



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION
The Professional Association for State Registered Dietitians



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Want to do it at least 5 times a day? Then go abroad

People wanting to get in their five or more portions of fruit and vegetables every day stand more chance of achieving it in foreign holiday hot spots than in Great Britain. According to food consumption data from the United Nations, countries like Greece, Italy, Spain and Turkey eat up to 2½ times the amount of fruit and vegetables than we do in Great Britain. But first British adults need to know more about what actually counts as a portion - nearly 1 in 3 adults (30%) still wrongly think that 1 tablespoon of strawberry jam counts and only half (54%) correctly consider a tablespoon of dried apricots to be a portion of fruit. These are the findings of research released today by The British Dietetic Association as a follow up to 'Give Me 5', its UK-wide Food Awareness Week.

The survey, undertaken by the Gallup Organisation on behalf of The British Dietetic Association, also reveals good news. Awareness of the recommendation to eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day has increased by about 25% since the 'Give Me 5' week in May 1999. Forty four percent of adults correctly stated that health experts recommend 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables every day compared to just the 35% identified by a Gallup survey conducted before the 'Give Me 5' week.

Lyndel Costain, spokesperson for The British Dietetic Association, says "we are delighted that more people are becoming aware of this vital food and health message. We now hope that raised awareness plus practical information from campaigns like 'Give Me 5' will help people boost their fruit and vegetable intake. On average in Great Britain we still only eat 3 portions a day, while in Greece they eat 2½ times, and in Italy and Turkey nearly twice the amount of fruit and vegetables that we do. Perhaps opting for the local cuisine on summer holidays abroad is another way to enjoy doing it more often, and hopefully people can keep up these good habits once they return home."

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For further information about 'Give Me 5' and local activities contact:

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- The Dietetic Department at your local hospital or health centre

Notes to Editors:

- This research was carried out by the Gallup Organisation between 28 May and 9 June 1999, randomly by telephone. A sample of 2005 adults 16+ who are representative of the population of Great Britain was collected. At the 95% confidence interval there is a margin of error of + or - 2.2 percentage points.
- Research before Food Awareness Week (10-16 May 99) was carried out by the Gallup Organisation between 24th and 30th of March 1999, randomly by telephone. A sample of 1053 adults 16+ who are representative of the population of Great Britain was collected. At the 95% confidence level there is a margin of error of + or - 3 percentage points.
- Fruit and vegetable food balance sheet data (1997) is published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation and provides useful comparative data - fruit and vegetable consumption compared to the UK: Greece - 2½ times; Turkey & Italy - nearly 2 times; Spain - 1½ times; France: 1¼ times. The average daily UK consumption figure of 3 portions of fruit and vegetables is derived from the National Food Survey 97.
- Eating at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables is a key dietary recommendation in the Government's White Paper '**Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation**'. A diet rich in fruit and vegetables is not only good for general health but population studies suggest it may reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as coronary heart disease and cancers.

- 'Give Me 5' was The British Dietetic Association's second Food Awareness Week and ran during 10-16 May 99. It aimed to raise awareness about the benefits of eating more fruit and vegetables and how to enjoy at least 5 portions a day. 'Give Me 5' was supported by a range of celebrities including: TV presenter **Sarah Greene**; top chefs **Antony Worrall Thompson** and **Peter Vaughan** and media nutritionist **Amanda Ursell**. **The Department of Health**, Sainsbury's, Whitworths, Ragu, Birds Eye Walls, Safeway, The Canned Food Information Centre and Asda also lent their support.

- **Portion Guide** (approximately 80g edible produce)

Medium fruit e.g. apple, pear, orange	1 fruit
Very large fruit e.g. melon, pineapple	1 large slice
Small fruit e.g. plums, satsumas	2 fruit
Grapes, berries	1 cupful
Fruit salad, stewed or canned fruit	2-3 tablespoonfuls
Dried fruit	½ -1 tablespoonful
Fruit juice	1 glass (150ml)
Vegetables - raw, cooked, canned, fresh	2 tablespoonfuls
Salad	1 dessert bowlful

*Children may need smaller portions; potatoes count as a starchy food, not a vegetable.

The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for State Registered Dietitians (SRDs). SRDs hold the only legally recognised qualification in nutrition and dietetics. and interpret the science of nutrition in a practical way to promote nutritional well being, treat disease and prevent nutrition-related problems.