

# What do older children (11-18 years) in the UK eat?

## A summary of key results from the UK National Diet and Nutrition Survey (2008/09-2011/12)

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**The National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) assesses the diet and nutritional status of the UK population.**

**This summary highlights some findings of popular interest about older children's (11-18 years) diets from the latest survey results.**

The NDNS is a representative sample of the UK population aged 18 months and upwards living in private households in the UK. The survey collects many measures from people, including a four-day diet diary, blood and urine samples, blood pressure, height, weight and an interview about their health and lifestyle.

This summary is based on NDNS data from older children aged 11 to 18 years, collected over 4 years from 2008/09 to 2011/12. In this period, the NDNS collected diet diaries from a total of 1,497 older children.

The results of the survey help us to understand the nutritional habits of the UK population, which helps the Government to monitor their policies and targets, such as the 5 A DAY recommendation for fruit and vegetables. The data collected is also used by the UK Food Standards Agency to monitor food safety and exposure, and by scientists who study the nations' diet.

The NDNS is jointly funded by the UK Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency. Data collection and reporting for this period was carried out by a consortium of organisations: NatCen Social Research, MRC Human Nutrition Research and the University College London Medical School.

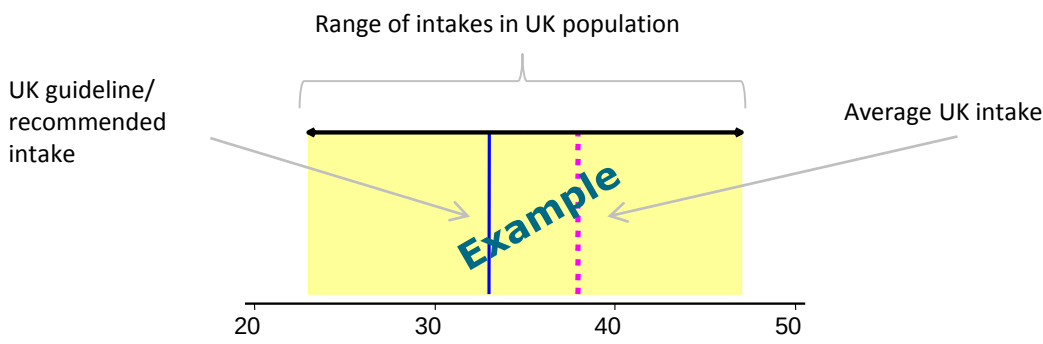
To find out more about the methods and limitations of the survey and to see the complete results tables (including results split by age and gender groups), see the report on the [UK Government website](http://www.uk.gov.uk): "National Diet and Nutrition Survey: results from Years 1 to 4 (combined) of the rolling programme for 2008 and 2009 to 2011 and 2012".

[www.mrc-hnr.cam.ac.uk/research/nutrition-surveys-and-studies/national-diet-and-nutrition-survey/](http://www.mrc-hnr.cam.ac.uk/research/nutrition-surveys-and-studies/national-diet-and-nutrition-survey/)

We have also produced a summary of adults' diets – follow this link to our website to view or download it.

# How does average daily consumption of key foods/nutrients compare to recommended intakes?

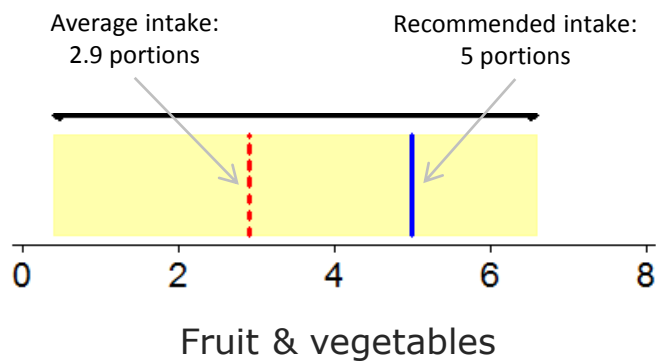
## Intakes of foods and nutrients compared to UK dietary recommendations



**Understanding the graphs:** If the **average UK intake (red line)** is to the right of the **UK recommended intake (blue line)** then people are on average consuming more than the guideline; if it is to the left, then people are on average consuming less. Eating more than the guideline is good for some foods and nutrients (for example, fibre and folate), but not for others (such as saturated fat) where intake should be limited to less than the guideline.

