

# Eating for health?

A survey of attitudes,  
awareness and eating  
habits among adults in  
Northern Ireland



**Health**  
Promotion  
Agency

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# Executive summary

## Shopping and factors taken into consideration when shopping for food

- Most adults (80%) reported food shopping in a multiple store such as Tesco, Sainsbury, 17% shopped at independent stores, such as Mace, VG or Spar and 2% shopped at a corner shop.
- When asked to state the main factor in deciding which food items to buy, cost came top (18%), followed by health (17%) then habit (16%) and what children would eat (15%). Cost was mentioned as the main factor by one in four of those from households with a low income (25%), three times as many as from households with a high income (7%).
- Almost three fifths (58%) said that they usually looked at the information on the packaging. Those from the manual social group (52%) or from low income households (50%) were less likely to report reading the label of food packaging than those from the non-manual social group (66%) and high income households (70%).
- Fat content (71%) was the piece of information most commonly looked at on food packaging followed by produce of Northern Ireland (50%), calorie content (48%), sugar content (47%) and presence of 'E' numbers (42%).

## Meal patterns

- Just under three quarters (74%) of the sample reported taking breakfast daily, while 8% reported not having breakfast at all on weekdays. More women (77%) than men (70%) ate breakfast daily. Older people were more likely to eat breakfast than younger ones. Nine out of ten (90%) of the oldest age group reported taking breakfast daily compared to 57% of the youngest age group.
- The adults most likely never to eat breakfast were those from households with children under 18 years (11%), those from a manual social class (11%), and adults from households with a low income (11%).
- Eight out of ten (82%) households with two or more members reported eating the main meal of the day together most days of the week. Less than half (47%) of adults living alone had three meals a day.

## Eating out

- Over two out of five (41%) adults surveyed reported eating out at least once a week. The youngest age group (63%) was over twice as likely to report eating out at least once a week as the oldest age group (27%). Adults from the non-manual group (46%) and those from high income households (51%) were more likely to report eating out more than once a week than those from a manual group (38%) and those from households with a low income (33%).
- Over a third (35%) of adults said that they would usually have a takeaway meal at least once a week. More men (41%) reported having takeaway meals more often than women (31%). Almost two out of three (63%) of the youngest age group eat takeaway meals at least once a week, five times as many as from the oldest age group (12%).

## Frequency of consumption of foods from the five food groups

### Fruit and vegetables and awareness of the five-a-day message

- One in five (20%) people reported eating the recommended five or more portions of fruit and vegetables in an average day. One in seven (14%) reported eating one portion and 11% did not eat any fruit or vegetables in an average day. Men, those in the youngest age group (18-29 years) and those from manual and low income households ate fruit and vegetables least often.
- Over half (53%) of adults were able to state correctly that health professionals recommend that five or more portions of fruit and vegetables should be eaten each day as part of a healthy diet. Those who stated that they were unaware of the recommended number of portions of fruit and vegetables per day (18%) were more likely to be male (24%), from the oldest age group (28%), from a single adult household (24%), from a manual social group (26%) or low income household (27%).
- Adults' awareness of the five-a-day message was compared with their reported consumption of fruit and vegetables. Of those who stated correctly that the message was five portions or more of fruit and vegetables per day, only 29% actually eat this amount.

### Bread, other cereals and potatoes

- The majority of people (88%) eat bread daily. More adults from the oldest age group reported eating wholemeal bread (25%) compared with those from the youngest age group (13%). Adults from manual households were more likely to report eating white bread (64%) compared to those from non-manual households (55%).
- More than four out of ten (42%) adults reported eating potatoes daily. Older people and those from manual households eat potatoes most often.
- Rice and pasta are eaten less often than potatoes. Fourteen percent of respondents reported eating rice or pasta on between 3 and 7 days of the week; 47% eat them once or twice a week. Women, younger people, those from non-manual households and adults with a higher household income are more likely to eat rice or pasta more frequently than other groups.

### Meat, fish and alternatives

- Most people (69%) have red meat once or twice a week or less often, and 31% eat it three times a week or more. Men and those from manual households eat most red meat.
- The majority of adults (62%) eat white meat once or twice a week, and 27% eat white meat three times a week or more. Women, younger people, those from non-manual households and those with a higher household income eat most white meat.
- Most people eat meat products, such as sausages, bacon, meat pies, pasties and chicken nuggets once or twice a week (45%) or less often (41%). Men, those from the youngest age group, adults from manual households and those with a lower household income eat meat products most often.
- Around a third of adults have fish (excluding fried fish) once or twice a week. The majority (62%) have it less often.

### Milk and milk products

- The main type of milk used is semi-skimmed milk (59%). Those from non-manual and higher income households are more likely to use semi-skimmed milk. Adults from households with children are more likely to use whole milk.

### Foods containing fat and foods containing sugar

- Most adults (55%) eat chips once or twice week and almost one in ten (9%) eat them on three or more days during the week. Men, those from the youngest age group and those from manual households eat chips most frequently.

- The majority of adults (53%) eat fried foods less than once a week and less than one in ten (8%) eat them on three or more days during the week. Men, those from manual households and those with a lower household income eat fried food most often.
- Over four in ten (44%) adults eat biscuits every day. One in four (25%) reported that they ate confectionery on three or more days a week. Almost one in four (23%) ate cakes on three or more days a week.
- One in seven (14%) eat savoury snacks such as crisps on a daily basis and a further 9% eat them most days.
- Over one in five (22%) men and more than one in ten (11%) women drink fizzy drinks and squashes containing sugar at least once a day. Younger age groups have sugary drinks most often.
- More than one in eight (13%) drink sugar-free drinks at least daily. Younger people also drink sugar-free drinks more frequently than older people.

## What does healthy eating mean?

- More than half (54%) of those surveyed suggested that the term 'healthy eating' meant cutting down on fried or fatty foods, 51% said eating plenty of fruit, vegetables and salad. One quarter (25%) stated that the term 'healthy eating' meant eating plenty of fibre or cutting down on sugar, cakes and confectionery.
- Women were more likely to say 'reduce fat intake' (57%), 'eat more fruit and vegetables' (55%) and 'reduce sugar intake' (29%) than men (50%, 45% and 20% respectively).
- More adults from the youngest age group (55%) gave 'eating fruit and vegetables' as a healthy eating definition compared with the oldest age group (43%).
- Adults from the non-manual social group were more likely to say 'reduce fat intake' (59%), 'reduce sugar intake' (27%) and 'eat plenty of fibre' (29%) than those from the manual social group (50%, 23% and 20% respectively).
- Increased fibre intake in the diet was mentioned more often as a definition of healthy eating by adults from a high income household (31%) than those from lower income households.

## Changes to eating patterns

- Those taking part in the survey were asked to identify from a list of options any changes that they had tried to make to their eating patterns in the past year. The most common changes reported were eating fewer fatty or fried foods (37%), followed by eating more fruit and vegetables (36%), eating fewer sugary foods (30%) and eating less generally (24%). Women were more likely than men to report making these dietary changes.

## Factors that discourage healthy eating

- The adults taking part in the survey were asked to choose the main factor that discouraged them from eating more healthily. Lack of willpower (25%) was the main reason followed by confusion about what is and is not healthy (16%), their partner's refusal to change (10%), and the cost of healthy foods (9%).
- Over one in five (22%) of the oldest age group stated that they are confused about what is and is not healthy. The youngest age groups were most likely to indicate the poor choice in canteens or restaurants as a factor discouraging healthy eating.

- Those from manual groups and the lowest income households were more likely to say that they are confused about what is and what is not healthy and that healthy foods are too expensive.
- Those from non-manual groups and from the highest income households are more likely to indicate lack of willpower rather than confusion or cost.

## **Self-assessment of eating habits**

- Most adults (77%) stated that their diet was 'fairly healthy'. One in ten (10%) rated their diet as 'very healthy' and one in seven (14%) rated their diet as 'unhealthy'.
- Adults' own assessments of their eating habits were compared with their reported daily consumption of two marker foods (fruit and vegetables, an indicator of healthy eating, and chips, an indicator of less healthy eating). The majority of those not achieving the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables daily rated their diet as 'fairly healthy'. Well over half (58%) of those who eat no fruit or vegetables on a daily basis rated their diet as 'fairly healthy' and over half (54%) of those who eat chips most days, also rated their diet as 'fairly healthy'.

The results of this survey provide a helpful baseline against which future dietary changes, as well as changes in awareness and knowledge of, and attitudes to, a variety of nutritional issues can be measured. This report outlines variations between age, gender and socioeconomic groups with regard to eating habits, awareness and knowledge of healthy eating and highlights some areas for discussion and future work.

# Introduction

What we eat plays a critical role in determining our state of health. Research indicates that many of the major causes of ill health and death in Northern Ireland are influenced by diet, including coronary heart disease, cancer, overweight, obesity, diabetes, osteoporosis and dental decay.<sup>1</sup>

*Eating and Health: A Food and Nutrition Strategy for Northern Ireland* outlines the first cross-sectoral framework for coordinated action to promote health and prevent disease through encouraging and enabling appropriate eating patterns.<sup>1</sup> It outlines dietary and nutritional targets, which are based on current recommendations made by a number of expert groups, and recommends actions and approaches that should be undertaken to achieve the necessary changes.

Current nutritional recommendations focus on achieving a balance in the diet, encouraging the consumption of a wide variety of foods from the four main food groups (bread, other cereals and potatoes; fruit and vegetables; meat, fish and alternatives; and milk and milk products) with a smaller proportion from the fifth food group (foods containing fat and foods containing sugar).

In autumn 1999, the Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland, as part of its work on the Food and Nutrition Strategy, commissioned research to obtain information on eating patterns among 5-75 year olds in Northern Ireland. The purpose of this research was to establish benchmark data on a number of key issues to facilitate the monitoring of progress in the key areas of the Strategy and to guide the development of programmes and initiatives undertaken to implement the Strategy.

This document reports on the adults' survey, which examined current eating patterns, reported food intake, the factors influencing food choices, public knowledge of current nutritional recommendations and attitudes to healthy eating.

During this survey, adults were also asked about the eating patterns of their children (aged 5-17 years). The results of this part of the survey are reported in a separate document.<sup>2</sup>

# The survey

The data presented in this report were based on a household food survey that was carried out on a sample of the Northern Ireland population. This section provides an outline of the methodology employed for this survey in terms of the sampling frame and study design. A guide to the presentation of results is also included.

## Methodology

### The sample and sampling frame

The Valuation and Lands Agency list of addresses was used as a sampling frame. The complete list of private addresses was stratified into three regions: Belfast; east Northern Ireland; and west Northern Ireland. A total random sample of 2,050 addresses was drawn from the individual regions in an effort to reflect the characteristics of those areas.

The Valuation and Lands Agency list provides a good sampling frame of addresses, but contains no details about the characteristics of households in terms of number of members. Interviewers were instructed to call at each address issued in their assignments and then list all members of the household who were eligible for inclusion in the sample, ie all persons aged 18 to 75 years. Each eligible adult within a household was asked to complete an interview.

### Study design and data collection

Addresses were issued to a panel of 102 interviewers in early October 1999. The fieldwork period was 26 October to 26 November 1999. The interviewers used a questionnaire that was developed specifically for use on a computer and responses were recorded directly onto the computer. The questionnaire was made up of standardised questions relating to household details, dietary practices as well as attitudes to healthy eating. The final data set achieved for the study was cleaned and validated.

Data analysis was carried out using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Scientists). Detailed information on response rate and profile of respondents is included in Appendix 1.

### Presentation of results

Results for this survey are presented as follows. The majority of information has been presented through the use of tables based on percentages that have been rounded up to the nearest whole number. Therefore, because of rounding, some column or row percentages may not equal 100 exactly. The overall base percentages (All (%)) are shown at the bottom of each table for each variable of interest. Base numbers have also been included in all tables to indicate the number (N) of respondents on which percentages are based.

Some figures have been added for illustration purposes and percentages are presented in the figures. The chi-square statistical test was employed to test for associations between groups in the data. Statistically significant findings are shown on all tables where appropriate and three levels of significance are presented (ie \*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\*  $p < 0.01$  and \*\*\*  $p < 0.001$ ). For instance if a finding is significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level for this study then this finding would be expected in a similar population 95 times out of 100.

The information in the tables has also been analysed by the respondents' demographic and socioeconomic circumstances. The demographic circumstances considered were gender, age and household type. The socioeconomic indicators used were social class and total household income per annum.

Respondents were grouped into four age bands for analysis and presentation purposes. The resulting age bands were 18 to 29 years, 30 to 44 years, 45 to 59 years and the oldest age grouping was 60 to 75 years. Throughout this report the 18-29 year old age group are referred to as the youngest age group and the 60-75 year old age group are referred to as the oldest age group.

The household type was determined by grouping households into one of three classifications: single adult households; households with two or more adults; and households with children aged under 18 years.

Social class was determined from respondents' socioeconomic grouping which was based on their occupation. For the purposes of analyses social class was classified into two groups, manual and non-manual (for more detail see Table 55). People who had never worked (economically inactive) were unable to be assigned a social class grouping and were therefore excluded from all analyses relating to social class.

Household income was based on the total gross annual income from all sources in the household. Adults from households with incomes of less than £10,000 per annum are referred to as low income households and those from households with incomes of £25,000 or more are referred to as high income households throughout the following text.

# Buying food for the household

This section describes shopping patterns and some factors that people consider before choosing or buying certain food items. The person who usually did the food shopping on behalf of a household answered questions relating to this section. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of adults who responded on behalf of the household are shown in Table 51 in Appendix 1.

## Shopping for food

Adults responding on behalf of the household were asked what type of food store they usually used to do their main food shopping. Four out of five (80%) people reported shopping in a multiple store such as Tesco, Sainsbury or Safeway, 17% shopped at independent stores, such as Mace, VG or Spar and 2% shopped at a corner shop.

There were associations between demographic and socioeconomic circumstances and where people usually shopped (Table 1). The groups most likely to use multiple stores were women (83%), the 30-44 age group (87%), those from households with children under 18 years (88%), those from a non-manual social class (86%) and those from high income households (90%).

**Table 1: Type of store used to do the main food shop for the household**

|                             | Multiple store (%) | Independent store (%) | Corner store (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |                    |                       |                  |              |
| Male                        | 69                 | 24                    | 7                | 219          |
| Female                      | 83                 | 16                    | 1                | 875          |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |                    |                       |                  |              |
| 18-29                       | 85                 | 13                    | 2                | 147          |
| 30-44                       | 87                 | 12                    | 1                | 392          |
| 45-59                       | 77                 | 21                    | 2                | 292          |
| 60-75                       | 72                 | 24                    | 4                | 263          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |                    |                       |                  |              |
| One adult                   | 71                 | 24                    | 5                | 238          |
| Two or more adults          | 77                 | 21                    | 2                | 381          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 88                 | 12                    | 1                | 475          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                    |                       |                  |              |
| Manual                      | 74                 | 23                    | 3                | 458          |
| Non-manual                  | 86                 | 13                    | 1                | 551          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                    |                       |                  |              |
| under £10,000               | 74                 | 23                    | 3                | 412          |
| £10-14,999                  | 77                 | 22                    | 1                | 185          |
| £15-24,999                  | 88                 | 11                    | 1                | 218          |
| more than £25,000           | 90                 | 9                     | 1                | 236          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>80</b>          | <b>17</b>             | <b>2</b>         | <b>1,094</b> |

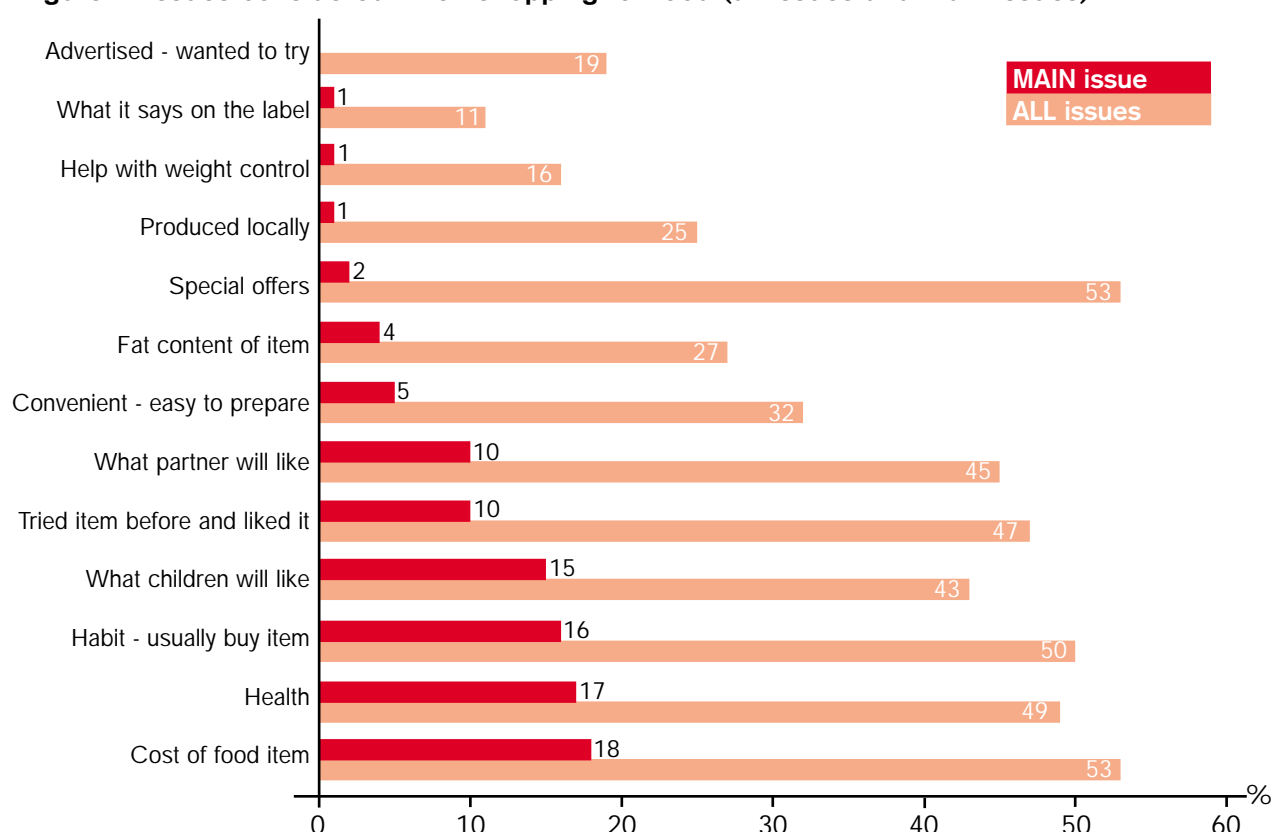
Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

Independent stores were more popular with men (24%), those from the oldest age group (24%), single adult households (24%), those from a manual social class (23%) and low income households (23%).

## Factors influencing shopping habits

Adults were asked to state the issues they considered when shopping for food. They were presented with 13 options and were allowed to choose one or more from the list. All the issues considered are shown in Figure 1. Over half of those surveyed (53%) named cost and special offers as factors influencing their choice of food items. Other influencing factors mentioned were habit (50%), health (49%) and having tried the food item before (47%).

