Does self-selection influence the relationship between park availability and physical activity? (US)

This study explored the extent to which self-selection, the idea that active persons simply seek out neighbourhoods more endowed with active resources, influences the relationship between park availability and physical activity (PA). The authors concluded that the issue of self-selection does not solely account for the relationship frequently observed between park space availability and PA. [Read abstract](#) in Preventive Medicine.

15.10.10: Time limits? Reflecting and responding to time barriers for healthy, active living (Australia)

The aim of this study was to investigate how time barriers are viewed by the people who develop programs to increase physical activity or use active transport. Researchers studied five interventions and explored the interplay between views and strategies. Some views emphasized personal choice and attitudes, and strategies to address time barriers were focused on changing personal priorities or perceptions. [Read abstract](#) in Health Prom. Int.

06.10.10: Cycling for transport and public health: a systematic review of the effect of the environment on cycling (UK)

Researchers conducted a systematic literature review of experimental or observational studies that objectively evaluated the effect of the built environment on cycling. The authors conclude that although the study identified environmental factors with positive and negative associations with cycling behaviour, many other types of environmental policies and interventions have yet to be rigorously evaluated. [Read abstract](#) in Eur J Public Health.

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RESOURCES/PUBLICATIONS

England: New from the National Obesity Observatory

- Data Briefing on Obesity and Socioeconomic Status in [Adults](#) and [Children](#)
- Briefing paper on [the economic burden of obesity](#)

Int: Obesity and the Economics of Prevention – Fit not Fat

This book contributes to evidence-based policy making by exploring multiple dimensions of the obesity problem. It examines the scale and characteristics of the epidemic, the respective roles and influence of market forces and governments, and the impact of interventions. It outlines an economic approach to the prevention of chronic diseases that provides novel insights relative to a more traditional public health approach. [Read more](#).

IOI: 'Active travel and health on the island of Ireland'

The Institute of Public Health in Ireland (IPH) will issue a briefing paper in January 2011 entitled 'Active travel and health on the island of Ireland'. Across Ireland, there is considerable scope to replace many short car journeys with walking and cycling and doing so would bring about a range of benefits to health as well as saving money for individuals and society as a whole. The paper presents a summary of international evidence on the health and economic benefits of active travel and makes recommendations as to how active travel can become a viable, safe and attractive alternative to car use. The publication will be available at www.publichealth.ie. For further information please contact Teresa.Lavin@publichealth.ie.

NI: Research update - Get up and go

ARK has just produced a [physical activity research update](#) for NI. [ARK](#) (Access, Research, Knowledge) is a joint resource between [Queen's University Belfast](#) and [University of Ulster](#), and provides access to social and political material on Northern Ireland.

ROI: Best practice guidelines in tailoring lifestyle interventions for obese men in the primary care setting

Guidelines for effectively engaging with obese men via lifestyle interventions in the primary care setting are now available. These reflect findings from a recent study conducted by the National Centre for Men's Health. For a copy of the guidelines contact Majella McCarthy, Post-Graduate Researcher, National Centre for Men's Health, Institute of Technology Carlow at majella.mccarthy@itcarlow.ie or 00353 (0)86 1291791.

ROI: Economic impact of sport

This report, prepared for the Irish Sports Council by Indecon International Economic Consultants in association with Sheffield-Hallam University, establishes that sport and sport-related activities generate a very significant contribution to the Irish economy, while also playing a vital role in supporting the development of social capital and contributing to the health and quality of life of the Irish population. [Read more](#).

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CAMPAIGNS/INITIATIVES

EU Health Programme Projects - Update:

[ENHR II - Report on nutrition and health status](#)

The project provides a comprehensive, up-to-date report on the nutrition and health situation in Europe that focuses on unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, tobacco use and harmful alcohol consumption.

[FOOD - Fighting obesity through offer and demand](#)

This project concentrates on health promotion in the workplace and aims at changing employees' bad habits during their lunch breaks.

[LifeCycle - Promotion of healthy mobility behaviour](#)

The objective of this project is to change our increasingly sedentary lifestyles by adding physical activity to our daily routines. It aims to integrate cycling as the main mean of transportation and as a daily physical activity routine.

[PERISCOPE - Pilot European Regional Interventions for Smart Childhood Obesity Prevention at an Early Age](#)

The project seeks to prevent obesity in children ages 3-6 and combat the increase of child obesity in Italy, Denmark and Poland.

IOI: weigh2live...update

The Weigh2Live advertising campaign will be back on television from Monday 27 December for four weeks. For more information visit www.weigh2live.safefood.eu and www.facebook.com/safefood.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 January 2011. [Read more.](#)

NI: Active People, Healthy Bodies - Reducing Your Risk of Cancer

This factsheet highlights the importance of sport's positive contribution to public health, and reducing the risk of developing cancer. Download [Active People: Healthy Bodies - Reducing Your Risk of Cancer](#).

ROI: safefood sponsor Operation Transformation

safefood will sponsor the popular RTE lifestyle programme "Operation Transformation" in 2011. Operation Transformation is a highly successful television show which helps five members of the public to reduce their weight by embracing a healthier lifestyle. The first episode will broadcast on Wednesday January 05 @ 8pm on RTE1 and the series runs for eight weeks. **safefood** will also be hosting live Facebook chats via the Operation Transformation website for the duration of the series.

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FUNDING

NI: Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership (BCPP) Programme- Funding Available

CDHN's Building the Community Pharmacy Partnership programme promotes and supports communities and pharmacists to work together to address local health needs using a community development approach. There are two levels of funding available. Level 1 funding is for those interested in developing ideas and a community pharmacy partnership.

It consists of a maximum of £2000 for a project that can last for up to 9 months. The closing date for Level 1 funding is **10 March 2011**. Level 2 funding is for those with established partnerships who have a clear vision of what the project wants to achieve. It consists of a maximum of £10,000 for a project that can last up to 2 years. The closing date for Level 2 funding is **20 April 2011**. [Find out more](#).

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TRAINING

Title: [Health Impact Assessment \(HIA\) Training Course](#)
Date: 21-23 March 2011
Venue: Holiday Inn, Ormeau Avenue, Belfast.

Title: [European Nutrition Leadership Programme](#) (closing date 30 November 2010)
Date: 13-21 April 2011
Venue: Luxembourg

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CONSULTATIONS

NI: Consultation on A Fitter Future For All - An Obesity Prevention Framework for Northern Ireland 2011-2021

The purpose of this consultation is to seek views on the detail and content of the proposed Obesity Prevention Framework. This Framework aims to *"empower the population of Northern Ireland to make healthy choices, and reduce the level of harm related to overweight and obesity, by creating an environment that supports and promotes a physically active lifestyle and a healthy diet"*. The Framework takes forward action to address this issue through two main areas – improving diet and nutrition, and increasing participation in physical activity. Once the consultation has ended, the framework will be finalised and processes will be put in place to oversee the implementation and delivery of the outcomes, and to monitor progress against the indicators and target. The final date for response is **Friday 28 January 2011**. [Read more](#).

UK: Consultation on the Next Steps for a Healthy Start

The purpose of this UK-wide consultation is to seek views on proposals to extend the Healthy Start Scheme to add frozen fruit and vegetables to the foods already allowed and to minimise the risk of voucher misuse. The Department of Health, Welsh Assembly Government, Scottish Government, and Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety are consulting on whether women and families supported by Healthy Start should also be able to spend their vouchers on plain frozen fruit and vegetables, and whether there is a need to do more to ensure that vouchers are only spent on products that are included in the scheme. Responses must be received by **31 December 2010**. [Read more](#).

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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

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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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