

What are people eating?

Dietary data collected from the first year of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey rolling programme has been released today.

The good news is that on average, adults are eating 4.4 portions of fruit and vegetables a day with over a third of men and women now meeting the "5-a-day" guideline. Results also suggest the nation is eating less saturated fat, less trans fat and less added sugar than it was ten years ago.

However, despite these encouraging indications, intakes of saturated fat and non-milk extrinsic milk sugars (NMES) are still above the recommended intake levels; people are also still not eating enough fibre and oily fish consumption remains low.

MRC Human Nutrition Research in Cambridge, the National Centre for Social Research (NatCen) and the Joint Surveys team at University College London were commissioned by the Food Standards Agency and the Department of Health to carry out this survey.

Over 1,000 people across the UK provided detailed information on their eating habits and later this year further information on their nutritional status will be available.

Dr Alison Lennox, from MRC Human Nutrition Research, Cambridge said: "The National Diet and Nutrition Survey is one of the most important surveys in the world. It gives us detailed information on the eating habits of the nation and informs our research on the relationship between food and health".

It is intended that the National Diet and Nutrition Survey rolling programme will continue to collect data indefinitely and will release the data collected annually, with the first full report published at the end of 4 years of collection.