**Figure 1: Issues considered when shopping for food (all issues and main issues)**



### Main factor considered while shopping for food

Each person was then asked to state the main factor that they considered while shopping for food and deciding which food items to buy. The most common factor was cost (18%), followed by health (17%) habit (16%) and what children would like (15%). These four factors accounted for 64% of all the responses given for this question and these are broken down by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances in Table 2.

Households with children under 18 years (20%) or single adults (19%) were more likely to mention cost as the main issue when shopping for food than households with two or more adults (14%). Over one in five (21%) people in the manual group considered cost as their main concern when buying food compared to 14% of those from the non-manual group. Cost was mentioned as the main factor by one in four (25%) adults from households with a low income, more than three times the rate for those from high income households (7%).

There were no significant associations between the likelihood of someone reporting health as the main factor considered when shopping for food and their demographic and socioeconomic circumstances.

Habit was more likely to be the main factor for men (26%), the oldest age group (25%), single adult households (25%), those from a manual group (18%), and those from low income households (21%). For households with children under 18 years, children's food preferences were also a major consideration when shopping for food (29%).

**Table 2: The four main factors influencing food shopping by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | Cost of item (%) | Health (%) | Habit (%)  | What children like (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|------------------|------------|------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                  |            |            |                        |              |
| Male                    | 18               | 15         | *** 26     | *** 4                  | 217          |
| Female                  | 18               | 17         | 13         | 17                     | 874          |
| <b>Age group</b>        |                  |            |            |                        |              |
| 18-29                   | 22               | 12         | *** 14     | *** 13                 | 147          |
| 30-44                   | 17               | 15         | 13         | 24                     | 392          |
| 45-59                   | 17               | 21         | 11         | 15                     | 291          |
| 60-75                   | 18               | 17         | 25         | 1                      | 261          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                  |            |            |                        |              |
| One adult               | * 19             | 17         | *** 25     | *** 2                  | 232          |
| Two or more adults      | 14               | 17         | 17         | 4                      | 385          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 20               | 16         | 10         | 29                     | 474          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                  |            |            |                        |              |
| Manual                  | ** 21            | 15         | ** 18      | 13                     | 456          |
| Non-manual              | 14               | 19         | 12         | 16                     | 550          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                  |            |            |                        |              |
| under £10,000           | *** 25           | 14         | *** 21     | ** 10                  | 409          |
| £10-14,999              | 22               | 16         | 14         | 18                     | 185          |
| £15-24,999              | 12               | 19         | 10         | 17                     | 218          |
| more than £25,000       | 7                | 21         | 11         | 18                     | 236          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>18</b>        | <b>17</b>  | <b>16</b>  | <b>15</b>              |              |
| <b>Base (N)</b>         | <b>192</b>       | <b>183</b> | <b>169</b> | <b>158</b>             | <b>1,091</b> |

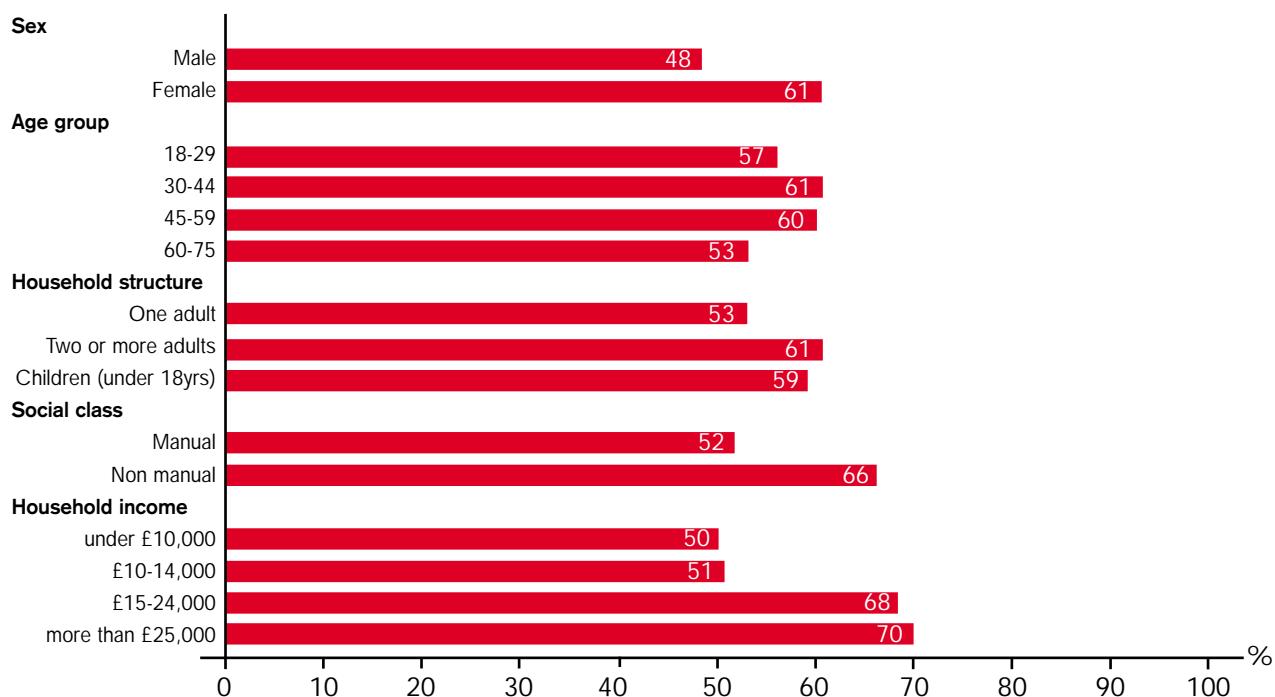
Note: Information presented in the above table is based on four separate variables therefore significance levels are displayed in the relevant column. Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05 \*\*p<0.01 and \*\*\*p<0.001).

### Information on food packaging

Those taking part in the survey were asked if they read the information on the packaging of food when shopping for a new item. Almost three fifths (58%) of adults said that they usually looked at the information on the packaging.

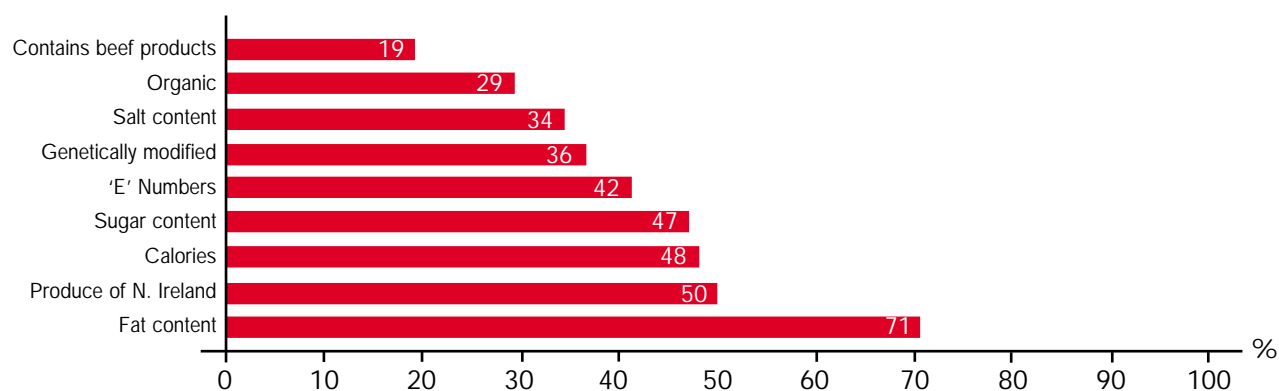
The demographic and socioeconomic circumstances of those who read the labels on food packaging of new items are shown in Figure 2. Men (48%) and those from the oldest age group (53%) were less likely than women (61%) and the 30-44 age group (61%) to read the labels on food packaging. Adults from the manual group (52%) or from low income households (50%) were less likely to report reading the label on food packaging than those from the non-manual social group (66%) or from high income households (70%).

**Figure 2: The demographic and socioeconomic profile of adults who reported reading the label on food packaging before buying a new food item**



Those who said that they read the labels on food packaging (640 people) were then asked to list the information they look out for on labels (Figure 3). They reported fat content (71%) as the piece of information most often looked at on food packaging, with produce of Northern Ireland (50%), calorie content (48%), sugar content (47%) and presence of 'E' numbers (42%) as the other main issues considered before buying something new.

**Figure 3: The information printed on food packaging that is most frequently read when choosing a new food item**



The five most frequently read items on a food label were further examined by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances for the 640 people who reported reading the food label when purchasing new food items (Table 3).

Women were more likely to check the fat content (73%) and calories (51%) of new food items than men (63% and 34% respectively). Adults from a non-manual background were more likely to look at the fat content of foods (74%) than those from a manual background (67%). Older people were more likely than younger ones to look at whether a new food item was a product of Northern Ireland (66% of the oldest age group compared with 33% of the youngest age group). The oldest age group was more likely to look at the sugar content (56%) of new food items than the younger groups were. Women (45%), those from the 30-44 age group (54%), households with children under 18 years (56%) and adults from a non-manual background (47%) were more likely to look for the 'E' numbers contained in new food items than other groups.

**Table 3: Five most frequently read items on food packaging when buying a new food item by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | Fat content (%) | Product of Northern Ireland (%) | Calories (%) | Sugar (%)  | 'E' Numbers (%) | Base (N)   |
|-------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|--------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                 |                                 |              |            |                 |            |
| Male                    | * 63            | 56                              | ** 34        | 39         | ** 29           | 105        |
| Female                  | 73              | 49                              | 51           | 48         | 45              | 535        |
| <b>Age group</b>        |                 |                                 |              |            |                 |            |
| 18-29                   | 67              | *** 33                          | 54           | * 42       | *** 36          | 84         |
| 30-44                   | 67              | 46                              | 50           | 49         | 54              | 239        |
| 45-59                   | 77              | 52                              | 46           | 38         | 40              | 177        |
| 60-75                   | 72              | 66                              | 45           | 56         | 27              | 140        |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                 |                                 |              |            |                 |            |
| One adult               | 71              | 50                              | 50           | 42         | *** 30          | 124        |
| Two or more adults      | 75              | 54                              | 45           | 45         | 32              | 236        |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 68              | 47                              | 50           | 50         | 56              | 280        |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                 |                                 |              |            |                 |            |
| Manual                  | * 67            | 51                              | 46           | 45         | ** 36           | 236        |
| Non-manual              | 74              | 50                              | 49           | 46         | 47              | 367        |
| <b>Household income</b> |                 |                                 |              |            |                 |            |
| under £10,000           | 67              | 48                              | 47           | 53         | 39              | 205        |
| £10-14,999              | 67              | 50                              | 52           | 48         | 36              | 95         |
| £15-24,999              | 79              | 46                              | 51           | 43         | 49              | 149        |
| more than £25,000       | 74              | 55                              | 44           | 44         | 47              | 165        |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>71</b>       | <b>50</b>                       | <b>48</b>    | <b>47</b>  | <b>42</b>       |            |
| <b>Base (N)</b>         | <b>455</b>      | <b>321</b>                      | <b>308</b>   | <b>299</b> | <b>268</b>      | <b>640</b> |

Note: Information presented in the above table is based on five separate variables therefore significance levels are displayed in the relevant column. Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01 and \*\*\*p<0.001).

# Eating patterns

This section focuses on information relating to the reported eating patterns of members within households. Information presented relates to mealtime patterns during the day, particularly breakfast patterns as well as consumption of meals not prepared at home.

## Mealtime patterns

The information on mealtime patterns is presented separately for households with two or more adults and for single adult households. One adult from each household responded on behalf of the other members of the household (see Table 51 in Appendix 1).

### Mealtime patterns for households with two or more members

Just over eight out of ten (82%) households with two or more members reported usually eating the main meal of the day together. Less than one in ten (9%) reported everyone in the household eating the same foods but not eating meals together as a family. One in ten (10%) reported cooking different foods for different members of the household. Fourteen households (2%) did not have any of these mealtime patterns and were excluded from the rest of the analyses.

**Table 4: Mealtime patterns for adults living in households with two or more members by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | Eat main meal together (%) | Eat same foods at different times (%) | Cook different foods (%) | Base (N)   |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                            |                                       |                          |            |
| Male                    | 76                         | 12                                    | 12                       | 110        |
| Female                  | 82                         | 8                                     | 9                        | 737        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |                            |                                       |                          |            |
| 18-29                   | 76                         | 11                                    | 13                       | 119        |
| 30-44                   | 80                         | 10                                    | 11                       | 337        |
| 45-59                   | 79                         | 11                                    | 10                       | 248        |
| 60-75                   | 96                         | 1                                     | 3                        | 143        |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                            |                                       |                          |            |
| Two or more adults      | 85                         | 7                                     | 8                        | 380        |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 79                         | 10                                    | 11                       | 467        |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                            |                                       |                          |            |
| Manual                  | 80                         | 10                                    | 10                       | 337        |
| Non-manual              | 83                         | 8                                     | 9                        | 446        |
| <b>Household income</b> |                            |                                       |                          |            |
| under £10,000           | 86                         | 6                                     | 8                        | 257        |
| £10-14,999              | 80                         | 10                                    | 10                       | 156        |
| £15-24,999              | 78                         | 9                                     | 13                       | 177        |
| more than £25,000       | 80                         | 11                                    | 9                        | 221        |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>82</b>                  | <b>9</b>                              | <b>10</b>                | <b>847</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.001$

The reported mealtime patterns of households with two or more members were broken down by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances. Age was the only factor associated with mealtime patterns for households with two or more members. Adults in the oldest age group (96%) were more likely to eat the main meal of the day together with other members of the household than any of the other age groups.

### Mealtime patterns for single member households

Adults who lived alone were asked to describe their daily mealtime pattern. Less than half (47%) of those in single adult households had three meals a day, over one third (35%) cooked one main meal a day, 8% ate a full meal at lunchtime and 11% had irregular mealtime patterns.

Mealtime patterns for these households were examined by their demographic and socioeconomic circumstances and the only associations identified were with age. Adults in the oldest age group (58%) were twice as likely to report having three meals a day than those from the 30-44 age group (29%). Over one in five (22%) of the youngest age group reported having a full meal at lunchtime. This is significantly higher than any of the other age groups. One in five (20%) of the 30-44 and 45-59 age groups reported having irregular meal patterns, five times as many as from the oldest age group (4%). Single adults from a high income household (23%) were more than three times as likely to have irregular mealtime patterns as to those from a low income household (7%). (This difference was not statistically significant).

**Table 5: Mealtime patterns of adults living alone by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | 3 meals<br>a day (%) | Cook 1<br>main meal<br>a day (%) | Eat full<br>meal at<br>lunchtime<br>(%) | Irregular<br>pattern/<br>no main<br>meal (%) | Base<br>(N) |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|---|--|-------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                      |                                  |   |  |             |
| Male                    | 38                   | 37                               | 9                                       | 16   | 100         |
| Female                  | 54                   | 33                               | 6                                       | 7  | 127         |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |                      |                                  |   |  |             |
| 18-29                   | 37                   | 30                               | 22                                      | 11   | 27          |
| 30-44                   | 29                   | 38                               | 13                                      | 20   | 45          |
| 45-59                   | 42                   | 34                               | 5                                       | 20   | 41          |
| 60-75                   | 58                   | 35                               | 3                                       | 4  | 114         |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                      |                                  |   |  |             |
| Manual                  | 46                   | 34                               | 8                                       | 13   | 110         |
| Non-manual              | 46                   | 36                               | 7                                       | 11   | 99          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                      |                                  |   |  |             |
| under £10,000           | 53                   | 34                               | 6                                       | 7  | 146         |
| £10-14,999              | 33                   | 41                               | 11                                      | 15   | 27          |
| £15-24,999              | 32                   | 41                               | 9                                       | 18   | 34          |
| more than £25,000       | 39                   | 23                               | 15                                      | 23   | 13          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>47</b>            | <b>35</b>                        | <b>8</b>                                | <b>11</b>                                    | <b>227</b>  |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001

## Breakfast

Adults were asked to describe their breakfast patterns during the week and at the weekend. Responses were combined to give an overall pattern of breakfasting during an average week. They were also asked about where they ate breakfast during the week and at weekends.

### Breakfast patterns on weekdays

Each person was asked how many times in a typical or average week (ie Monday to Friday) they eat breakfast. Over three quarters (78%) reported eating breakfast on all five weekdays, 6% on three or four days, 4% on one or two days and 12% did not eat breakfast at all on weekdays.

**Table 6: Breakfast patterns during weekdays by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | 5 days (%) | 3-4 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | None (%)  | Base (N)     |
|---------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                |            |              |              |           |              |
| Male                      | 75         | 7            | 5            | 13        | 733          |
| Female                    | 80         | 5            | 4            | 11        | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |            |              |              |           |              |
| 18-29                     | 66         | 10           | 9            | 16        | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 71         | 7            | 6            | 17        | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 85         | 4            | 2            | 10        | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 91         | 2            | 2            | 6         | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b> |            |              |              |           |              |
| One adult                 | 79         | 7            | 4            | 11        | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 84         | 4            | 3            | 9         | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 72         | 7            | 5            | 16        | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>       |            |              |              |           |              |
| Manual                    | 76         | 6            | 5            | 14        | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 80         | 5            | 4            | 11        | 848          |
| <b>* Household income</b> |            |              |              |           |              |
| under £10,000             | 78         | 6            | 4            | 12        | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 75         | 4            | 6            | 14        | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 76         | 9            | 2            | 14        | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 80         | 5            | 5            | 10        | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>78</b>  | <b>6</b>     | <b>4</b>     | <b>12</b> | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05 and \*\*\*p<0.001)

Reporting of breakfast patterns during weekdays was examined in relation to demographic and socioeconomic circumstances. There were associations with age, household type and household income. Older people were more likely to eat breakfast with the majority of the oldest age group (91%) having breakfast five days a week compared to two out of three (66%) of the 18-29 age group. Households with two or more adults (84%) were more likely to eat breakfast every weekday than those with children under 18 years (72%). More adults from households with a high income (80%) reported taking breakfast on all five weekdays than from households with an income of £10-14,999 (75%).

### Breakfast patterns at the weekend

Adults were then asked how many times they would usually eat breakfast during the weekend (ie Saturday and Sunday). Over four out of five (82%) people said that they usually ate breakfast on both days of the weekend, 6% on one day and 12% never took breakfast at the weekend.

**Table 7: Breakfast patterns at the weekend by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | Breakfast<br>both days (%) | Breakfast<br>one day (%) | No breakfast<br>(%) | Base<br>(N)  |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| <b>* Sex</b>              |                            |                          |                     |              |
| Male                      | 79                         | 7                        | 14                  | 733          |
| Female                    | 84                         | 5                        | 11                  | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |                            |                          |                     |              |
| 18-29                     | 71                         | 9                        | 21                  | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 76                         | 8                        | 16                  | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 89                         | 4                        | 7                   | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 92                         | 3                        | 6                   | 385          |
| <b>* Household type</b>   |                            |                          |                     |              |
| One adult                 | 81                         | 6                        | 14                  | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 85                         | 6                        | 9                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 79                         | 6                        | 15                  | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>   |                            |                          |                     |              |
| Manual                    | 78                         | 6                        | 17                  | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 85                         | 6                        | 9                   | 848          |
| <b>* Household income</b> |                            |                          |                     |              |
| under £10,000             | 80                         | 5                        | 15                  | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 80                         | 7                        | 13                  | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 79                         | 8                        | 13                  | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 86                         | 5                        | 9                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>82</b>                  | <b>6</b>                 | <b>12</b>           | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05 and \*\*\*p<0.001)

Breakfast patterns at the weekend were examined in relation to demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Women (84%), adults from the oldest age group (92%), those from households with two or more adults (85%), from a non-manual background (85%) and from a household with a high income (86%) were more likely to eat breakfast at the weekend than other groups.