**Fruit and vegetables** are a good source of fibre, vitamins and minerals, and are an important part of a healthy balanced diet.

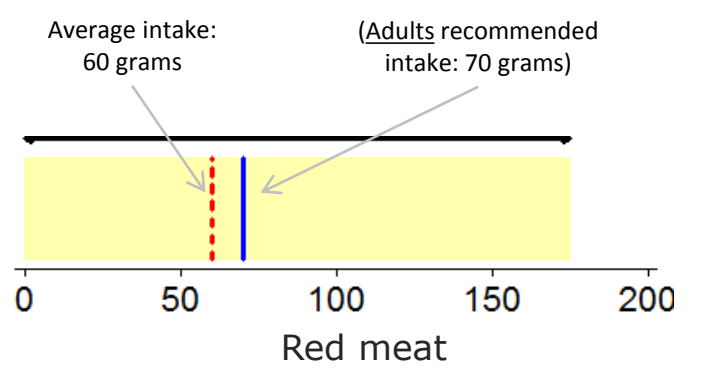
It is recommended that we eat at least five 80g portions of fruit and vegetables every day, which is based on advice from the World Health Organization recommending a minimum of 400g of fruit and vegetables a day to lower the risk of serious health problems, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and obesity.



# How does average daily consumption of key foods/nutrients compare to recommended intakes?

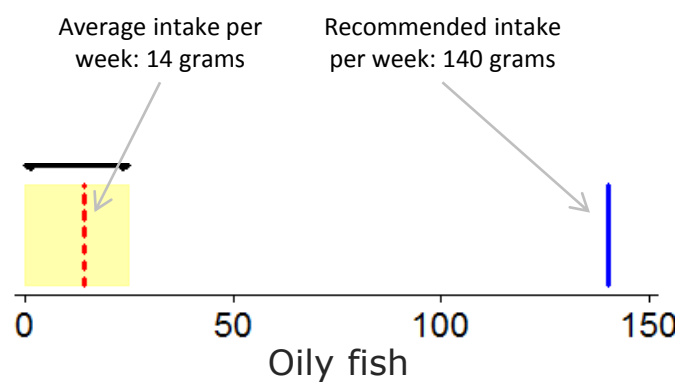
**Red meat** is a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals in your diet. However, eating a lot of red and processed meat probably increases your risk of bowel (colorectal) cancer.

There are no red meat consumption recommendations for children. To provide a sense of scale we have indicated the adult recommendations: people who eat more than 90g (cooked weight) of red and processed meat a day should cut down to 70g.



**Oily fish:** Fish and shellfish are good sources of vitamins and minerals. Oily fish is high in long-chain omega-3 fatty acids, which may help to reduce the risk of heart disease, and is also a good source of vitamin D.

It is recommended that a healthy diet includes at least two portions of fish a week, including one portion (140g) of oily fish such as salmon, fresh tuna, mackerel, sardines, trout and herring.

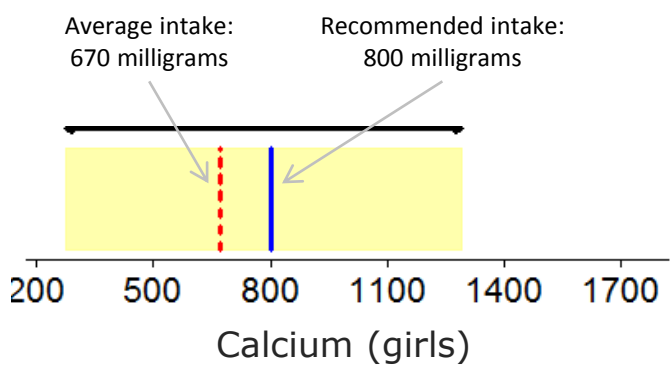
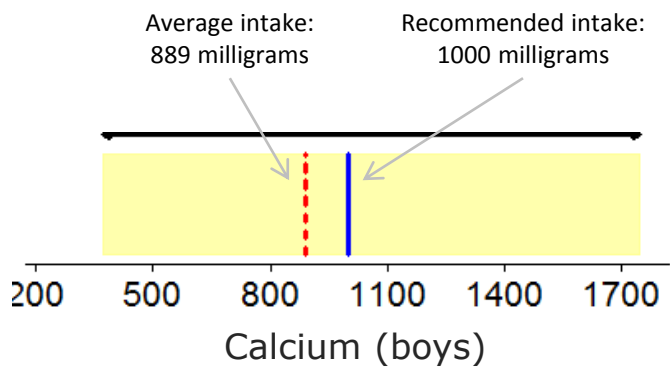


# How does average daily consumption of key foods/nutrients compare to recommended intakes?

**Calcium** is important for many functions in the body, including the development of strong bones and teeth, helping muscles to contract and blood to clot properly.