Overall, more people reported taking breakfast every day at the weekend (82%) compared to every day during the week (78%).

Overall 12% of adults reported not eating breakfast on weekdays and 12% reported not taking breakfast at the weekend. Although these rates are the same, the general trend was for more people to have breakfast at the weekend compared to on weekdays. However, some specific groups were less likely to have breakfast at the weekend than on weekdays. These were 18-29 year olds (16% had no breakfast on weekdays, this rose to 21% having no breakfast at the

weekend), similarly, adults living alone (11% on weekdays, 14% at the weekend), those from a manual group (14% on weekdays, 17% at the weekend) and from a low income household (12% on weekdays, 15% at the weekend).

### Breakfast patterns in an average week

In order to assess breakfast patterns for the entire week, responses for eating breakfast on weekdays and at the weekend were combined. Just under three quarters (74%) of those surveyed reported taking breakfast every day, 12% on three to six days a week, 6% on one or two days and 8% never ate breakfast.

**Table 8: Eating patterns for breakfast during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | 7 days (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | No breakfast (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|--------------|
| <b>** Sex</b>               |            |              |              |                  |              |
| Male                        | 70         | 15           | 7            | 9                | 733          |
| Female                      | 77         | 10           | 6            | 7                | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |            |              |              |                  |              |
| 18-29                       | 57         | 23           | 10           | 10               | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 67         | 14           | 8            | 11               | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 82         | 8            | 5            | 5                | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 90         | 4            | 1            | 5                | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |            |              |              |                  |              |
| One adult                   | 75         | 13           | 5            | 7                | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 79         | 10           | 6            | 5                | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 69         | 13           | 7            | 11               | 771          |
| <b>** Social class</b>      |            |              |              |                  |              |
| Manual                      | 72         | 12           | 5            | 11               | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 76         | 11           | 7            | 6                | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |            |              |              |                  |              |
| under £10,000               | 75         | 11           | 4            | 11               | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 71         | 12           | 7            | 9                | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 70         | 15           | 6            | 9                | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 77         | 11           | 9            | 4                | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>74</b>  | <b>12</b>    | <b>6</b>     | <b>8</b>         | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

Associations between breakfast patterns and demographic and socioeconomic circumstances were identified. More women (77%) than men (70%) ate breakfast daily, and older people were more likely to have breakfast every day than younger groups. Nine out of ten (90%) of the oldest age group reported taking breakfast daily compared to 57% of the youngest age group. The most likely people to skip breakfast altogether were adults from households with children under 18 years (11%), those from a manual group (11%), and those from households with a low income (11%).

### Location of breakfast

Adults taking part in the survey were asked where and with whom they would usually eat breakfast on weekdays and at the weekend. Overall, the majority of people reported having breakfast at home either alone (35% on weekdays, 24% at the weekend) or with the family (61% on weekdays, 75% at the weekend) with 4% of adults on weekdays and 2% at the weekend having breakfast at work or in a café. The responses varied by household type.

**Table 9: Location of breakfast on weekdays and at the weekend by household type**

| Household type<br>(week day/weekend) | Eat<br>breakfast<br>at home<br>alone (%) | Eat<br>breakfast<br>at home<br>with<br>family (%) | Eat<br>breakfast<br>at work<br>(%) | Eat<br>breakfast<br>in café,<br>restaurant,<br>other (%) | Base<br>(N)  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| <b>One adult</b>                     |  |   |                                    |  |              |
| weekday                              | 94                                       | 1   | 4                                  | 1  | 231          |
| weekend                              | 92                                       | 4   | 1                                  | 3  | 223          |
| <b>Two or more adults</b>            |  |   |                                    |  |              |
| weekday                              | 32                                       | 66  | 2                                  | 1  | 656          |
| weekend                              | 18                                       | 81  | 1                                  | 1  | 656          |
| <b>Children (under 18yrs)</b>        |  |   |                                    |  |              |
| weekday                              | 17                                       | 78  | 4                                  | 1  | 651          |
| weekend                              | 6  | 93  | 1                                  | 1  | 655          |
| <b>All (%)</b>                       |  |   |                                    |  |              |
| <b>weekday</b>                       | <b>35</b>                                | <b>61</b>   | <b>3</b>                           | <b>1</b>   | <b>1,538</b> |
| <b>weekend</b>                       | <b>24</b>                                | <b>75</b>   | <b>1</b>                           | <b>1</b>   | <b>1,534</b> |

The majority of adults living alone reported eating breakfast at home on their own (94% on weekdays and 92% on weekends). Almost a third (32%) of those from households with two or more adults reported eating breakfast at home alone on weekdays compared to 18% at the weekend. Two thirds (66%) reported eating breakfast at home with the family on weekdays, increasing to 81% at the weekend. Adults from households with children under 18 years were least likely to eat eating breakfast alone on weekdays (17%) and at the weekend (6%).

### Eating meals not prepared at home

This section describes the eating patterns of adults in terms of eating out and having takeaway meals, ie meals not cooked or prepared at home.

#### Eating out

Adults taking part in the survey were asked how often they ate a meal or a snack in a café, restaurant, pub or fast food outlet. Over two out of five (41%) people reported eating out at least once a week, 14% once in every two weeks, 18% ate out once a month and more than a quarter (27%) reported eating out less than once a month or never (Table 10).

**Table 10: Eating out by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | 1 day or more a week (%) | Once in 2 weeks (%) | Once a month (%) | Less than monthly or never (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                  |                          |                     |                  |                                |              |
| Male                        | 42                       | 13                  | 16               | 29                             | 733          |
| Female                      | 41                       | 14                  | 20               | 25                             | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |                          |                     |                  |                                |              |
| 18-29                       | 63                       | 12                  | 17               | 9                              | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 44                       | 17                  | 19               | 20                             | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 35                       | 14                  | 19               | 32                             | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 27                       | 10                  | 16               | 46                             | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |                          |                     |                  |                                |              |
| One adult                   | 42                       | 14                  | 14               | 31                             | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 43                       | 11                  | 17               | 30                             | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 40                       | 17                  | 21               | 22                             | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                          |                     |                  |                                |              |
| Manual                      | 38                       | 12                  | 19               | 31                             | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 46                       | 16                  | 18               | 21                             | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                          |                     |                  |                                |              |
| under £10,000               | 33                       | 12                  | 17               | 38                             | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 40                       | 13                  | 22               | 26                             | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 47                       | 12                  | 21               | 20                             | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 51                       | 18                  | 15               | 16                             | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>41</b>                | <b>14</b>           | <b>18</b>        | <b>27</b>                      | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*p<0.001)

How often people ate out varied significantly by age group, household type and socioeconomic circumstances. The youngest age group (63%) was over twice as likely to report eating out at least once a week than the oldest age group (27%). Those from the non-manual group (46%) and from households with a high income (51%) were more likely to report eating out more than once a week than people from the manual group (38%) and those from households with a low income (33%).

### Takeaway meals

Adults were asked how often they would usually have a takeaway meal such as fish and chips. Over a third (35%) said that they would usually have a takeaway meal at least once a week, 14% said once in every two weeks, 18% said once a month and one third (33%) said that they rarely or never have a takeaway meal (Table 11).

**Table 11: Consumption of takeaway meals by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | Once a week or more (%) | Once in 2 weeks (%) | Once a month (%) | Less than monthly or never (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |                         |                     |                  |                                |              |
| Male                        | 41                      | 14                  | 15               | 30                             | 733          |
| Female                      | 31                      | 14                  | 20               | 34                             | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |                         |                     |                  |                                |              |
| 18-29                       | 63                      | 14                  | 14               | 9                              | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 44                      | 19                  | 18               | 20                             | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 25                      | 15                  | 23               | 37                             | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 12                      | 6                   | 15               | 67                             | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |                         |                     |                  |                                |              |
| One adult                   | 28                      | 7                   | 15               | 50                             | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 31                      | 13                  | 17               | 39                             | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 42                      | 18                  | 20               | 21                             | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                         |                     |                  |                                |              |
| Manual                      | 38                      | 10                  | 16               | 36                             | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 34                      | 18                  | 20               | 29                             | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                         |                     |                  |                                |              |
| under £10,000               | 31                      | 9                   | 15               | 45                             | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 37                      | 10                  | 25               | 29                             | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 40                      | 14                  | 20               | 26                             | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 39                      | 24                  | 16               | 22                             | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>35</b>               | <b>14</b>           | <b>18</b>        | <b>33</b>                      | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.001$

Frequency of having takeaway meals varied by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances. Men (41%) eat takeaway meals more often than women (31%). Almost two thirds (63%) of the youngest age group have takeaway meals at least once a week, more than five times as many as in the oldest age group (12%).

Households with children under 18 years (42%) were more likely to have a takeaway meal at least once a week than households with two or more adults (31%) or those with a single adult (28%).

Half (50%) of adults living alone reported rarely or never having a takeaway meal compared to 39% of households with two or more adults and 21% of households with children under 18 years. Adults from the manual group (38%) ate takeaway meals more frequently during the week than those from the non-manual grouping (34%). However more of the manual group (36%) reported eating takeaway meals less than once a month or never compared to those from the non-manual group (29%). People from the lowest income group (45%) were more than twice as likely to eat takeaway meals less than once a month or never, as those from the highest income group (22%).

# Foods consumed in an average week

Adults were asked to indicate their normal weekly consumption of a number of foods. For ease of reference, these have been presented within the food groups as classified in the nutrition education tool, *The Balance of Good Health*:

- fruit and vegetables;
- bread, other cereals and potatoes;
- meat, fish and alternatives;
- milk and milk products;
- foods containing fat and foods containing sugar.

Findings are also examined in relation to demographic and socioeconomic circumstances.

## Fruit and vegetables

The survey included questions about the number of portions of fruit and vegetables people usually ate as well as awareness of the health promotion message relating to recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables.

### Frequency of fruit consumption in an average week

Almost a quarter (23%) of adults reported that they ate fruit more than once a day, 29% ate fruit at least once every day, 16% ate fruit on three to six days, 18% ate fruit on one or two days and 14% rarely or never ate fruit.

**Table 12: Frequency of fruit consumption during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | More than once<br>a day (%) | Daily<br>(%) | 3-6<br>days (%) | 1-2<br>days (%) | Less than<br>weekly (%) | Base<br>(N)  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| <b>** Sex</b>               |                             |              |                 |                 |                         |              |
| Male                        | 19                          | 28           | 18              | 21              | 15                      | 733          |
| Female                      | 26                          | 29           | 15              | 16              | 14                      | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |                             |              |                 |                 |                         |              |
| 18-29                       | 17                          | 23           | 20              | 23              | 17                      | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 22                          | 30           | 16              | 18              | 14                      | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 25                          | 27           | 16              | 18              | 15                      | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 28                          | 34           | 13              | 14              | 12                      | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>       |                             |              |                 |                 |                         |              |
| One adult                   | 26                          | 24           | 20              | 16              | 14                      | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 25                          | 29           | 13              | 18              | 15                      | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 20                          | 30           | 18              | 18              | 14                      | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                             |              |                 |                 |                         |              |
| Manual                      | 18                          | 29           | 14              | 21              | 19                      | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 28                          | 30           | 17              | 15              | 10                      | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                             |              |                 |                 |                         |              |
| under £10,000               | 16                          | 30           | 17              | 20              | 18                      | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 21                          | 23           | 18              | 21              | 17                      | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 28                          | 25           | 15              | 19              | 14                      | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 30                          | 32           | 16              | 14              | 9                       | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>23</b>                   | <b>29</b>    | <b>16</b>       | <b>18</b>       | <b>14</b>               | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

The frequency of consumption of fruit during an average week varied significantly by gender, age group and socioeconomic circumstances (Table 12). More women than men (26% compared to 19%) reported eating fruit more than once daily. More of the oldest age group (62%) reported eating fruit at least daily compared to the youngest age group (40%). More people from the manual group (19%) and from households with a low income (18%) reported eating fruit less than once a week compared with those from the non-manual group (10%) and households with a high income (9%).

### Frequency of vegetable and salad consumption in an average week

Adults were asked how often they ate vegetables and salad during an average week. Half (50%) reported eating vegetables or salad daily and 6% reported eating them more than once a day. One in four (25%) people reported eating vegetables and salad on three to six days a week, 14% on one or two days and 5% ate vegetables and salad less than once a week.

**Table 13: Frequency of vegetable and salad consumption during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | More than once a day (%) | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                        | 5                        | 47        | 24           | 18           | 7                    | 733          |
| Female                      | 8                        | 52        | 26           | 11           | 4                    | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                       | 7                        | 36        | 28           | 18           | 11                   | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 9                        | 47        | 26           | 15           | 4                    | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 6                        | 55        | 24           | 11           | 4                    | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 3                        | 59        | 21           | 13           | 3                    | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                   | 5                        | 41        | 26           | 20           | 9                    | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 5                        | 52        | 24           | 13           | 5                    | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 8                        | 50        | 25           | 13           | 4                    | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                      | 4                        | 48        | 24           | 18           | 7                    | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 9                        | 51        | 25           | 11           | 4                    | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000               | 2                        | 48        | 28           | 16           | 7                    | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 6                        | 46        | 25           | 18           | 6                    | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 8                        | 50        | 24           | 14           | 4                    | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 11                       | 52        | 23           | 11           | 4                    | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>6</b>                 | <b>50</b> | <b>25</b>    | <b>14</b>    | <b>5</b>             | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.001$

How often people ate vegetables and salad varied significantly with demographic and socioeconomic circumstances. Women (60%) were more likely to eat vegetables at least once a day compared to men (52%). Over two out of five (43%) of the youngest age group eat vegetables at least once a day compared to over three out of five (62%) of the oldest age group. Adults living alone (29%), those from the manual group (25%) and those from a low income household (23%) were more likely to eat vegetables less than three days a week.

### Number of portions of fruit consumed in an average day

Those adults who reported eating fruit on three or more days a week were asked to state how many portions of fruit they would eat in the average day. Sixty eight percent of those surveyed reported eating fruit on three or more days a week. For the purpose of analysis, people who reported eating fruit on fewer than three days a week (32%) were assigned zero portions of fruit per day.

Almost half (47%) of adults ate one or two portions of fruit a day, 15% had three portions, 5% had four portions and 2% ate five or more portions of fruit a day.

**Table 14: Number of portions of fruit consumed in an average day by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | None (%)  | 1 portion (%) | 2 portions (%) | 3 portions (%) | 4 portions (%) | 5 or more portions (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| Male                        | 36        | 23            | 23             | 13             | 4              | 1                      | 733          |
| Female                      | 29        | 23            | 24             | 16             | 5              | 3                      | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>            |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| 18-29                       | 40        | 23            | 18             | 13             | 4              | 2                      | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 31        | 22            | 25             | 16             | 4              | 2                      | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 33        | 22            | 23             | 14             | 5              | 3                      | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 26        | 24            | 27             | 16             | 5              | 2                      | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>       |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| One adult                   | 30        | 20            | 25             | 18             | 4              | 3                      | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 33        | 22            | 22             | 15             | 5              | 3                      | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 32        | 24            | 24             | 14             | 4              | 2                      | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| Manual                      | 39        | 25            | 22             | 10             | 3              | 1                      | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 25        | 21            | 25             | 20             | 6              | 3                      | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| under £10,000               | 38        | 26            | 23             | 10             | 2              | 2                      | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 38        | 23            | 20             | 13             | 4              | 3                      | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 33        | 20            | 19             | 20             | 7              | 2                      | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 22        | 21            | 29             | 19             | 7              | 3                      | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>32</b> | <b>23</b>     | <b>24</b>      | <b>15</b>      | <b>5</b>       | <b>2</b>               | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

The number of fruit portions eaten in the average day varied significantly by gender and socioeconomic circumstances. More women (24%) reported eating three or more fruit portions a day compared to men (18%). Twice as many adults (29%) from the non-manual group or high income households reported eating three or more fruit portions per day as those from the manual group or low income households (14%).

### Number of portions of vegetables and salad consumed in an average day

Eighty one percent of adults surveyed said that they ate vegetables and salad on three or more days a week. These people were then asked how many portions of vegetables and salad they would eat in an average day. For the purpose of analysis the other 19% who reported eating vegetables and salad on less than three days a week were assigned zero portions per day.

Over two thirds (68%) of adults reported eating one or two portions of vegetables and salad per day, 10% had three portions and 3% ate four or more portions of vegetables and salad a day.

**Table 15: Number of portions of vegetables and salad consumed in an average day by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | None (%)  | 1 portion (%) | 2 portions (%) | 3 portions (%) | 4 or more portions (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |           |               |                |                |                        |              |
| Male                        | 25        | 31            | 33             | 9              | 3                      | 733          |
| Female                      | 15        | 31            | 41             | 10             | 3                      | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |           |               |                |                |                        |              |
| 18-29                       | 29        | 29            | 30             | 10             | 2                      | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 19        | 31            | 35             | 12             | 4                      | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 15        | 27            | 47             | 8              | 2                      | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 17        | 36            | 36             | 8              | 3                      | 385          |
| <b>** Household type</b>    |           |               |                |                |                        |              |
| One adult                   | 29        | 30            | 34             | 5              | 2                      | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 19        | 31            | 38             | 9              | 3                      | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 17        | 31            | 38             | 12             | 2                      | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |           |               |                |                |                        |              |
| Manual                      | 25        | 31            | 34             | 9              | 2                      | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 15        | 31            | 40             | 11             | 3                      | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |           |               |                |                |                        |              |
| under £10,000               | 23        | 36            | 33             | 7              | 2                      | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 24        | 26            | 36             | 12             | 3                      | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 18        | 31            | 38             | 9              | 4                      | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 15        | 27            | 44             | 12             | 3                      | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>19</b> | <b>31</b>     | <b>37</b>      | <b>10</b>      | <b>3</b>               | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

The number of portions of vegetables and salad eaten in an average day varied significantly by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances. Women (54%), those from the 45-59 age group (57%) and those from a household with children under 18 years (52%) were more likely to eat two or more portions of vegetables per day than other groups. Adults from the manual group (45%) or from low income households (42%) were less likely to eat two or more portions of vegetables and salad a day compared to those from the non-manual group (54%) or high income households (59%).

### Total portions of fruit, vegetables and salad consumed in an average day

The total number of fruit and vegetable portions people ate was derived by combining the reported consumption of fruit portions and vegetable and salad portions in an average day. One in five (20%) adults eats five or more portions of fruit and vegetables in an average day. Over a third (35%) reported eating three to four portions of fruit and vegetables per day, 21% ate two portions, 14% one portion and 11% did not eat any fruit or vegetables in an average day.

The total number of portions of fruit and vegetables consumed in an average day varied significantly by gender, age group and socioeconomic circumstances. More women (22%) reported eating five or more fruit and vegetable portions than men (16%). Almost one in five (19%) of the youngest age group reported not eating any fruit or vegetable portions in the average day, more than twice as many as in the oldest age group (8%). Adults from the non-manual group (27%) or from high income households (28%) were over twice as likely to eat five portions a day as those from the manual group or from low income households (both 12%).