The recommended intake is 1,000 mg per day for boys and 800 mg per day for girls.

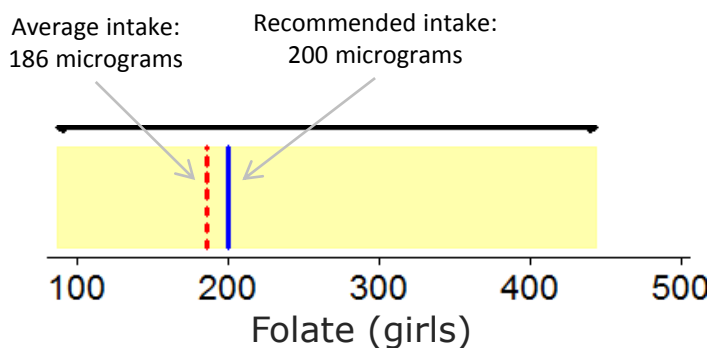
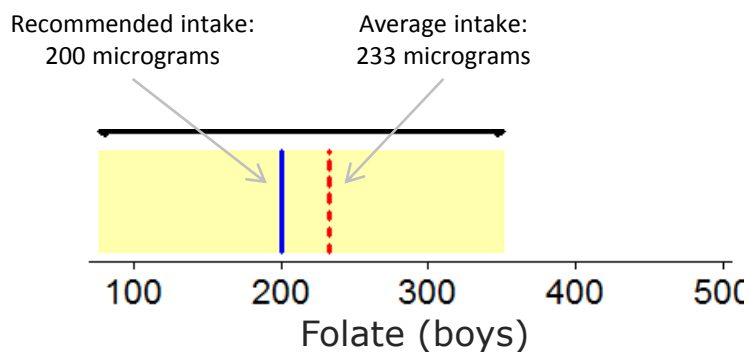
An important source of calcium is low fat dairy products including cottage cheese, yoghurt and fromage frais. Good non-dairy sources of calcium are broccoli, kale, soya products with added calcium and fish with bones such as sardines/pilchards.



**Folate** (including folic acid) is one of the B vitamins and is emerging as an important factor to reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as cancer and heart disease. The recommended intake is 200 µg per day.

It is recommended that women who are pregnant or thinking of trying to have a baby take a 400 µg supplement of folic acid daily to reduce the risk of having a baby with birth defects such as spina bifida.

Good sources of folate are green leafy vegetables as well as pulses and legumes such as chickpeas and beans.

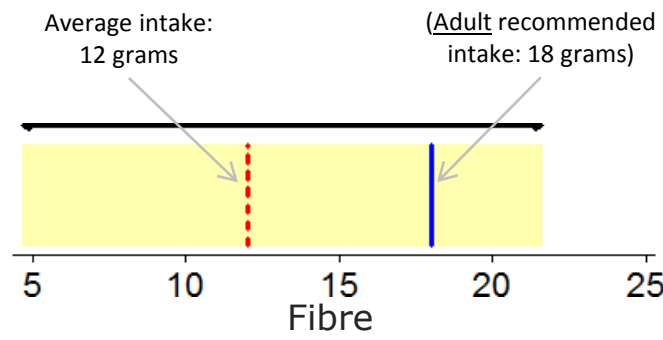


# How does average daily consumption of key foods/nutrients compare to recommended intakes?

**Dietary Fibre** is analysed in the UK as non-starch polysaccharides (NSP). Fibre helps to maintain a healthy digestive system and may also reduce the risk of chronic disorders and diseases, such as heart disease and some cancers.

Major sources of fibre in UK diets are wholemeal and whole grain cereal & cereal products (especially bread and breakfast cereals), vegetables and potatoes.