**Table 16: Total portions of fruit, vegetables and salad consumed in an average day by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | None (%)  | 1 portion (%) | 2 portions (%) | 3 portions (%) | 4 portions (%) | 5 or more portions (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| Male                        | 14        | 16            | 21             | 19             | 14             | 16                     | 733          |
| Female                      | 8         | 13            | 21             | 19             | 18             | 22                     | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| 18-29                       | 19        | 18            | 18             | 16             | 11             | 19                     | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 10        | 13            | 21             | 20             | 15             | 21                     | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 9         | 13            | 22             | 19             | 18             | 20                     | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 8         | 14            | 21             | 19             | 21             | 18                     | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>       |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| One adult                   | 14        | 12            | 20             | 19             | 17             | 17                     | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 11        | 15            | 21             | 17             | 16             | 21                     | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 9         | 13            | 21             | 20             | 17             | 20                     | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| Manual                      | 14        | 17            | 23             | 19             | 15             | 12                     | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 7         | 11            | 19             | 18             | 18             | 27                     | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |           |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| under £10,000               | 13        | 18            | 24             | 18             | 14             | 12                     | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 14        | 15            | 20             | 18             | 17             | 17                     | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 10        | 13            | 21             | 17             | 15             | 25                     | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 7         | 9             | 17             | 20             | 19             | 28                     | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>11</b> | <b>14</b>     | <b>21</b>      | <b>19</b>      | <b>16</b>      | <b>20</b>              | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

### Consumption of fruit, vegetables and salad in the day prior to survey

To assess if reported behaviour resembles actual behaviour, those surveyed were asked to estimate how many portions of fruit and vegetables they had eaten the day prior to the survey. They were also asked whether the previous day had been a typical day. For the 88% who said the previous day had been typical, the number of fruit and vegetable portions eaten the previous day was compared to their reported intake on an average day (Table 17).

**Table 17: Number of portions of fruit and vegetables eaten in an average day and number of portions eaten the previous day**

|   | Fruit and vegetable portions<br>in an average day (%) | Fruit and vegetable portions<br>the previous day (%) |
|---|---|--|
| <b>Average daily<br/>consumption (portions)</b> |   |  |
| No portions                                     | 11  | 7  |
| 1 portion                                       | 14  | 13   |
| 2 portions                                      | 21  | 21   |
| 3 portions                                      | 19  | 18   |
| 4 portions                                      | 16  | 18   |
| 5 or more portions                              | 19  | 22   |
| <b>Base (N)</b>                                 | <b>1,550</b>  | <b>1,550</b>   |

Of those who said the previous day was typical, just over half (51%) reported eating the same number of portions for that day as they had for an average day. Thirty one percent had actually consumed more fruit and vegetables in the previous day than they reported for an average day. Less than one fifth (18%) had eaten fewer portions the previous day than they reported eating in an average day.

**Table 18: Agreement between reported fruit and vegetable consumption for an average day and reported consumption the day prior to the survey.**

| Reported average intake of fruit and vegetables compared with reported intake on<br>the day prior to the survey | (%)          |
|---|--------------|
| less intake the previous day than for an average day  | 18           |
| same intake the previous day than for an average day  | 51           |
| higher intake the previous day than for an average day  | 31           |
| <b>Base (N)</b>   | <b>1,550</b> |

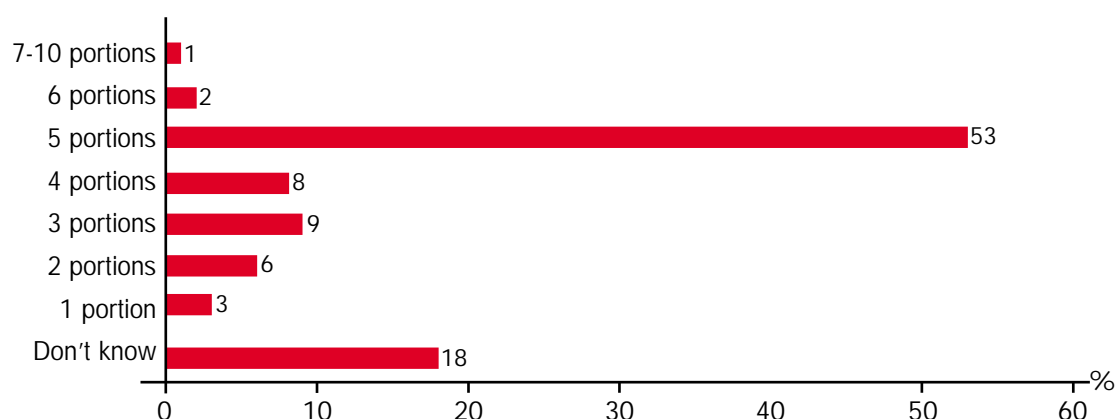
Those people who ate five portions of fruit and vegetables on the day prior to the survey were most likely to accurately report fruit and vegetable intake for an average day (refer to Tables 57-59 in Appendix 2 for further details).

#### The recommended number of portions of fruit and vegetables per day

Health professionals recommend that we eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables each day as part of a healthy diet. To assess awareness of this health promotion message, people were asked to state how many portions of fruit and vegetables they thought health professionals recommend they eat each day.

Over half (53%) replied correctly, stating five portions of fruit and vegetables each day (Figure 4). Over a quarter (26%) said between one and four portions and 3% said between six and ten portions. Fewer than one in five (18%) adults stated that they did not know the recommended number of portions of fruit and vegetables.

**Figure 4: Awareness of the number of portions of fruit and vegetables recommended per day by health professionals**



To assess if there were any associations between knowledge of this health promotion message and demographic and socioeconomic circumstances (Table 19), the responses were regrouped into five portions (53%), other number of portions (29%) and 'don't know' (18%).

Women (60%) were more likely than men (43%) to know the correct number of portions of fruit and vegetables recommended by health professionals. People in the oldest age group (28%) were more likely to say that they did not know than those from the other age groups. Adults living alone (45%) were less likely to state five portions of fruit and vegetables compared to the others. Adults in the manual group (42%) or from low income households (38%) were less likely to state five portions of fruit and vegetables per day than those from the non-manual group (64%) or from high income households (67%).

Adults who answered 'don't know' (18%) were more likely to be male (24%), from the oldest age group (28%), from a single adult household (24%), from a manual social class (26%) or low income household (27%).

Awareness of the recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables was compared with reported consumption of fruit and vegetables. For those who stated correctly that the recommended level was five portions or more of fruit and vegetables per day, less than three out of ten (29%) actually eat this amount.

However there was a significant ( $p < 0.001$ ) association between daily consumption of fruit and vegetable portions and awareness of the recommended level. Adults who knew that health professionals recommend eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day were more likely to actually achieve this level of consumption. Those who rarely ate fruit and vegetables were less likely to know how many portions were recommended for good health (29%).

**Table 19: Awareness of recommended daily intake of fruit and vegetables by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | <b>5 portions<br/>(correct response) (%)</b> | <b>Other number<br/>of portions (%)</b> | <b>Don't<br/>know (%)</b> | <b>Base<br/>(N)</b> |
|-----------------------------|--|---|---------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |  |   |                           |                     |
| Male                        | 43   | 33                                      | 24                        | 733                 |
| Female                      | 60   | 26                                      | 14                        | 1,019               |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |  |   |                           |                     |
| 18-29                       | 52   | 32                                      | 17                        | 328                 |
| 30-44                       | 56   | 30                                      | 14                        | 576                 |
| 45-59                       | 54   | 28                                      | 18                        | 463                 |
| 60-75                       | 48   | 25                                      | 28                        | 385                 |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |  |   |                           |                     |
| One adult                   | 45   | 31                                      | 24                        | 258                 |
| Two or more adults          | 54   | 25                                      | 21                        | 723                 |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 55   | 32                                      | 14                        | 771                 |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |  |   |                           |                     |
| Manual                      | 42   | 33                                      | 26                        | 750                 |
| Non-manual                  | 64   | 25                                      | 11                        | 848                 |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |  |   |                           |                     |
| under £10,000               | 38   | 35                                      | 27                        | 573                 |
| £10-14,999                  | 53   | 28                                      | 19                        | 301                 |
| £15-24,999                  | 59   | 27                                      | 14                        | 363                 |
| more than £25,000           | 67   | 23                                      | 10                        | 449                 |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>53</b>                                    | <b>29</b>                               | <b>18</b>                 | <b>1,752</b>        |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.001$

## Bread, other cereals and potatoes

### Bread

Each person was asked how often they ate bread in an average week. Over half (51%) reported eating bread more than once a day, 37% said daily, 8% on three to six days, 4% on one or two days and 1% less than once a week.

How often people ate bread was associated with demographic and social group characteristics. Men (55%) were more likely to eat bread more than once a day than women (47%).

**Table 20: Consumption of bread during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | More than once a day (%) | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>            |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                      | 55                       | 33        | 9            | 2            | 0                    | 733          |
| Female                    | 47                       | 39        | 8            | 5            | 1                    | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                     | 45                       | 38        | 13           | 5            | 1                    | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 45                       | 40        | 10           | 4            | 1                    | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 52                       | 37        | 7            | 4            | 1                    | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 63                       | 30        | 4            | 2            | 1                    | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                 | 55                       | 26        | 13           | 4            | 2                    | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 51                       | 39        | 7            | 3            | -                    | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 49                       | 38        | 8            | 5            | 1                    | 771          |
| <b>* Social class</b>     |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                    | 54                       | 34        | 7            | 4            | 1                    | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 47                       | 39        | 10           | 4            | 1                    | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000             | 54                       | 34        | 7            | 4            | 1                    | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 50                       | 37        | 9            | 4            | 1                    | 301          |
| 15-24,999                 | 49                       | 36        | 10           | 3            | 1                    | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 45                       | 42        | 9            | 4            | -                    | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>51</b>                | <b>37</b> | <b>8</b>     | <b>4</b>     | <b>1</b>             | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## Type of bread

Those surveyed were asked to state what type of bread they normally ate. The most popular type of bread was white (59%), followed by wholemeal/multigrain (17%) and brown/granary (14%). One in ten (10%) people said that they had no regular preference.

There were associations between the type of bread that people chose and their age, household type and social class. The younger they were the more likely they were to prefer white bread. More of the oldest age group reported eating wholemeal bread (25%) than the youngest age group (13%). Adults living with children under 18 years (66%) and those from manual households (64%) were more likely to choose white bread compared to adults living alone (48%) or those from a non-manual background (55%).

**Table 21: Type of bread usually consumed by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | White (%) | Wholemeal/<br>multigrain (%) | Brown/<br>granary (%) | No usual<br>(%) | Base<br>(N)  |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                |           |                              |                       |                 |              |
| Male                      | 61        | 15                           | 15                    | 10              | 732          |
| Female                    | 58        | 19                           | 14                    | 10              | 1,017        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |           |                              |                       |                 |              |
| 18-29                     | 70        | 13                           | 11                    | 7               | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 65        | 14                           | 12                    | 10              | 575          |
| 45-59                     | 55        | 18                           | 17                    | 11              | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 48        | 25                           | 16                    | 12              | 383          |
| <b>*** Household type</b> |           |                              |                       |                 |              |
| One adult                 | 48        | 26                           | 17                    | 10              | 257          |
| Two or more adults        | 56        | 18                           | 17                    | 9               | 721          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 66        | 13                           | 11                    | 11              | 771          |
| <b>** Social class</b>    |           |                              |                       |                 |              |
| Manual                    | 64        | 14                           | 12                    | 10              | 749          |
| Non-manual                | 55        | 20                           | 15                    | 10              | 846          |
| <b>Household income</b>   |           |                              |                       |                 |              |
| under £10,000             | 62        | 16                           | 14                    | 9               | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 62        | 16                           | 14                    | 9               | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 63        | 15                           | 13                    | 9               | 361          |
| more than £25,000         | 53        | 21                           | 15                    | 12              | 448          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>59</b> | <b>17</b>                    | <b>14</b>             | <b>10</b>       | <b>1,749</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## Potatoes

Adults were asked how often they ate potatoes in an average week. More than four out of ten (42%) adults reported eating potatoes every day and another 38% eat potatoes on three to six days of the week. Seventeen percent reported eating potatoes on one or two days and 3% less than once a week. The majority of people (81%) reported that their usual type of cooked potato is boiled.

How often potatoes were eaten in an average week varied with age, household type and socioeconomic circumstances. Those in the older age groups were more likely to report having potatoes daily (60% for 60-75 year olds) compared to the younger age groups (27% for 18-29 year olds). Adults from manual households also reported eating potatoes more often than those from non-manual households. Higher income households reported eating potatoes less often than those from the lowest income group (31% of the highest income group eat potatoes every day compared with 48% of those from the lowest income group). Those from households with two or more adults were more likely to have potatoes daily than those from other household types.

**Table 22: Consumption of potatoes during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                  |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                        | 41        | 39           | 18           | 3                    | 733          |
| Female                      | 43        | 38           | 17           | 2                    | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                       | 27        | 46           | 23           | 3                    | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 32        | 44           | 22           | 2                    | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 49        | 34           | 15           | 2                    | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 60        | 27           | 9            | 3                    | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                   | 36        | 34           | 23           | 8                    | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 48        | 35           | 15           | 2                    | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 38        | 43           | 18           | 1                    | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                      | 48        | 34           | 15           | 3                    | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 35        | 43           | 20           | 3                    | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000               | 48        | 33           | 15           | 3                    | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 50        | 32           | 16           | 3                    | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 36        | 42           | 19           | 3                    | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 31        | 47           | 20           | 2                    | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>42</b> | <b>38</b>    | <b>17</b>    | <b>3</b>             | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

## Rice and pasta

People were asked how often they ate rice or pasta in an average week. Fourteen percent ate rice or pasta on three to seven days a week. Most people eat rice or pasta once or twice a week (47%) or less often (39%).

There were significant associations between how often people ate rice or pasta and their gender, age, household type, and socioeconomic circumstances. Women are more likely to eat rice or pasta more frequently than men. Adults in the younger age groups are more likely to eat rice or pasta more frequently than those in the older age groups (28% of 18-29 year olds eat rice or pasta several times a week compared to only 4% of those in the 60-75 year age group). Adults from non-manual households (19%) and those with a higher household income (21%) are also more likely to eat rice or pasta more often than those from a manual (9%) or low income household (7%).

**Table 23: Consumption of rice and pasta during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                        | 12           | 43           | 45                   | 733          |
| Female                      | 16           | 50           | 34                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                       | 28           | 50           | 21                   | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 18           | 55           | 27                   | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 8            | 50           | 42                   | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 4            | 28           | 68                   | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                   | 13           | 33           | 54                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 12           | 41           | 47                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 17           | 57           | 26                   | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                      | 9            | 41           | 50                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 19           | 52           | 30                   | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000               | 7            | 41           | 52                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 15           | 43           | 43                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 18           | 51           | 31                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 21           | 56           | 23                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>14</b>    | <b>47</b>    | <b>39</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

## Breakfast cereal

Each person was asked how often they eat breakfast cereal in an average week. Forty six percent of adults eat breakfast cereal daily. Almost a third (31%) would have breakfast cereal less than once a week.

There were significant associations between how often people eat breakfast cereal and their age and socioeconomic circumstances. Older people are more likely to eat breakfast cereal more often than the younger ones (56% of 60-75 year olds eat breakfast cereal daily compared to only 40% of 30-44 year olds). Adults from non-manual households (50%) and those with a higher household income (51%) are also more likely to eat breakfast cereal daily, than those from manual (40%), or low income households (43%).

**Table 24: Consumption of breakfast cereal during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                            | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|----------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                 |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                       | 45        | 14           | 10           | 32                   | 733          |
| Female                     | 46        | 13           | 11           | 30                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>       |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                      | 43        | 19           | 11           | 27                   | 328          |
| 30-44                      | 40        | 14           | 12           | 35                   | 576          |
| 45-59                      | 46        | 12           | 10           | 32                   | 463          |
| 60-75                      | 56        | 9            | 9            | 27                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>      |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                  | 47        | 11           | 11           | 31                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults         | 49        | 13           | 10           | 28                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)     | 42        | 14           | 11           | 33                   | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>    |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                     | 40        | 12           | 9            | 39                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                 | 50        | 13           | 12           | 25                   | 848          |
| <b>** Household income</b> |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000              | 43        | 13           | 9            | 34                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                 | 40        | 12           | 12           | 36                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                 | 47        | 13           | 11           | 30                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000          | 51        | 14           | 12           | 23                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>             | <b>46</b> | <b>13</b>    | <b>11</b>    | <b>31</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

### Fibre content of breakfast cereal

The main type of breakfast cereal eaten by people in the survey is high fibre (41%). Six percent had no usual type of breakfast cereal. One in five (20%) respondents reported that they did not eat breakfast cereal.

There were significant associations between type of breakfast cereal and gender, age, household type, and social class. More women (43%) eat high fibre breakfast cereal than men (38%). Older people are more likely to eat high fibre cereal than younger ones (56% of 60-75 year olds eat high fibre cereal compared to 31% of those in the 18-29 age group).

Adults from non-manual households (47%) are also more likely to eat high fibre cereal, than those from a manual household (35%). Those in households with children (36%) are less likely to eat high fibre cereal than those from other household types.

**Table 25: Type of breakfast cereal usually consumed during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | High fibre (%) | Other cereals (%) | No usual type (%) | Don't eat breakfast cereal (%) | Base (N)     |
|---------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>            |                |                   |                   |                                |              |
| Male                      | 38             | 32                | 5                 | 24                             | 733          |
| Female                    | 43             | 33                | 7                 | 16                             | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |                |                   |                   |                                |              |
| 18-29                     | 31             | 45                | 5                 | 19                             | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 36             | 37                | 9                 | 18                             | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 42             | 31                | 6                 | 21                             | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 56             | 18                | 5                 | 21                             | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b> |                |                   |                   |                                |              |
| One adult                 | 48             | 22                | 5                 | 25                             | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 45             | 30                | 4                 | 21                             | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 36             | 39                | 9                 | 16                             | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>   |                |                   |                   |                                |              |
| Manual                    | 35             | 33                | 7                 | 25                             | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 47             | 31                | 7                 | 16                             | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b>   |                |                   |                   |                                |              |
| under £10,000             | 38             | 34                | 7                 | 20                             | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 38             | 32                | 6                 | 23                             | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 40             | 35                | 5                 | 19                             | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 47             | 31                | 7                 | 16                             | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>41</b>      | <b>33</b>         | <b>6</b>          | <b>20</b>                      | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.001$

## Meat, fish and alternatives

### Red meat

Adults were asked how often they ate red meat in an average week. Less than one third (31%) would have red meat three days a week or more. Most people (69%) eat red meat once or twice a week or less often.

There were significant associations between consumption of red meat and gender, age and social class. Men eat red meat more often than women with 27% of women eating red meat three or more times a week compared to 36% of men. Those in the youngest age group eat red meat least often compared to the other age groups. Adults from manual households are also more likely to eat red meat more often than those from a non-manual household (34% of adults from manual households eat red meat three or more times a week compared to 29% of those from a non-manual household).

**Table 26: Consumption of red meat during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>          |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 36           | 53           | 11                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 27           | 57           | 16                   | 1,019        |
| <b>** Age group</b>     |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 27           | 53           | 20                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 30           | 59           | 12                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 35           | 54           | 11                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 31           | 55           | 14                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 26           | 57           | 17                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 35           | 52           | 13                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 29           | 58           | 13                   | 771          |
| <b>** Social class</b>  |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 34           | 55           | 11                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 29           | 55           | 16                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 29           | 57           | 14                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 31           | 56           | 13                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 33           | 54           | 13                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 33           | 54           | 14                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>31</b>    | <b>55</b>    | <b>14</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## White meat

The adults surveyed were asked how often they eat white meat such as chicken or turkey in an average week. Just over one quarter (27%) would eat white meat three or more days a week. Most people would have white meat once or twice a week (62%).

There were significant associations between how often people ate white meat and their gender, age, household type and socioeconomic circumstances. Women eat white meat more often than men (29% of women eat white meat three or more times a week compared to 25% of men). The younger people were, the more likely they were to eat white meat more frequently (35% of 18-29 year olds eat white meat most days compared to 21% of 60-75 year olds). Adults in households with children eat white meat more often than those in other households. People from non-manual households and those with a higher household income are also more likely to eat white meat more frequently than those from a manual, or low income household.

**Table 27: Consumption of white meat during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>** Sex</b>               |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                        | 25           | 61           | 14                   | 733          |
| Female                      | 29           | 62           | 9                    | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                       | 35           | 55           | 10                   | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 29           | 64           | 7                    | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 26           | 62           | 12                   | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 21           | 63           | 16                   | 385          |
| <b>* Household type</b>     |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                   | 22           | 61           | 17                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 28           | 59           | 14                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 29           | 65           | 6                    | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                      | 23           | 63           | 14                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 32           | 60           | 8                    | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000               | 19           | 66           | 15                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 29           | 58           | 13                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 29           | 63           | 9                    | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 37           | 56           | 7                    | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>27</b>    | <b>62</b>    | <b>11</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<001)

## Meat products

Adults were asked how often they eat meat products (such as sausages, bacon, meat pies, pasties or chicken nuggets). Most people would have meat products once or twice a week (45%) or less often (41%). Fourteen percent would eat meat products three or more days a week.

There were significant associations between how often people ate meat products and their gender, age, household type and socioeconomic circumstances. Men eat meat products more often than women. Almost twice as many men as women eat meat products on most days of the week (19% compared to 10%).

Younger people are more likely to eat meat products more often than older ones (25% of 18-29 year olds eat meat products on most days compared to 5% of 60-75 year olds).

Adults in households with children eat meat products more often than other people. Sixty four percent of those in households with children eat meat products at least once or twice a week compared to 46% of adults living alone.

People from manual households and those with a lower household income are also more likely to eat meat products more often than adults from a non-manual, or high income household.

**Table 28: Consumption of meat products during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>            |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                      | 19           | 47           | 34                   | 733          |
| Female                    | 10           | 44           | 46                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                     | 25           | 48           | 27                   | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 16           | 47           | 37                   | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 10           | 48           | 43                   | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 5            | 37           | 58                   | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                 | 14           | 32           | 54                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 13           | 45           | 43                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 14           | 50           | 36                   | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                    | 17           | 46           | 37                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 10           | 44           | 46                   | 848          |
| <b>* Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000             | 16           | 45           | 39                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 16           | 49           | 36                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 13           | 45           | 42                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 11           | 43           | 46                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>14</b>    | <b>45</b>    | <b>41</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## Fried fish

Adults were asked how often they ate fried fish in an average week. Almost half (49%) of them reported that they rarely or never ate fried fish, 48% reported eating fried fish once or twice a week and 2% on three or more days a week.

There were associations between how often people ate fried fish and their gender, age and social class. More men (55%) than women (47%) reported that they ate fried fish at least once a week. Older people were more likely to eat fried fish than younger ones. Slightly more people from manual households ate fried fish more often than those from non-manual households.

**Table 29: Consumption of fried fish during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>          |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 3            | 52           | 44                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 2            | 45           | 53                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 2            | 37           | 60                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 2            | 46           | 53                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 2            | 54           | 44                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 4            | 55           | 41                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 4            | 47           | 50                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 2            | 51           | 47                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 2            | 46           | 52                   | 771          |
| <b>* Social class</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 3            | 52           | 46                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 2            | 45           | 54                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 3            | 50           | 47                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 3            | 51           | 47                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 1            | 47           | 52                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 2            | 45           | 52                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>2</b>     | <b>48</b>    | <b>49</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

### Fish (not fried)

Adults were also asked how often they ate fish that wasn't fried (that is grilled, poached, steamed, raw) in an average week. Around a third (34%) of them would have cooked in this way of fish once or twice a week. The majority (62%) would have it less often.

There were significant associations between how often people ate fish that was not fried and their gender and age. Women eat non-fried fish more often than men (40% of women would eat non-fried fish at least once or twice a week compared to 35% of men). Older people are more likely to eat non-fried fish, with almost half (48%) of those in the oldest age group eating it at least once a week compared to 29% of those in the youngest age group.

**Table 30: Consumption of fish (not fried) during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>* Sex</b>            |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 4            | 31           | 65                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 3            | 37           | 60                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 3            | 26           | 71                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 3            | 31           | 66                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 4            | 37           | 60                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 5            | 43           | 52                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 5            | 37           | 59                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 4            | 37           | 60                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 3            | 32           | 65                   | 771          |
| <b>* Social class</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 4            | 32           | 65                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 4            | 38           | 59                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 3            | 32           | 65                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 4            | 32           | 65                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 4            | 33           | 62                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 3            | 39           | 59                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>4</b>     | <b>34</b>    | <b>62</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

### Fish (combined fried and not fried)

All those who reported eating fish, either fried or not fried, were combined to provide an estimate of how often people ate any kind of fish during an average week. Six out of ten (61%) people would have fish once or twice a week. One third (33%) would have fish less often or never.

There were significant associations between consumption of fish and gender, age, and household type. Men eat fish more often than women (7% of men eat fish three or more days a week compared to 4% of women).

Older people are significantly more likely to eat fish more often than those in the other age groups (78% of 60-75 year olds eat fish at least once or twice a week, compared to 52% of 18-29 year olds). People in households with children eat fish less often than those in other households, 63% eating it at least once or twice a week compared to 69% from other household types.

**Table 31: Consumption of fish (fried and not fried) during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>* Sex</b>            |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 7            | 61           | 32                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 4            | 61           | 35                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 5            | 47           | 48                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 5            | 59           | 37                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 5            | 65           | 30                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 7            | 71           | 21                   | 385          |
| <b>* Household type</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 7            | 62           | 31                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 5            | 64           | 30                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 5            | 58           | 38                   | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 6            | 62           | 32                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 5            | 60           | 34                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 6            | 61           | 33                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 6            | 62           | 33                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 6            | 61           | 33                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 5            | 60           | 35                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>6</b>     | <b>61</b>    | <b>33</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## Milk and milk products

### Milk

The main type of milk used by adults in Northern Ireland is semi-skimmed milk (59%), followed by whole milk (33%).

There were significant associations between type of milk used and household type, and socioeconomic circumstances. Adults from non-manual (66%) and higher income households (70%) are more likely to use semi-skimmed milk, than those from a manual (54%) or lower income households (51%). People in households with children are more likely to use whole milk (37%) than those from other households.

**Table 32: Type of milk consumed by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | Whole (%) | Semi-skimmed (%) | Skimmed (%) | Other (%) | None (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-----------|------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                  |           |                  |             |           |          |              |
| Male                        | 35        | 58               | 4           | 2         | 1        | 732          |
| Female                      | 31        | 61               | 5           | 2         | 1        | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>            |           |                  |             |           |          |              |
| 18-29                       | 30        | 62               | 4           | 1         | 3        | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 34        | 58               | 4           | 3         | 1        | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 33        | 58               | 4           | 3         | 2        | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 32        | 60               | 6           | 1         | 1        | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |           |                  |             |           |          |              |
| One adult                   | 32        | 62               | 4           | 1         | 2        | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 29        | 61               | 7           | 2         | 2        | 722          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 37        | 57               | 2           | 3         | 1        | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |           |                  |             |           |          |              |
| Manual                      | 40        | 54               | 3           | 2         | 1        | 749          |
| Non-manual                  | 24        | 66               | 6           | 3         | 2        | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |           |                  |             |           |          |              |
| under £10,000               | 42        | 51               | 3           | 1         | 2        | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 40        | 54               | 4           | 1         | -        | 300          |
| £15-24,999                  | 27        | 66               | 4           | 2         | 2        | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 19        | 70               | 6           | 4         | 2        | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>33</b> | <b>59</b>        | <b>4</b>    | <b>2</b>  | <b>1</b> | <b>1,751</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

## Foods containing fat and foods containing sugar

### Chips

Fewer than one in ten (9%) adults said they eat chips on three or more days during the week and over half (55%) eat chips on one or two days. Over one in three (36%) people reported eating chips less than once a week.

There were significant associations between how often people ate chips and their demographic circumstances and social class grouping. Men reported eating chips more often than women, with 13% of men eating them more than three days a week compared to 7% of women. One in five (20%) of the youngest age group reported eating chips on three or more days a week, twice as many as in any other age group. More adults from the manual group (11%) reported eating chips several times a week than from the non-manual group (7%).

**Table 33: Consumption of chips during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>            |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                      | 13           | 53           | 35                   | 733          |
| Female                    | 7            | 56           | 37                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                     | 20           | 62           | 18                   | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 9            | 63           | 28                   | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 7            | 53           | 41                   | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 2            | 39           | 59                   | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                 | 9            | 36           | 55                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 7            | 54           | 39                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 11           | 62           | 27                   | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                    | 11           | 56           | 33                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 7            | 53           | 40                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b>   |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000             | 10           | 53           | 37                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 11           | 59           | 30                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 6            | 58           | 35                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 9            | 52           | 38                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>9</b>     | <b>55</b>    | <b>36</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

### Fried foods (excluding chips)

Those surveyed were asked how often they ate fried foods other than chips during an average week. Fewer than one in ten (8%) people ate fried food on three or more days during the week and over half (53%) ate fried foods less than once a week.

There were significant associations between how often people ate fried food and their gender and socioeconomic circumstances. Men were more likely to eat fried food several times a week than women were (12% of men eat fried food 3-7 days a week compared with 5% of women). Adults from the manual group (11%) were more likely to eat fried foods several times a week than those from the non-manual group (5%). Adults from high income households were less likely to eat fried foods regularly than those from low income households (5% compared with 11%).

**Table 34: Consumption of fried foods (not chips) during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | 3-7 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                        | 12           | 44           | 44                   | 733          |
| Female                      | 5            | 36           | 59                   | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>            |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                       | 8            | 41           | 51                   | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 8            | 39           | 54                   | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 7            | 38           | 54                   | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 8            | 41           | 51                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>       |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                   | 10           | 35           | 55                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 7            | 39           | 54                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 7            | 41           | 51                   | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                      | 11           | 46           | 44                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 5            | 35           | 60                   | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000               | 11           | 43           | 46                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 7            | 47           | 47                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 7            | 36           | 57                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 5            | 34           | 62                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>8</b>     | <b>40</b>    | <b>53</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

## Fat used to fry foods

The main type of fat used by adults in Northern Ireland to fry foods (including chips) is polyunsaturated fat (36%) eg sunflower, safflower or corn oil, followed by vegetable oil (28%) which may vary in composition, and monounsaturated oil (16%), eg olive or rapeseed oil.

There were significant associations between the type of fat used and gender, age and socioeconomic circumstances. More women (40%) than men (32%) use polyunsaturated oil. Older people are more likely to use solid cooking fat (eg Cookeen, Trex or White Flora), for example 13% of 60-75 year olds used solid cooking fat compared to 3% of 18-29 year olds. However people in the oldest group also reported using no fat (14% of 60-75 year olds compared to between 7% and 9% in the other age groups).

Households with children are more likely to use polyunsaturated oils than other household types. Adults from non-manual households (21%) are more likely to use monounsaturated oils compared to those from manual households (11%) and similarly people from higher income households are more likely to use monounsaturated oil (27% of those in the highest income group) than those from lower income households (9% of the lowest income group).

**Table 35: Type of fat used to fry foods by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | Mono-<br>unsaturated<br>(%) | Poly-<br>unsaturated<br>(%) | Vegetable<br>(%) | Solid<br>(%) | No<br>usual<br>(%) | None<br>(%) | Base<br>(N)  |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |                             |                             |                  |              |                    |             |              |
| Male                        | 15                          | 32                          | 29               | 8            | 7                  | 10          | 733          |
| Female                      | 17                          | 40                          | 27               | 7            | 2                  | 9           | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>        |                             |                             |                  |              |                    |             |              |
| 18-29                       | 13                          | 38                          | 33               | 3            | 5                  | 9           | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 16                          | 41                          | 28               | 5            | 4                  | 7           | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 18                          | 34                          | 28               | 9            | 4                  | 8           | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 16                          | 31                          | 21               | 13           | 4                  | 14          | 385          |
| <b>*** Household type</b>   |                             |                             |                  |              |                    |             |              |
| One adult                   | 15                          | 27                          | 23               | 11           | 4                  | 19          | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 18                          | 36                          | 25               | 9            | 4                  | 8           | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 15                          | 40                          | 32               | 4            | 3                  | 7           | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                             |                             |                  |              |                    |             |              |
| Manual                      | 11                          | 36                          | 30               | 9            | 5                  | 9           | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 21                          | 36                          | 26               | 5            | 3                  | 10          | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                             |                             |                  |              |                    |             |              |
| under £10,000               | 9                           | 37                          | 30               | 10           | 4                  | 10          | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 11                          | 37                          | 34               | 7            | 4                  | 7           | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 17                          | 36                          | 30               | 6            | 4                  | 9           | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 27                          | 37                          | 21               | 3            | 3                  | 10          | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>16</b>                   | <b>36</b>                   | <b>28</b>        | <b>7</b>     | <b>4</b>           | <b>9</b>    | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

## Spread

The main type of spread used was reduced/low fat spread, eg Low Low, Golden Olive, Gold (36%), followed by soft margarine/blend, eg Flora, Stork, Blue Band (31%) and butter/hard margarine/block margarine (27%).

There were no significant gender or socioeconomic differences in the type of spread used although more women (38%) than men (33%) used low fat spreads.

There were significant differences in the type of spread used by age group. The youngest adults were least likely to use low fat spread (30%) and butter or other hard spreads were most commonly used by the 45-59 and 60-75 age groups (31%).

**Table 36: Type of spread most frequently used by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | Low fat spread (%) | Spread (soft) (%) | Spread (hard) (%) | Other (%) | None (%) | Base         |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                    |                   |                   |           |          |              |
| Male                    | 33                 | 33                | 28                | 3         | 2        | 733          |
| Female                  | 38                 | 30                | 26                | 3         | 3        | 1,019        |
| <b>** Age group</b>     |                    |                   |                   |           |          |              |
| 18-29                   | 30                 | 38                | 24                | 4         | 4        | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 38                 | 34                | 23                | 3         | 3        | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 37                 | 27                | 31                | 3         | 2        | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 36                 | 27                | 31                | 4         | 2        | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                    |                   |                   |           |          |              |
| One adult               | 31                 | 33                | 28                | 6         | 3        | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 39                 | 26                | 28                | 4         | 3        | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 35                 | 35                | 27                | 2         | 2        | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                    |                   |                   |           |          |              |
| Manual                  | 34                 | 33                | 28                | 3         | 2        | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 37                 | 31                | 25                | 4         | 3        | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                    |                   |                   |           |          |              |
| under £10,000           | 34                 | 33                | 30                | 2         | 1        | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 32                 | 32                | 31                | 3         | 2        | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 38                 | 30                | 25                | 4         | 3        | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 38                 | 29                | 25                | 4         | 4        | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>36</b>          | <b>31</b>         | <b>27</b>         | <b>3</b>  | <b>3</b> | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01)

## Biscuits

Adults were asked how often they ate biscuits during an average week. Over four in ten (44%) people eat biscuits every day.

There were significant associations between how often people ate biscuits and their age. One in five adults in the two youngest age groups (18-29 and 30-44 years) ate biscuits more than once a day, compared to 16% of those over 45 years.

**Table 37: Consumption of biscuits during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | More than once a day (%) | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 21                       | 27        | 12           | 23           | 17                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 17                       | 26        | 14           | 25           | 19                   | 1,019        |
| <b>** Age group</b>     |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 20                       | 24        | 18           | 24           | 14                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 21                       | 22        | 12           | 27           | 18                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 16                       | 27        | 13           | 23           | 22                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 16                       | 31        | 12           | 23           | 18                   | 385          |
| <b>* Household type</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 18                       | 23        | 14           | 22           | 23                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 17                       | 31        | 13           | 23           | 17                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 20                       | 23        | 13           | 26           | 17                   | 771          |
| <b>* Social class</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 21                       | 28        | 11           | 21           | 19                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 17                       | 25        | 15           | 27           | 17                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 17                       | 27        | 14           | 24           | 19                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 18                       | 24        | 11           | 26           | 22                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 24                       | 23        | 12           | 23           | 19                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 17                       | 28        | 15           | 26           | 15                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>18</b>                | <b>26</b> | <b>13</b>    | <b>24</b>    | <b>18</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\* p<0.01)

## Confectionery

One in four (25%) adults reported that they ate confectionery on three or more days a week.

Older people were significantly less likely to eat confectionery frequently. Almost half (49%) of adults in the oldest age group rarely or never ate confectionery compared with 22% of the youngest age group.

**Table 38: Consumption of confectionery during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | More than once a day (%) | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 5                        | 13        | 9            | 33           | 40                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 5                        | 9         | 9            | 37           | 40                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 7                        | 15        | 18           | 38           | 22                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 7                        | 13        | 7            | 37           | 38                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 3                        | 9         | 7            | 35           | 46                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 4                        | 7         | 8            | 31           | 49                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 5                        | 7         | 10           | 33           | 45                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 5                        | 10        | 10           | 36           | 40                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 6                        | 13        | 8            | 36           | 38                   | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 5                        | 10        | 8            | 33           | 44                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 5                        | 11        | 9            | 37           | 37                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 4                        | 10        | 9            | 35           | 41                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 7                        | 11        | 9            | 32           | 41                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 6                        | 11        | 10           | 36           | 37                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 5                        | 11        | 8            | 40           | 36                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>5</b>                 | <b>11</b> | <b>9</b>     | <b>35</b>    | <b>40</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*) p<0.001)

## Cakes

Almost one in four (23%) adults ate cakes on three or more days a week.

How often people ate cakes did not appear to be related to their gender or socioeconomic circumstances. Older people were more likely to eat cakes on a daily basis. One in five (20%) of the 60-75 age group reported that they ate cakes daily compared to 9% of the 18-29 age group.

**Table 39: Consumption of cakes during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                          | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>               |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                     | 14        | 11           | 33           | 42                   | 733          |
| Female                   | 13        | 9            | 38           | 40                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>     |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                    | 9         | 9            | 31           | 52                   | 328          |
| 30-44                    | 11        | 8            | 35           | 46                   | 576          |
| 45-59                    | 13        | 10           | 43           | 34                   | 463          |
| 60-75                    | 20        | 14           | 33           | 33                   | 385          |
| <b>** Household type</b> |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                | 12        | 9            | 34           | 45                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults       | 17        | 11           | 36           | 36                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)   | 11        | 9            | 36           | 44                   | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>      |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                   | 14        | 11           | 34           | 41                   | 750          |
| Non-manual               | 13        | 9            | 37           | 41                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b>  |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000            | 15        | 11           | 35           | 39                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999               | 15        | 10           | 33           | 43                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999               | 12        | 8            | 36           | 45                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000        | 11        | 10           | 38           | 41                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>           | <b>13</b> | <b>10</b>    | <b>36</b>    | <b>41</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.001 and \*\*\*p<0.01)

## Savoury snacks

Most people (78%) eat savoury snacks such as crisps once or twice a week or less often. This varies significantly with age, gender and household income.