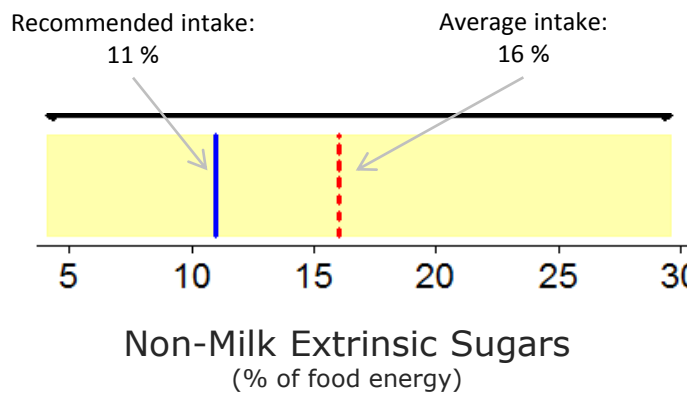
There are currently no UK recommendations for fibre intake in children. To provide a sense of scale we have indicated the adult recommendation: 18 grams per day.



The average energy intake reported was: 1972 calories per day for boys  
1569 calories per day for girls

**NMES = non-milk extrinsic sugars**  
NMES includes all sugars in table sugar, fruit juices, honey, sucrose, glucose and glucose syrups added to food, plus 50% of the sugars in canned, stewed, dried or preserved fruits. Major sources of NMES include sweets, biscuits, soft drinks, and sweetened breakfast cereals.

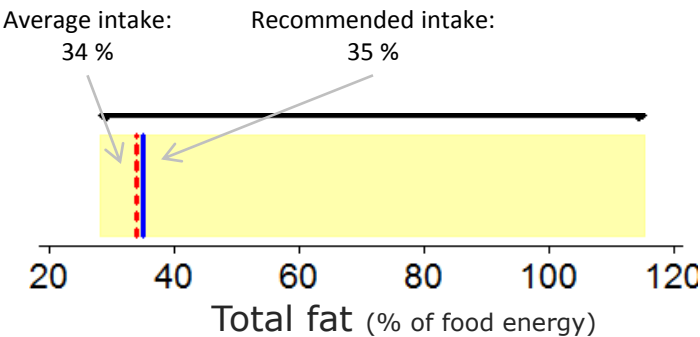
To reduce the risk of tooth decay and as part of a healthy diet, NMES shouldn't make up more than 11% of the energy (calorie intake) you get from food and non-alcoholic drinks each day.



# How does average daily consumption of key foods/nutrients compare to recommended intakes?

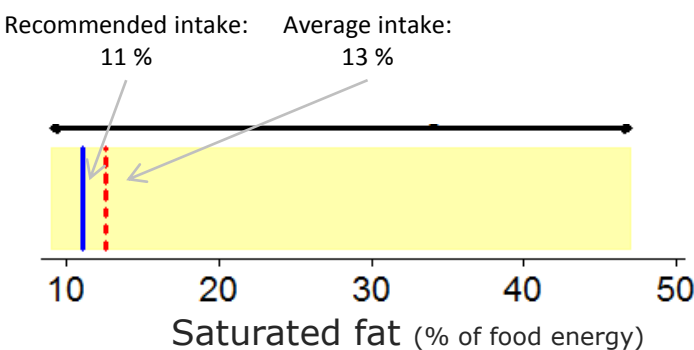
**Total Fat** intake is expressed as a % of food energy consumed. Some fat is essential, but we need to limit the fat in our diet.

To assist with the maintenance of a healthy body weight and reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, fat should only make up 35% or less of food energy.



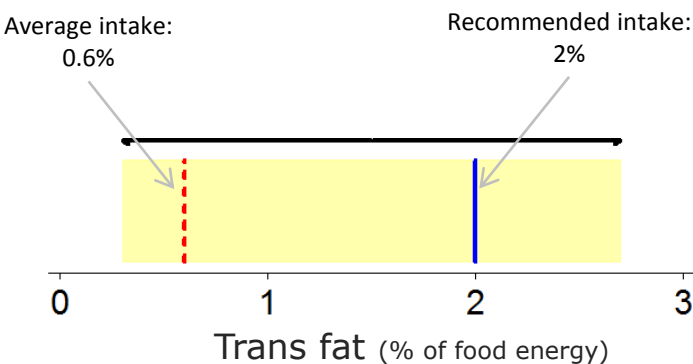
**Saturated fat:** People in the UK also tend to eat too much saturated fat. Saturated fat is associated with an increased risk of heart disease. The guideline is that no more than 11% of food energy intake should come from saturated fat.