More than one in four (27%) men eat savoury snacks most days or daily compared to one in five (20%) women. Young people are much more likely to eat savoury snacks on a daily basis than older people. Just 3% of the 60-75 age group reported that they eat savoury snacks daily compared to 26% of the 18-29 age group.

Adults from the lowest income households eat savoury snacks less often. More than half (52%) of adults from the lowest income households eat savoury snacks less than once a week compared to 41% of those from the highest income households.

**Table 40: Consumption of savoury snacks during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                           | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>* Sex</b>              |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                      | 16        | 11           | 29           | 45                   | 733          |
| Female                    | 12        | 8            | 32           | 48                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>      |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                     | 26        | 19           | 36           | 19                   | 328          |
| 30-44                     | 18        | 10           | 39           | 33                   | 576          |
| 45-59                     | 8         | 7            | 29           | 57                   | 463          |
| 60-75                     | 3         | 3            | 15           | 78                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>     |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                 | 7         | 7            | 19           | 67                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults        | 12        | 8            | 27           | 53                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)    | 17        | 11           | 38           | 34                   | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>       |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                    | 15        | 9            | 29           | 47                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                | 13        | 9            | 31           | 47                   | 848          |
| <b>* Household income</b> |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000             | 11        | 9            | 28           | 52                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                | 16        | 10           | 31           | 43                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                | 16        | 9            | 32           | 44                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000         | 14        | 11           | 35           | 41                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>            | <b>14</b> | <b>9</b>     | <b>31</b>    | <b>47</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## Fizzy drinks and squashes

There are significant differences between men and women in terms of how often they drink fizzy drinks or squashes containing sugar. Men are more likely than women (22% compared to 11%) to drink sugary drinks at least once a day. Seventy percent of women drink sugary drinks less than once a week compared with 52% of men. Older people are less likely than younger ones to drink sugary drinks, for example 17% of 18-29 year olds drink them more than once a day compared with 2% of 60-75 year olds.

**Table 41: Consumption of fizzy drinks and squashes containing sugar during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | More than once a day (%) | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>          |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                    | 9                        | 13        | 11           | 16           | 52                   | 733          |
| Female                  | 4                        | 7         | 6            | 13           | 70                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>    |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                   | 17                       | 14        | 19           | 18           | 33                   | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 5                        | 10        | 7            | 15           | 63                   | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 3                        | 8         | 5            | 16           | 69                   | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 2                        | 7         | 3            | 9            | 79                   | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult               | 4                        | 8         | 7            | 14           | 67                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 5                        | 10        | 9            | 13           | 62                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 7                        | 10        | 8            | 15           | 60                   | 771          |
| <b>* Social class</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                  | 7                        | 12        | 8            | 14           | 60                   | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 5                        | 7         | 7            | 14           | 66                   | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000           | 7                        | 11        | 8            | 14           | 60                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 7                        | 11        | 8            | 14           | 61                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 5                        | 10        | 9            | 15           | 61                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 5                        | 8         | 9            | 15           | 63                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>6</b>                 | <b>10</b> | <b>8</b>     | <b>14</b>    | <b>62</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

## Sugar-free drinks

*Note: Sugar-free drinks are sweetened with a variety of artificial sweetening agents as alternatives to sugar. Although they are sugar-free, they are presented here with sugar-containing drinks to allow comparison.*

There are significant associations between how often people have sugar-free drinks and their demographic and socioeconomic circumstances and household type. Women are more likely than men (39% compared to 32%) to drink sugar-free drinks once a week or more often. Older people are less likely to have sugar-free drinks, for example 10% of 18-29 year olds drink them more than once a day compared to 3% of 60-75 year olds. Fewer adults from manual and low income households drink sugar-free drinks once a week or more. Adults living alone are least likely to drink sugar-free drinks, with 75% of this group drinking them less than once a week.

**Table 42: Consumption of sugar-free fizzy drinks or squashes during an average week by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                            | More than once a day (%) | Daily (%) | 3-6 days (%) | 1-2 days (%) | Less than weekly (%) | Base (N)     |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------|--------------|--------------|----------------------|--------------|
| <b>* Sex</b>               |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Male                       | 5                        | 9         | 6            | 13           | 68                   | 733          |
| Female                     | 6                        | 8         | 9            | 17           | 61                   | 1,019        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>       |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| 18-29                      | 10                       | 10        | 12           | 14           | 55                   | 328          |
| 30-44                      | 6                        | 8         | 9            | 17           | 60                   | 576          |
| 45-59                      | 2                        | 8         | 5            | 17           | 67                   | 463          |
| 60-75                      | 3                        | 8         | 5            | 11           | 73                   | 385          |
| <b>** Household type</b>   |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| One adult                  | 4                        | 3         | 5            | 13           | 75                   | 258          |
| Two or more adults         | 6                        | 10        | 8            | 16           | 62                   | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)     | 5                        | 9         | 8            | 15           | 62                   | 771          |
| <b>** Social class</b>     |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| Manual                     | 6                        | 8         | 6            | 13           | 67                   | 750          |
| Non-manual                 | 4                        | 10        | 9            | 17           | 60                   | 848          |
| <b>** Household income</b> |                          |           |              |              |                      |              |
| under £10,000              | 4                        | 7         | 6            | 14           | 70                   | 573          |
| £10-14,999                 | 7                        | 7         | 9            | 15           | 62                   | 301          |
| £15-24,999                 | 7                        | 12        | 6            | 14           | 61                   | 363          |
| more than £25,000          | 5                        | 10        | 10           | 18           | 58                   | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>             | <b>5</b>                 | <b>8</b>  | <b>8</b>     | <b>15</b>    | <b>64</b>            | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05, \*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

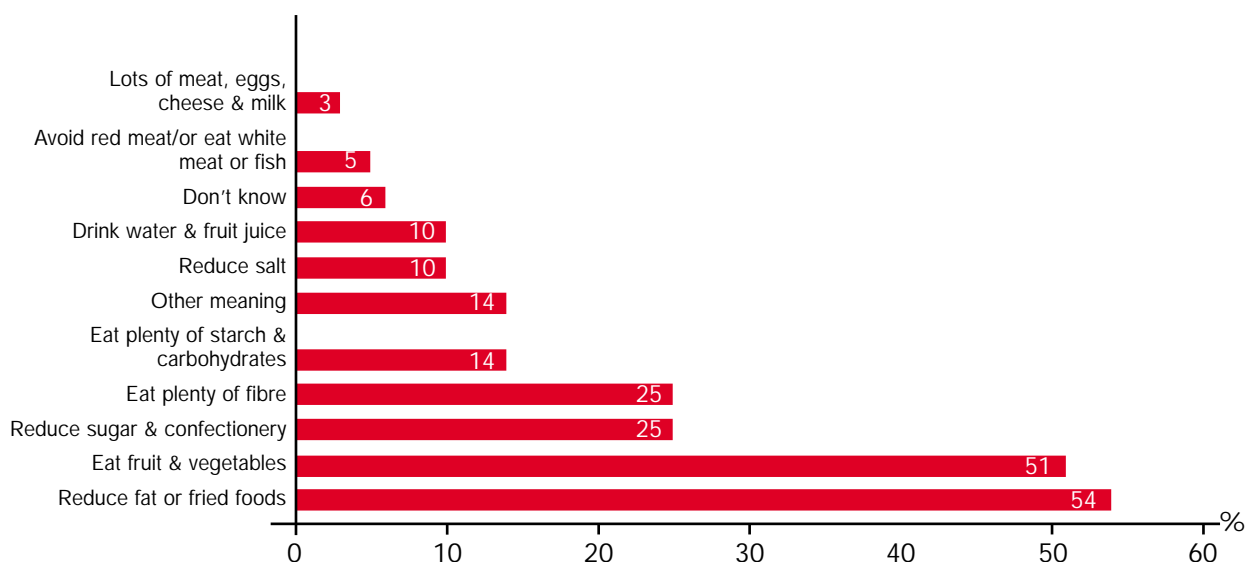
# Healthy eating: awareness and influences

This section describes adults' awareness of healthy eating as well as influences on their eating habits.

## The meaning of healthy eating

Those taking part in the survey were asked to state what they understood by the term 'healthy eating'. More than one definition could be provided and the responses are summarised in Figure 5. More than half (54%) of those asked suggested that the term 'healthy eating' meant cutting down on fried or fatty foods, 51% said eating plenty of fruit, vegetables and salad. One quarter (25%) of respondents stated that the term 'healthy eating' meant eating plenty of fibre or cutting down on sugar, cakes and confectionery (25%).

**Figure 5: 'Healthy eating' definitions expressed by respondents**



The four most common healthy eating definitions were examined in relation to demographic and socioeconomic circumstances (Table 43). Women were more likely to say 'reduce fat intake' (57%), 'eat more fruit and vegetables' (55%) and 'reduce sugar intake' (29%) than men (50%, 45% and 20% respectively). More of the youngest age group (55%) gave 'eating fruit and vegetables' as a healthy eating definition compared with the oldest age group (43%). Similarly more people from households with children under 18 years (55%) gave this definition compared with adults living alone (46%).

Adults from the non-manual group were more likely to say 'reduce fat intake' (59%), 'reduce sugar intake' (27%) and 'eat plenty of fibre' (29%) than those from the manual group (50%, 23% and 20% respectively). Eating plenty of fibre was more likely to be mentioned as a definition of healthy eating by adults from a high income household (31%) than those with lower household incomes.

**Table 43: The four most frequently stated 'healthy eating' definitions by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | Reduce fat intake (%) | Eat fruit & vegetables (%) | Eat plenty of fibre (%) | Reduce sugar intake (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |                       |                            |                         |                         |              |
| Male                        | ** 50                 | *** 45                     | 24                      | *** 20                  | 733          |
| Female                      | 57                    | 55                         | 26                      | 29                      | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>            |                       |                            |                         |                         |              |
| 18-29                       | 56                    | ** 55                      | 27                      | 23                      | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 56                    | 53                         | 26                      | 26                      | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 53                    | 51                         | 21                      | 24                      | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 51                    | 43                         | 28                      | 27                      | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>       |                       |                            |                         |                         |              |
| One adult                   | 54                    | ** 46                      | 23                      | 26                      | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 55                    | 48                         | 26                      | 26                      | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 53                    | 55                         | 26                      | 24                      | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                       |                            |                         |                         |              |
| Manual                      | *** 50                | 50                         | *** 20                  | * 23                    | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 59                    | 53                         | 29                      | 27                      | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                       |                            |                         |                         |              |
| under £10,000               | 51                    | ** 46                      | ** 23                   | 24                      | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 51                    | 53                         | 21                      | 24                      | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 58                    | 58                         | 23                      | 25                      | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 57                    | 51                         | 31                      | 27                      | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>54</b>             | <b>51</b>                  | <b>25</b>               | <b>25</b>               |              |
| <b>Base (N)</b>             | <b>944</b>            | <b>890</b>                 | <b>442</b>              | <b>439</b>              | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\* p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01 and \*\*\*p<0.001).

Responses were regrouped into those who provided three or more definitions, one to two definitions and no definitions and analysed by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances (Table 44). There were associations between gender and socioeconomic circumstances and the number of healthy eating definitions given. More women (38%) than men (26%) provided three or more terms. A higher proportion of adults from the non-manual group (40%) or high income households (40%) gave three or more definitions compared to those from the manual group (26%) or low income households (28%).

**Table 44: Number of 'healthy eating' definitions provided by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                             | No definitions stated (%) | 1-2 definitions (%) | 3 or more definitions (%) | Base (N)     |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| <b>*** Sex</b>              |                           |                     |                           |              |
| Male                        | 9                         | 65                  | 26                        | 733          |
| Female                      | 9                         | 58                  | 38                        | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>            |                           |                     |                           |              |
| 18-29                       | 5                         | 62                  | 34                        | 328          |
| 30-44                       | 5                         | 60                  | 34                        | 576          |
| 45-59                       | 7                         | 60                  | 33                        | 463          |
| 60-75                       | 8                         | 61                  | 31                        | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>       |                           |                     |                           |              |
| One adult                   | 7                         | 58                  | 35                        | 258          |
| Two or more adults          | 6                         | 63                  | 32                        | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)      | 6                         | 60                  | 34                        | 771          |
| <b>*** Social class</b>     |                           |                     |                           |              |
| Manual                      | 9                         | 65                  | 26                        | 750          |
| Non-manual                  | 3                         | 57                  | 40                        | 848          |
| <b>*** Household income</b> |                           |                     |                           |              |
| under £10,000               | 9                         | 63                  | 28                        | 573          |
| £10-14,999                  | 6                         | 65                  | 29                        | 301          |
| £15-24,999                  | 5                         | 58                  | 37                        | 363          |
| more than £25,000           | 3                         | 57                  | 40                        | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>              | <b>6</b>                  | <b>61</b>           | <b>33</b>                 | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\*\*)  $p < 0.001$

## Changes to eating patterns in the previous year

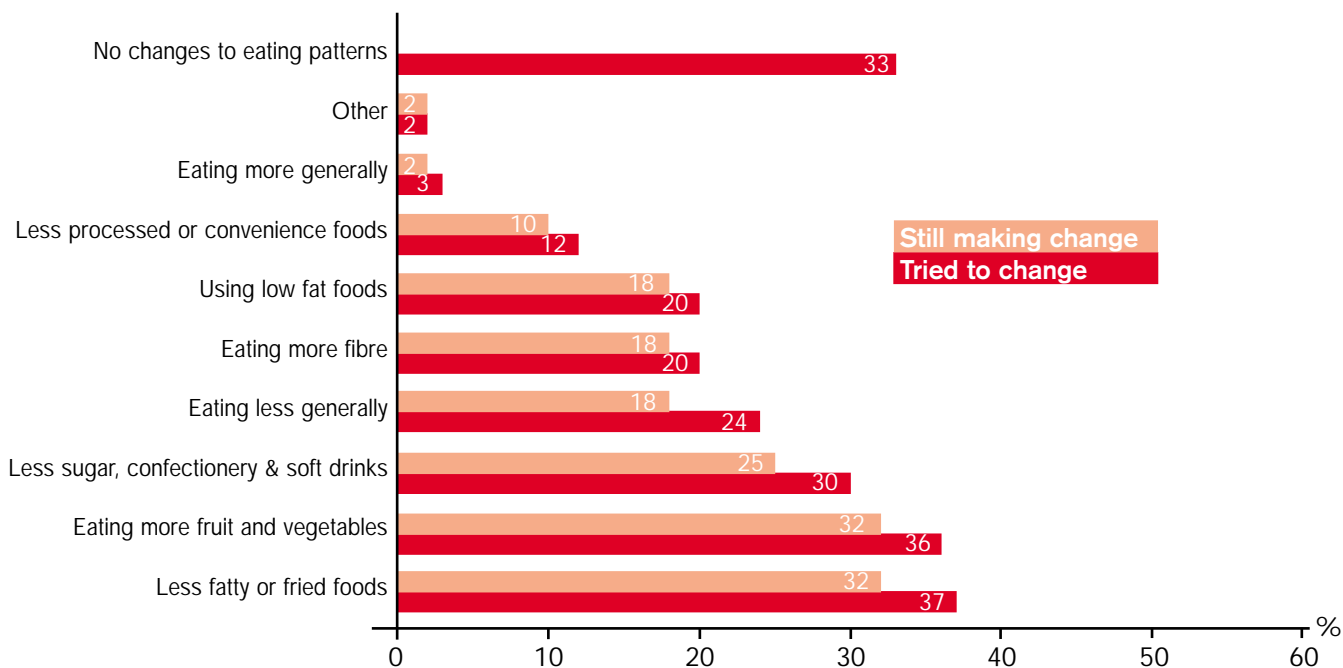
Adults were asked about changes they had made to their eating patterns in the last year. The questions explored their reasons for change and factors that discourage them from eating more healthy foods.

### Changes to eating patterns

Each person was asked to identify from a list of options any dietary changes that they had tried to make in the past year, even if only for a short time. The most common changes reported were eating less fatty or fried foods (37%), followed by eating more fruit and vegetables (36%), eating less sugary foods (30%) and eating less generally (24%) (Figure 6).

Those people who said that they had tried to make changes to their eating habits in the previous year (67% of the sample or 1,175 people) were then asked if they were still maintaining these changes at the time of survey. Ninety one percent of them said they were still implementing a change at the time of survey.

**Figure 6: Adults who tried to make a change to their eating patterns in the previous year and those who were still doing so at the time of survey**



There were associations between the four most frequently reported changes to eating patterns in the previous year and demographic and socioeconomic circumstances (Table 45). More women reported attempting to reduce fat intake (41%), increase fruit and vegetable intake (41%), reduce sugar intake (36%) and eat less generally (27%) than men (31%, 30%, 22% and 19% respectively).

The 30-44 year age group were the most likely to attempt to reduce fat in the diet (44%), increase fruit and vegetable consumption (43%) and reduce sugar intake (36%). The oldest age group were the least likely to report attempts to reduce fat in the diet (31%), increase fruit and vegetable consumption (26%) or reduce sugar intake (23%) compared to the other age groups. Responses to an earlier question also indicated that people in the oldest age group were most likely to say they did not know how many portions of fruit and vegetables are recommended each day.

Households with children under 18 years were more likely to report attempting to reduce fat intake and sugar intake in the diet than other household types. Adults from the non-manual group or high income households were more likely to report attempting to increase fruit and vegetable consumption and eating less generally than people from the manual group or low income households.

**Table 45: The four most frequent changes to eating habits in the previous year by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

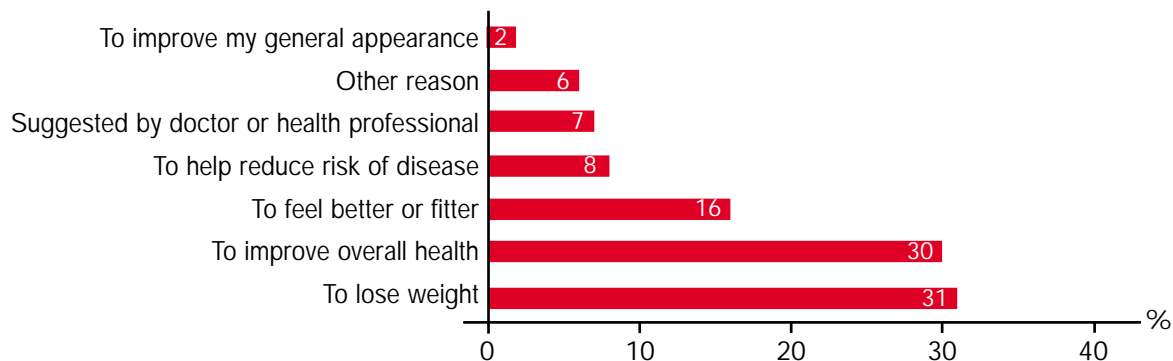
|                         | Reduced fat intake (%) | Increased fruit and vegetable intake (%) | Reduced sugar intake (%) | Ate less generally (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                        |  |                          |                        |              |
| Male                    | *** 31                 | *** 30                                   | *** 22                   | *** 19                 | 733          |
| Female                  | 41                     | 41                                       | 36                       | 27                     | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>        |                        |  |                          |                        |              |
| 18-29                   | *** 39                 | *** 41                                   | *** 34                   | 22                     | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 44                     | 43                                       | 36                       | 27                     | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 32                     | 34                                       | 28                       | 23                     | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 31                     | 26                                       | 23                       | 21                     | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                        |  |                          |                        |              |
| One adult               | * 32                   | 35                                       | *** 25                   | 21                     | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 35                     | 34                                       | 27                       | 23                     | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 40                     | 39                                       | 35                       | 26                     | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                        |  |                          |                        |              |
| Manual                  | 39                     | *** 30                                   | ** 28                    | *** 20                 | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 36                     | 44                                       | 36                       | 28                     | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                        |  |                          |                        |              |
| under £10,000           | 34                     | *** 28                                   | *** 25                   | *** 19                 | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 36                     | 31                                       | 28                       | 23                     | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 40                     | 41                                       | 36                       | 25                     | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 40                     | 49                                       | 37                       | 31                     | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>37</b>              | <b>36</b>                                | <b>31</b>                | <b>24</b>              |              |
| <b>Base (N)</b>         | <b>646</b>             | <b>636</b>                               | <b>534</b>               | <b>414</b>             | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

### Reasons for wanting to change eating habits

Those people (67%) who had reported dietary changes in the previous year were also asked to indicate their main reason for wanting to change. Almost one third (31%) said that they wanted to lose weight, 30% wanted to improve their overall health and 16% wanted to feel better or fitter.

**Figure 7: Reasons for wanting to change eating patterns in the previous year**



The top three reasons for making changes to eating habits were analysed by demographic and socioeconomic characteristics (Table 46). Women (36%) were more likely than men (22%) to say that the main reason for wanting to change their eating habits was to lose weight. In contrast, men (35%) were more likely than women (28%) to state that they wanted to change their eating habits to improve their overall health.

Adults from the oldest age group (21%) were less likely to say that losing weight was a reason for wanting to make dietary changes than any of the other age groups. People from the youngest age group were over twice as likely to say that they wanted to change their eating habits to feel fitter (22%) than those from the oldest age group (9%).

Adults from a manual background (12%) or low income household (12%) were less likely to want to change their eating habits to feel fitter compared with people from the non-manual group (18%) or high income households (20%).

**Table 46: Top three reasons why people wanted to change their eating habits by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

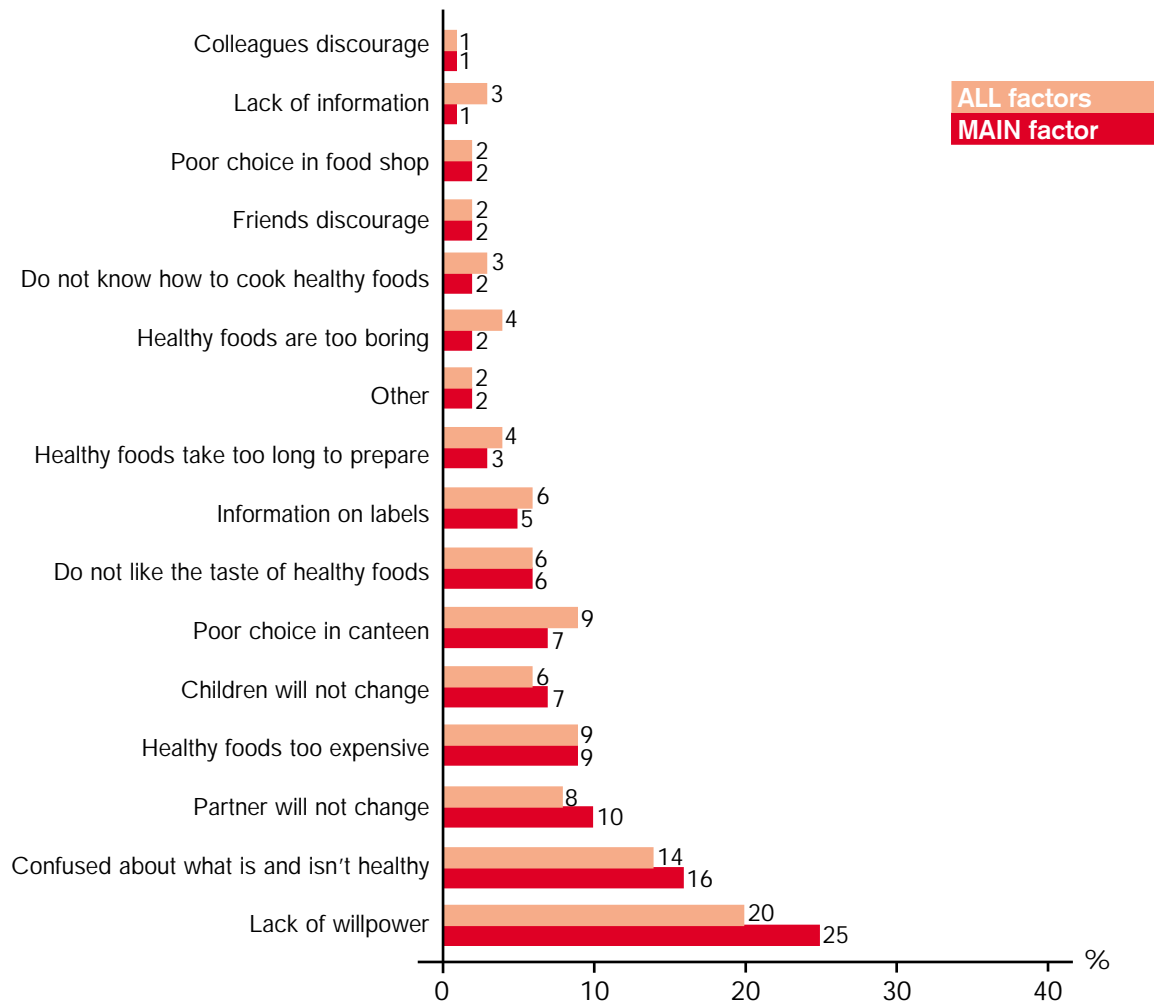
|                         | To lose weight (%) | To improve overall health (%) | To feel better or fitter (%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                    |                               |                              |
| Male                    | *** 22             | * 35                          | 18                           |
| Female                  | 36                 | 28                            | 15                           |
| <b>Age group</b>        |                    |                               |                              |
| 18-29                   | ** 34              | 26                            | ** 22                        |
| 30-44                   | 35                 | 31                            | 18                           |
| 45-59                   | 32                 | 31                            | 14                           |
| 60-75                   | 21                 | 32                            | 9                            |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                    |                               |                              |
| One adult               | * 24               | 35                            | 14                           |
| Two or more adults      | 29                 | 29                            | 16                           |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 35                 | 30                            | 17                           |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                    |                               |                              |
| Manual                  | 33                 | 29                            | ** 12                        |
| Non-manual              | 31                 | 32                            | 18                           |
| <b>Household income</b> |                    |                               |                              |
| under £10,000           | 28                 | 30                            | * 12                         |
| £10-14,999              | 33                 | 27                            | 15                           |
| £15-24,999              | 31                 | 34                            | 18                           |
| more than £25,000       | 35                 | 29                            | 20                           |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>31</b>          | <b>30</b>                     | <b>16</b>                    |
| <b>Base (N)</b>         | <b>365</b>         | <b>354</b>                    | <b>189</b>                   |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05, \*\* p<0.001 and \*\*\*p<0.0001).

### Factors discouraging a healthy eating pattern

Each person was asked to identify factors that might discourage or prevent them from eating more healthy foods. They were allowed to choose one or more factors and then were asked to choose the main factor that discouraged them from eating more healthily. The most common reasons selected were lack of willpower (25%), confusion about what is and isn't healthy (16%), partner will not change (10%), and the cost of healthy foods (9%).

**Figure 8: Factors that adults said discouraged them from eating more healthy foods (all factors and main factors)**



There were associations between the main factors discouraging healthy eating patterns and people's demographic and socioeconomic circumstances (Table 47). Women (26%) are more likely than men (18%) to cite a lack of willpower and the cost of healthy choices as factors discouraging healthy eating patterns.

Over one in five (22%) of the oldest age group stated that they were confused about what is and is not healthy compared with 12% of the younger age group. The youngest age groups were most likely to highlight the poor choice in canteens or restaurants as a factor discouraging healthy eating patterns.

Adults from manual groups and the lowest income households were more likely to state that they were confused about what is and what isn't healthy and that healthy foods are too expensive compared with those in better socioeconomic circumstances. It is worth noting that those from non-manual groups and from the highest income households are more likely to indicate lack of willpower rather than confusion or cost.

**Table 47: The main factors discouraging healthy eating patterns by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | No factor stated (%) | Lack of willpower (%) | Confused by health messages (%) | Healthy foods too expensive (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |                      |                       |                                 |                                 |              |
| Male                    | *** 40               | *** 18                | 17                              | ** 7                            | 733          |
| Female                  | 32                   | 26                    | 16                              | 12                              | 1,019        |
| <b>Age group</b>        |                      |                       |                                 |                                 |              |
| 18-29                   | *** 30               | *** 29                | ** 12                           | 9                               | 328          |
| 30-44                   | 30                   | 26                    | 16                              | 13                              | 576          |
| 45-59                   | 37                   | 23                    | 16                              | 8                               | 463          |
| 60-75                   | 44                   | 12                    | 22                              | 10                              | 385          |
| <b>Household type</b>   |                      |                       |                                 |                                 |              |
| One adult               | * 39                 | * 22                  | 17                              | 12                              | 258          |
| Two or more adults      | 37                   | 20                    | 17                              | 9                               | 723          |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 32                   | 26                    | 15                              | 11                              | 771          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |                      |                       |                                 |                                 |              |
| Manual                  | 33                   | *** 20                | ** 20                           | ** 13                           | 750          |
| Non-manual              | 35                   | 28                    | 14                              | 8                               | 848          |
| <b>Household income</b> |                      |                       |                                 |                                 |              |
| under £10,000           | 35                   | *** 17                | ** 20                           | *** 15                          | 573          |
| £10-14,999              | 33                   | 26                    | 18                              | 10                              | 301          |
| £15-24,999              | 33                   | 26                    | 15                              | 9                               | 363          |
| more than £25,000       | 38                   | 27                    | 11                              | 6                               | 449          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>35</b>            | <b>23</b>             | <b>16</b>                       | <b>10</b>                       |              |
| <b>Base (N)</b>         | <b>613</b>           | <b>399</b>            | <b>287</b>                      | <b>178</b>                      | <b>1,752</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*p<0.05, \*\*p<0.01 and \*\*\* p<0.001)

### How people perceive their own eating habits

Those surveyed were asked to consider their own eating habits and to assess how healthy they thought it was. Most adults (77%) stated that their eating pattern was 'fairly healthy'. One in ten (10%) rated their diet as 'very healthy' and one in seven (14%) rated their diet as 'unhealthy'.

There were associations between people's demographic and socioeconomic circumstances and how they rated their eating habits.

**Table 48: Rating of eating habits by demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

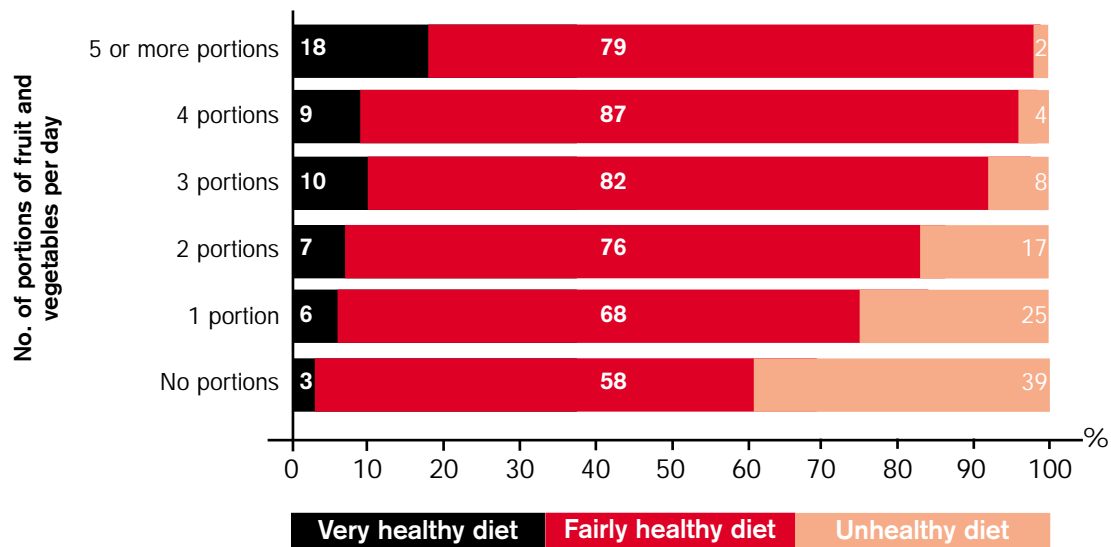
|                            | Very healthy diet (%) | Fairly healthy diet (%) | Unhealthy diet (%) | Base (N)     |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>                 |                       |                         |                    |              |
| Male                       | 10                    | 74                      | 16                 | 717          |
| Female                     | 9                     | 79                      | 12                 | 1,012        |
| <b>*** Age group</b>       |                       |                         |                    |              |
| 18-29                      | 5                     | 70                      | 25                 | 326          |
| 30-44                      | 7                     | 78                      | 16                 | 565          |
| 45-59                      | 8                     | 81                      | 11                 | 459          |
| 60-75                      | 20                    | 76                      | 5                  | 379          |
| <b>** Household type</b>   |                       |                         |                    |              |
| One adult                  | 14                    | 71                      | 15                 | 253          |
| Two or more adults         | 11                    | 77                      | 13                 | 714          |
| Children (under 18yrs)     | 7                     | 79                      | 15                 | 762          |
| <b>Social class</b>        |                       |                         |                    |              |
| Manual                     | 9                     | 76                      | 16                 | 738          |
| Non-manual                 | 9                     | 79                      | 12                 | 839          |
| <b>** Household income</b> |                       |                         |                    |              |
| under £10,000              | 11                    | 77                      | 12                 | 564          |
| £10-14,999                 | 11                    | 70                      | 19                 | 295          |
| £15-24,999                 | 7                     | 76                      | 17                 | 361          |
| more than £25,000          | 8                     | 81                      | 10                 | 444          |
| <b>All (%)</b>             | <b>10</b>             | <b>77</b>               | <b>14</b>          | <b>1,729</b> |

Note: Statistical test used was chi-square (\*\* p<0.01 and \*\*\*p<0.001)

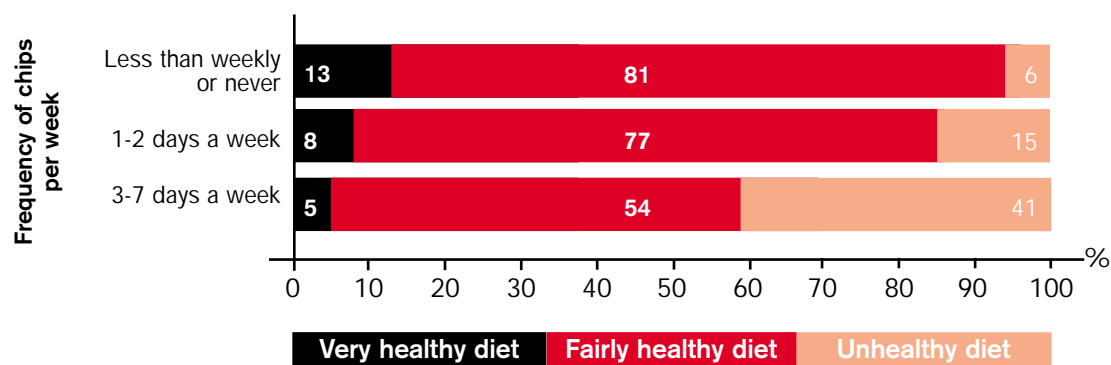
Adults' own assessment of their eating habits were compared with their reported daily consumption of fruit and vegetables and their reported weekly consumption of chips (Figure 9 and Figure 10).

The majority of those not achieving the recommended five portions of fruit and vegetables daily rated their diet as 'fairly healthy'. Well over half (58%) of those who eat no fruit or vegetables on a daily basis rated their diet as 'fairly healthy' and a further 3% rated their diet as 'very healthy'. Over half (54%) of those who eat chips most days also rate their diet as 'fairly healthy'.

**Figure 9: Number of portions of fruit and vegetables per day by self-assessment of eating patterns**



**Figure 10: Frequency of eating chips in the average week by self-assessment of eating patterns**



# Discussion

There is widespread agreement that diet affects health. The food we eat can either promote good health and wellbeing or contribute to ill health. Poor nutrition is associated with compromised oral health and an increased risk of conditions such as heart disease, some cancers, obesity, osteoporosis and diabetes.<sup>1</sup>

The Food and Nutrition Strategy for Northern Ireland outlines a framework for coordinated action to promote health and prevent diet-related disease through encouraging and enabling changes in eating patterns.<sup>1</sup> The difficulties of collecting data on eating patterns are acknowledged. This survey collected data on the frequency of consumption of various foods. While this is not the preferred method of collecting information on eating patterns, it provides a helpful baseline against which future dietary changes as well as changes in awareness and knowledge of, and attitudes to, a variety of nutritional issues can be measured.

Current nutritional recommendations focus on the overall balance of the diet and emphasise the importance of eating a wide variety of foods from the four main food groups: bread, other cereals and potatoes; fruit and vegetables; meat, fish and alternatives; milk and milk products. These are illustrated in *The Balance of Good Health*, which shows the proportions of the various types of food recommended for health. The fifth food group: foods containing fat and foods containing sugar is also illustrated. The healthy eating messages recognise that these foods add to the enjoyment and variety of the diet. However the small segment allocated to this food group on *The Balance of Good Health* model emphasises that they should be limited.

## Comparing actual dietary intakes with current recommendations

The results of this survey indicate some variance from the recommendations, illustrated for example by a comparison of the reported consumption of fruit and vegetables with foods containing fat and foods containing sugar (eg chips, other fried foods, biscuits, savoury snacks, confectionery, cakes and sugary drinks).

Higher intakes of fruit and vegetables have been associated with a lower risk of cancer and coronary heart disease.<sup>3,4</sup> This protection has been observed at intakes of 400g daily or more.<sup>5</sup> An average serving or portion of fruit or vegetables is approximately 80g, therefore this recommendation has been translated into the public health message to eat five or more portions of fruit and vegetables each day.

Most people did not achieve this target, with only 21% of those surveyed reporting that they eat five or more portions a day. Eleven percent of those surveyed reported that they did not eat any fruit or vegetables on a daily basis and a further 14% reported that they ate one portion a day.

In contrast, consumption of foods from the fifth food group was high. For example, 44% eat biscuits at least once a day; 23% eat savoury snacks at least three times a week; 25% and 23% eat confectionery and cakes respectively at least three times a week.