Major contributors to saturated fat in the UK diet include various meat products (processed meats), cereal products (e.g. cakes), full fat dairy desserts and butter, chips and chocolate.



**Trans fats** are artificially created fats used in the manufacture of foods, which are associated with an increased risk of coronary heart disease.

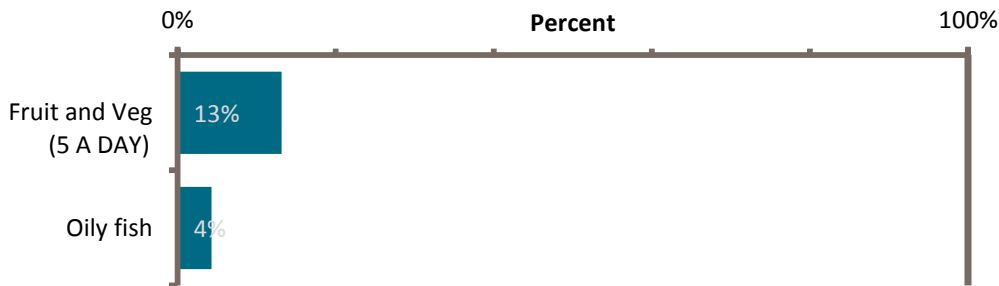
It is recommended that trans fat should contribute no more than 2% of food energy.



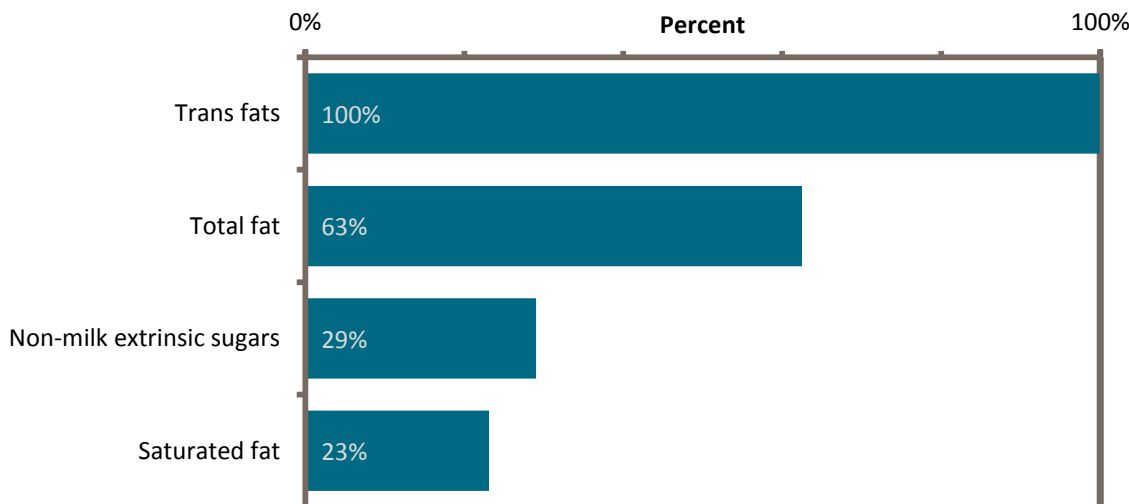
# What percent of older children meet the healthy eating recommendations?

These graphs show the proportion of older children who are successfully meeting the dietary recommendations in the UK.

**Foods/nutrients that people are encouraged to eat more of:** the proportion of older children who meet or exceed the minimum recommended intake.

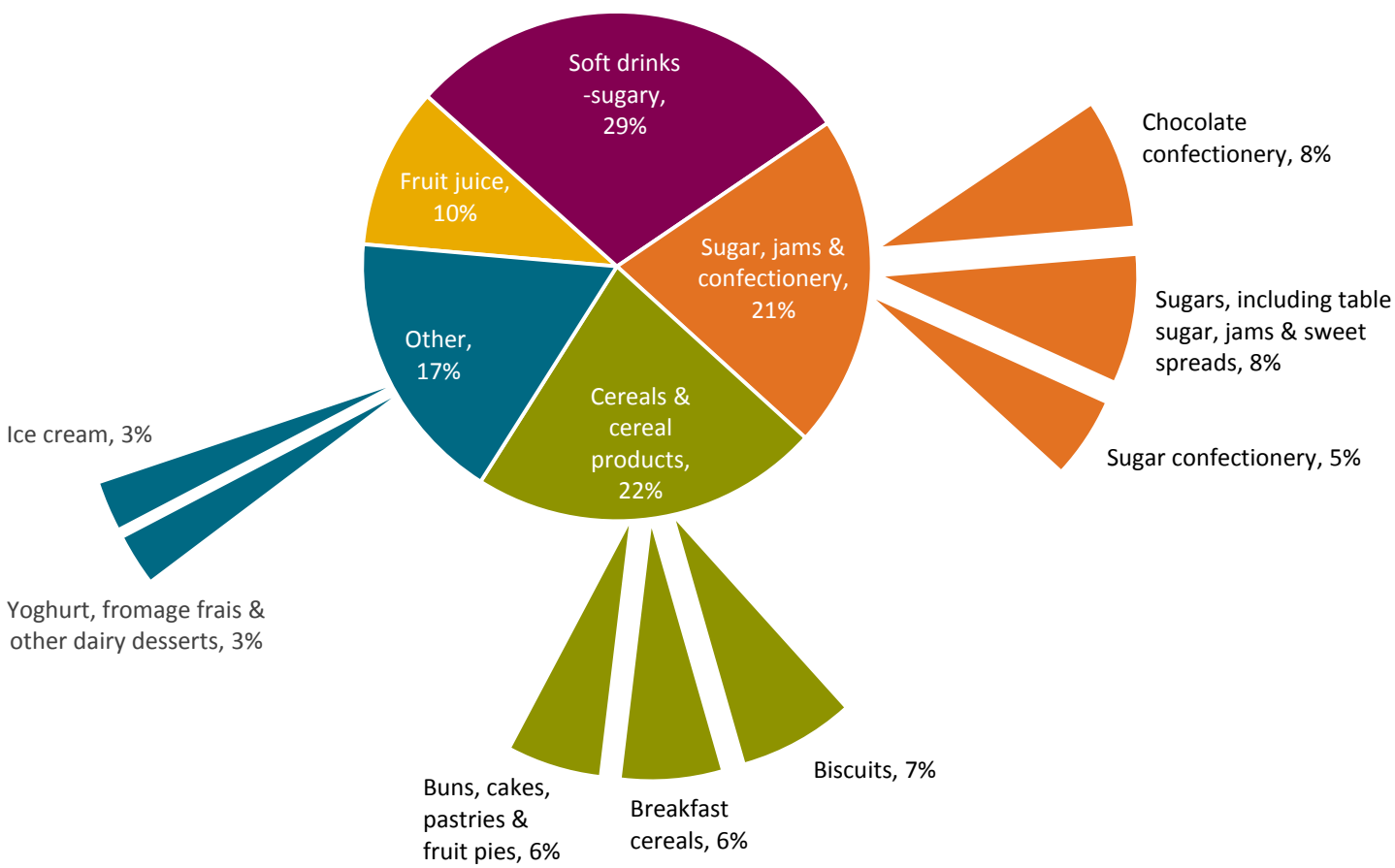


**Food/nutrients that people are encouraged to eat less of:** the proportion of older children who consume less than the maximum recommended intake.



See which foods contribute to the high intake of non-milk extrinsic sugars and saturated fat on pages 9 & 10

# What foods contribute most to older children's intake of non-milk extrinsic sugars?



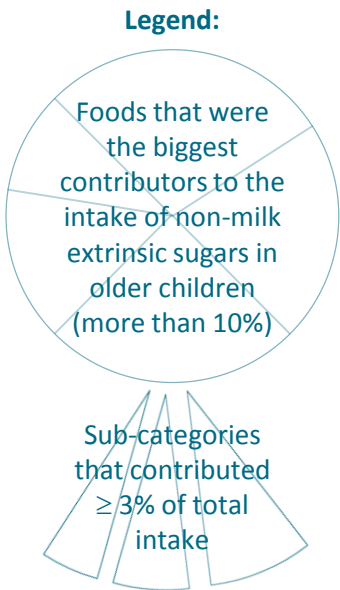
## Non-Milk Extrinsic Sugars = NMES

To reduce the risk of tooth decay and as part of a healthy diet, NMES shouldn't make up more than 10% of the energy (calorie intake) you get from food and drinks each day, according to UK government recommendations.