These results are disappointing when considered alongside the public awareness of the 'five-a-day' message. Over half (53%) of those who took part in the survey were able to correctly state the number of portions of fruit and vegetables recommended each day by health professionals. There was a significant association between people's knowledge and their reported consumption. However for those who stated correctly that the message was five portions or more of fruit and vegetables per day, only 29% reported that they eat five or more

portions in the average day. It is clear that additional work to increase public awareness of the five-a-day message should be undertaken alongside efforts to facilitate and encourage a higher intake of fruit and vegetables.

## Demographic variations

The survey results highlight a number of differences between various age, gender and socioeconomic groups. For example with regard to knowledge, women, younger age groups and those from non-manual and high income households were more likely to be aware of what the term 'healthy eating' means and to know the number of portions of fruit and vegetables recommended for health. These groups were also most likely to report changes to their eating patterns during the previous year, for example attempting to reduce fat intake, increase fruit and vegetable intake and reduce sugar intake. In contrast, men, those from manual and low income households and the oldest age groups were less aware of the healthy eating messages and were less likely to report dietary changes over the previous year.

The reported consumption of a number of foods also varied between age, gender and socioeconomic groups. Men, those from manual and low income households and the youngest age group (18-29 years) were most likely to eat less of the foods recommended for health, particularly fruit and vegetables and more of the foods associated with less healthy eating patterns.

For example women were reported to eat more fruit and vegetables than men. Twenty two percent of women and 16% of men eat the recommended five or more portions each day. In contrast, 14% of men and 8% of women said that they did not eat any fruit or vegetables on a daily basis.

Adults aged 18-29 years were most likely not to eat any fruit and vegetables, when compared with any other age group. More than twice as many people from non-manual households (27%) eat five or more portions each day compared with those from manual households (12%).

Adults from manual households eat meat products more frequently than those from non-manual households, for example 17% of those from manual groups eat these products most days, compared to 10% of those from non-manual groups. Men and younger age groups also tend to eat more meat products than women or their older counterparts. Meat products are generally lower in protein and iron and higher in fat compared with lean red meat or poultry, therefore it is recommended that they are not eaten often.

Chips and other fried foods are also eaten more often by those from manual households and men. Men and those from younger age groups also ate savoury snacks, such as crisps, and drank sugary fizzy drinks, most often.

This research has highlighted significant variations in reported intakes of several foods. Adults from manual households, men and those aged 18-29 years are less aware of healthy eating messages and eat fewer of the foods recommended for health and more of those associated with less healthy eating patterns. Confusion about what is and isn't healthy was identified as a major factor discouraging healthy eating patterns among manual groups and lower income households. It is recommended therefore that attention should be given to meeting the information needs of these groups. However the cost of healthy choices is also identified as an important factor among manual groups and those from low income households.

It is therefore recommended that programmes demonstrating how to eat well on a low budget are expanded and methods of increasing affordability and accessibility of healthy food choices are sought in order to help these groups make the dietary changes that will protect and promote their health.

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# Appendix 1: Response rate and profile of respondents

This section profiles the households and respondents who participated in the survey. All adult (18-75 years) members of selected households were asked to respond. For some sections of the study it was more appropriate that one adult responded on behalf of the household. This section profiles the households, individual respondents and those respondents who answered questions on behalf of the household. Households are profiled in terms of their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Key characteristics of the sample are compared to that of the Northern Ireland population based on the survey data and estimates published in the Northern Ireland Annual Abstract of Statistics 17, 1999 and the Continuous Household Survey 1999-2000.

## Response rate

The sample used for the survey was based on households and an overall response rate of 70% was achieved. One in five (20%) households refused to take part in the study and one in ten households (10%) had no one at home when an interviewer called (Table 49).

**Table 49: Response rate (households) to the survey**

|                     | Total sample of households (%) | Total sample of households (N) | Eligible sample achieved (%) | Eligible sample achieved (N) |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Households</b>   |                                |                                |                              |                              |
| Issued addresses    | 100                            | 2,050                          | 100                          | 1,769                        |
| #Interview achieved | 61                             | 1,243                          | 70                           | 1,243                        |
| Refusal             | 17                             | 356                            | 20                           | 356                          |
| Non contact         | 8                              | 170                            | 10                           | 170                          |
| Non eligible        | 14                             | 281                            | -                            | -                            |

Note: #Interview achieved includes partial and proxy interviews

### Profile of households

Although 1,243 households were interviewed, information for analyses was available for 1,171 households. The demographic and socioeconomic circumstances of the head of household were used to classify the household (Table 50). Where information was unavailable on the head of household then their partner or son/daughter was used to classify the household (23% of cases).

**Table 50: The demographic and socioeconomic circumstances of the households by household type**

|                         | One adult (%) | Two or more adults (%) | Children (under 18yrs) (%) | Base (N)     |
|-------------------------|---------------|------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |               |                        |                            |              |
| Male                    | 19            | 42                     | 39                         | 637          |
| Female                  | 27            | 27                     | 46                         | 534          |
| <b>Age group</b>        |               |                        |                            |              |
| 18-29                   | 20            | 30                     | 50                         | 138          |
| 30-44                   | 12            | 13                     | 75                         | 390          |
| 45-59                   | 14            | 48                     | 38                         | 333          |
| 60-75                   | 44            | 53                     | 3                          | 310          |
| <b>Social class</b>     |               |                        |                            |              |
| Manual                  | 23            | 36                     | 40                         | 559          |
| Non-manual              | 20            | 35                     | 45                         | 538          |
| <b>Household income</b> |               |                        |                            |              |
| under £10,000           | 39            | 29                     | 32                         | 438          |
| £10-14,999              | 14            | 41                     | 44                         | 194          |
| £15-24,999              | 15            | 35                     | 50                         | 229          |
| more than £25,000       | 6             | 42                     | 52                         | 261          |
| <b>All (%)</b>          | <b>22</b>     | <b>36</b>              | <b>42</b>                  | <b>1,171</b> |

Overall 22% of the households in the survey sample consisted of a single adult, 36% had two or more adults and 42% had children under 18 years. Respondents from the single adult households were more likely to be female (27%), in the oldest age group (44%), belong to a manual social class (23%) and have a low income (39%) compared to their counterparts. More of the households with children under 18 years were classified as non-manual (45%) and high income (52%) than manual (40%) or low income (32%).

## Respondents

The data presented in this report are based on information received from 1,171 households (Table 51). Once a household was selected, information was to be gathered from all the adults aged between 18-75 years living within the selected household. Responses were achieved from 1,752 individual adults and their demographic and socioeconomic characteristics are shown in Table 51.

However, on some occasions questions specifically related to the dietary practices of the members of a household as a whole; therefore one adult was elected to answer questions on behalf of the other members of the household. The person who responded on behalf of the household was usually the person who generally did the shopping for the household. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of these three categories of respondent are shown in Table 51. This report focuses on information derived from individual respondents and those responding on behalf of the household.

**Table 51: Characteristics of respondents at household and individual level and on behalf of the household by their demographic and socioeconomic circumstances**

|                         | Household (%) | Household (N) | Individual (%) | Individual (N) | Responded on behalf of household (%) | Responded on behalf of household (N) |
|-------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Sex</b>              |               |               |                |                |                                      |                                      |
| Male                    | 54            | 637           | 42             | 733            | 20                                   | 219                                  |
| Female                  | 46            | 534           | 58             | 1,019          | 80                                   | 877                                  |
| <b>Age group</b>        |               |               |                |                |                                      |                                      |
| 18-29                   | 12            | 138           | 19             | 328            | 13                                   | 147                                  |
| 30-44                   | 33            | 390           | 33             | 576            | 36                                   | 392                                  |
| 45-59                   | 28            | 333           | 26             | 463            | 27                                   | 294                                  |
| 60-75                   | 27            | 310           | 22             | 385            | 24                                   | 263                                  |
| <b>Household type</b>   |               |               |                |                |                                      |                                      |
| One adult               | 22            | 258           | 15             | 258            | 22                                   | 234                                  |
| Two or more adults      | 36            | 418           | 41             | 723            | 35                                   | 386                                  |
| Children (under 18yrs)  | 42            | 495           | 44             | 771            | 43                                   | 476                                  |
| <b>Social class</b>     |               |               |                |                |                                      |                                      |
| Manual                  | 51            | 559           | 47             | 750            | 45                                   | 458                                  |
| Non-manual              | 49            | 538           | 53             | 848            | 55                                   | 553                                  |
| <b>Household income</b> |               |               |                |                |                                      |                                      |
| under £10,000           | 39            | 438           | 34             | 573            | 39                                   | 412                                  |
| £10-14,999              | 17            | 194           | 18             | 301            | 18                                   | 185                                  |
| £15-24,999              | 20            | 229           | 22             | 363            | 21                                   | 218                                  |
| more than £25,000       | 23            | 261           | 27             | 449            | 23                                   | 237                                  |
| <b>Base (N)</b>         | <b>1,171</b>  | <b>1,171</b>  | <b>1,752</b>   | <b>1,752</b>   | <b>1,096</b>                         | <b>1,096</b>                         |

## Data validation

To determine if the survey sample was representative of the general population the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics for the households and respondents were compared with available figures for Northern Ireland taken from the Annual Abstract. Household details such as home ownership, household type and size were found to be similar to that of Northern Ireland (Table 52 and Table 53 respectively).

The dynamics of the sample in terms of age and sex profile, and the socioeconomic grouping of respondents were also compared against figures for the Northern Ireland population (Table 54, Table 55 and Table 56). From this, the sample was shown to have a lower proportion of 18-29 year olds (19% compared to 26%) than would be expected in the Northern Ireland population.

The socioeconomic grouping of respondents was similar to those for the Northern Ireland population (Table 55) with one exception, there was an under representation of men in the skilled manual grouping (30% compared with 37%). The socioeconomic grouping of respondents was reclassified into social class in terms of manual and non-manual groups (Table 56). There was an over representation of males in the non-manual grouping for respondents (43%) compared to that expected for the Northern Ireland population (37%), however this difference was within acceptable confidence limits.

Differences in the age ranges of the samples for the Northern Ireland survey and this survey could also account for differences in social class grouping. The Northern Ireland figures included all adults aged over 15 years whereas this survey sample excludes adults aged 16 and 17 years old. The validation checks showed that the achieved sample for the survey was broadly representative of the Northern Ireland population.

## Key characteristics of the survey sample compared with the Northern Ireland population

### Home ownership

**Table 52: Home ownership of households in the sample compared to the Continuous Household Survey (CHS)**

|                                  | Sample 1999 (%) | #CHS (%)     |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Household ownership</b>       |                 |              |
| Owned outright                   | 31              | 30           |
| Owned with a mortgage            | 39              | 39           |
| Rented from NI Housing Executive | 22              | 23           |
| Rented other                     | 8               | 7            |
| Rent free                        | 1               | 1            |
| <b>Sample base (N)</b>           | <b>1,171</b>    | <b>3,021</b> |

#Source: Table 2.5 page 26, Northern Ireland Annual Abstract of Statistics Number 17, 1999.

### Household size

**Table 53: Household size in the sample compared to the CHS**

|                               | Sample 1999 (%) | #CHS (%)     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| <b>Household size</b>         |                 |              |
| 1 member                      | 22              | 26           |
| 2 members                     | 28              | 27           |
| 3 members                     | 19              | 16           |
| 4 members                     | 16              | 16           |
| 5 members                     | 9               | 8            |
| more than 5 members           | 6               | 6            |
| <b>Average household size</b> | <b>2.8</b>      | <b>2.7</b>   |
| <b>Sample base (N)</b>        | <b>1,171</b>    | <b>3,024</b> |

#Source: Table 2.1 page 19, Northern Ireland Annual Abstract of Statistics Number 17, 1999.

## Age and sex profile

**Table 54: The age and sex profile of respondents in the sample compared with the Northern Ireland population estimates (1998)**

| Age group (years) | Sample 1999 |              |              | #Northern Ireland 1998 estimates |                |                  |
|-------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------|------------------|
|                   | Male (%)    | Female (%)   | Total (%)    | Male (%)                         | Female (%)     | Total (%)        |
| 18-29             | 20          | 18           | 19           | 27                               | 25             | 26               |
| 30-44             | 30          | 35           | 33           | 32                               | 32             | 32               |
| 45-59             | 27          | 26           | 26           | 24                               | 24             | 24               |
| 60-75             | 23          | 21           | 22           | 17                               | 19             | 18               |
| <b>Base (N)</b>   | <b>733</b>  | <b>1,019</b> | <b>1,752</b> | <b>558,684</b>                   | <b>576,283</b> | <b>1,134,967</b> |

#Source: Table 1.1 page 3, Northern Ireland Annual Abstract of Statistics Number 17, 1999.

## Socioeconomic grouping

Individuals who had never worked and those who did not provide sufficient information to determine their socioeconomic group were not assigned a socioeconomic group. They are included in the following two tables under the heading “economically inactive”. The distribution obtained from this survey is compared with information supplied by the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) from the 1999-2000 Northern Ireland Continuous Household Survey (CHS). The CHS data relates to all those over 15 years old, while the age range of the food survey was 18-75 years.

**Table 55: The socioeconomic grouping of respondents to the survey compared to the CHS**

| Socioeconomic grouping based on occupation | Sample 1999 |              |              | Continuous Household Survey |              |              |
|--|-------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|
|  | Male (%)    | Female (%)   | Total (%)    | Male (%)                    | Female (%)   | Total (%)    |
| Professional (non-manual)                  | 7           | 2            | 4            | 5                           | 2            | 3            |
| Employer, manager (non-manual)             | 14          | 8            | 10           | 15                          | 7            | 11           |
| Intermediate (non-manual)                  | 12          | 16           | 14           | 8                           | 14           | 11           |
| Junior non-manual                          | 11          | 27           | 21           | 9                           | 27           | 19           |
| Skilled manual                             | 30          | 5            | 16           | 37                          | 6            | 20           |
| Semi-skilled manual                        | 15          | 25           | 21           | 15                          | 26           | 21           |
| Unskilled manual                           | 5           | 8            | 6            | 4                           | 7            | 6            |
| Economically inactive                      | 7           | 10           | 8            | 7                           | 11           | 9            |
| <b>Base (N)</b>                            | <b>729</b>  | <b>1,016</b> | <b>1,745</b> | <b>2,720</b>                | <b>3,063</b> | <b>5,783</b> |

### Social class

The confidence interval (CI) for the population was  $p \pm 1.96\sqrt{p(100-p)/n}$  where p = percentage and n = base.

**Table 56: The social class profile for the sample compared with the Northern Ireland population estimates (1998)**

|  | Non-manual (%)<br>(CI) | Manual (%)<br>(CI) | Economically<br>inactive (%) (CI) | Base<br>(N)  |
|--|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Population</b>                            |                        |                    |                                   |              |
| <b>Survey Sample 1999</b>                    |                        |                    |                                   |              |
| Males  | 43 (±4)                | 50 (±4)            | 7 (±2)                            | 729          |
| Females                                      | 52 (±3)                | 38 (±3)            | 10 (±2)                           | 1,016        |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>49 (±2)</b>         | <b>43 (±2)</b>     | <b>8 (±1)</b>                     | <b>1,745</b> |
| <b>Continuous Household Survey 1999/2000</b> |                        |                    |                                   |              |
| Males  | 37 (±2)                | 56 (±2)            | 7 (±1)                            | 2,720        |
| Females                                      | 50 (±2)                | 39 (±2)            | 11 (±1)                           | 3,063        |
| <b>Total</b>                                 | <b>44 (±1)</b>         | <b>47 (±1)</b>     | <b>9 (±1)</b>                     | <b>5,783</b> |

## Appendix 2: Respondents' reported average consumption compared with that of the previous day

**Table 57: Comparing respondents' reporting of fruit portions consumed in an average day with reported consumption on the day prior to the survey**

|                                  | Number of portions of fruit consumed in the day prior to the survey |               |                |                |                |                        | Base (N)     |
|----------------------------------|---|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
|                                  | None (%)  | 1 portion (%) | 2 portions (%) | 3 portions (%) | 4 portions (%) | 5 or more portions (%) |              |
| <b>Average daily consumption</b> |   |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| None                             | 66  | 26            | 4              | 2              | 1              | 1                      | 561          |
| 1 portion                        | 15  | 59            | 20             | 5              | 1              | -                      | 398          |
| 2 portions                       | 5   | 16            | 59             | 18             | 1              | 2                      | 413          |
| 3 portions                       | 3   | 4             | 30             | 45             | 16             | 3                      | 262          |
| 4 portions                       | 9   | 1             | 6              | 29             | 43             | 13                     | 80           |
| 5 or more portions               | -   | 3             | 5              | 29             | 18             | 45                     | 38           |
| <b>All (%)</b>                   | <b>27</b>   | <b>26</b>     | <b>25</b>      | <b>15</b>      | <b>6</b>       | <b>3</b>               | <b>1,752</b> |

**Table 58: Comparing respondents' reporting of vegetable and salad portions consumed in an average day with reported consumption on the day prior to the survey**

|                                  | Number of portions of vegetables and salad consumed in the day prior to the survey |               |                |                |                |                        | Base (N)     |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
|                                  | None (%)   | 1 portion (%) | 2 portions (%) | 3 portions (%) | 4 portions (%) | 5 or more portions (%) |              |
| <b>Average daily consumption</b> |  |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| None                             | 48   | 34            | 11             | 4              | 2              | 2                      | 340          |
| 1 portion                        | 13   | 63            | 20             | 3              | 1              | -                      | 539          |
| 2 portions                       | 8  | 20            | 60             | 10             | 2              | 1                      | 656          |
| 3 portions                       | 4  | 12            | 23             | 48             | 10             | 4                      | 169          |
| 4 portions                       | 8  | 5             | 10             | 31             | 33             | 13                     | 39           |
| 5 or more portions               | -  | 22            | -              | 22             | 33             | 22                     | 9            |
| <b>All (%)</b>                   | <b>17</b>  | <b>35</b>     | <b>33</b>      | <b>11</b>      | <b>3</b>       | <b>1</b>               | <b>1,752</b> |

**Table 59: Comparing respondents' reporting of fruit and vegetable portions consumed in an average day with reported consumption on the day prior to the survey**

| Total portions of fruit, vegetables and salad consumed in the day prior to the survey |          |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
|---|----------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------------|--------------|
|   | None (%) | 1 portion (%) | 2 portions (%) | 3 portions (%) | 4 portions (%) | 5 or more portions (%) | Base (N)     |
| <b>Average daily consumption</b>  |          |               |                |                |                |                        |              |
| None  | 40       | 29            | 21             | 6              | 1              | 3                      | 185          |
| 1 portion   | 10       | 49            | 28             | 8              | 3              | 3                      | 241          |
| 2 portions  | 6        | 11            | 47             | 19             | 11             | 5                      | 363          |
| 3 portions  | 3        | 4             | 20             | 40             | 20             | 13                     | 327          |
| 4 portions  | 2        | 2             | 7              | 19             | 45             | 26                     | 289          |
| 5 or more portions  | 1        | 1             | 4              | 8              | 21             | 66                     | 347          |
| <b>All (%)</b>  | <b>8</b> | <b>13</b>     | <b>22</b>      | <b>18</b>      | <b>18</b>      | <b>22</b>              | <b>1,752</b> |



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**ISBN 1 874602 37 9**