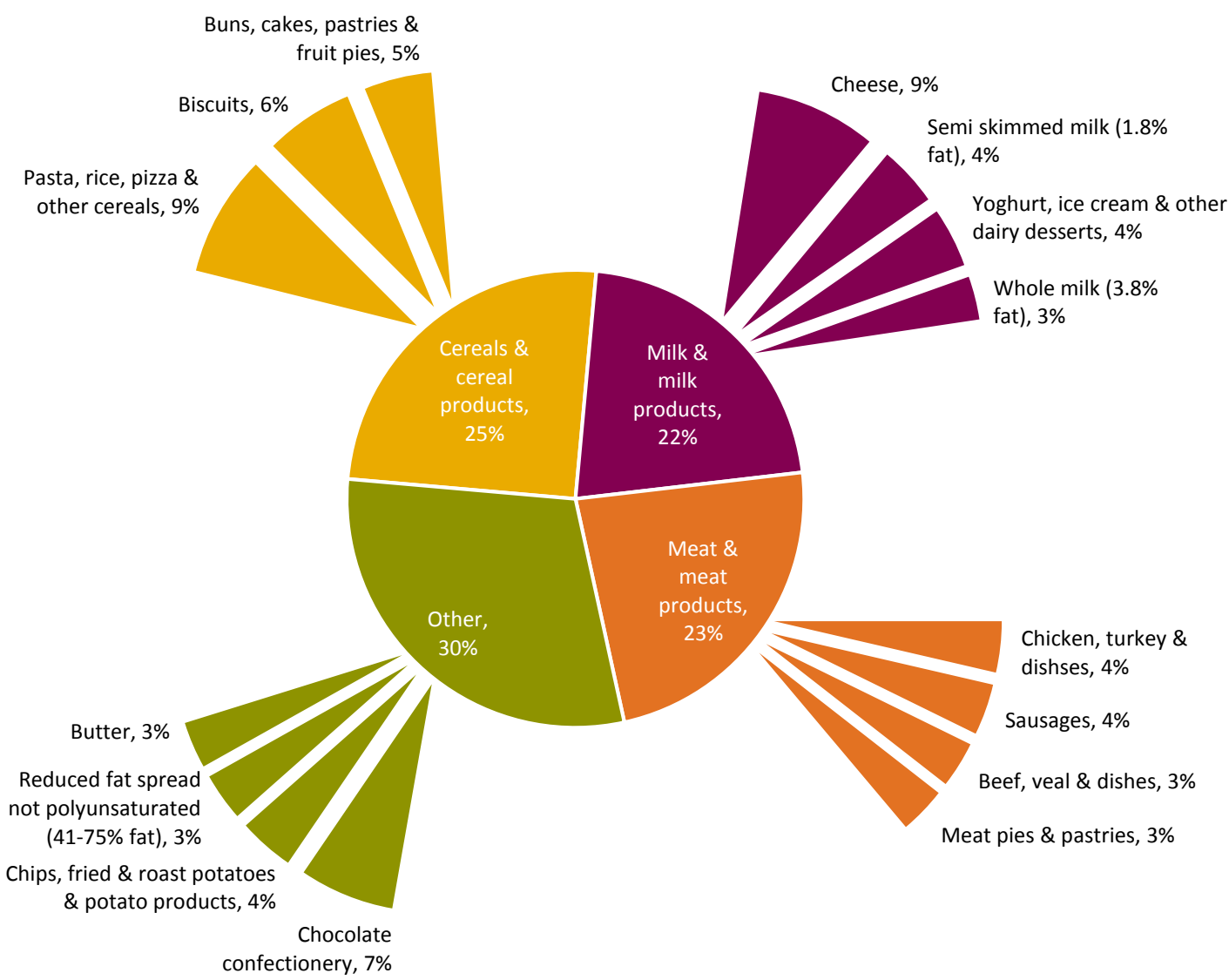
However, for older children (aged 11-18 years) in the UK the average NMES consumption is 15% of their energy intake from food and drinks.

Less than a third (29%) of older children meet or consume less than the recommended maximum intake.

NMES includes all sugars in table sugar, fruit juices, honey, sucrose, glucose and glucose syrups added to food, plus 50% of the sugars in canned, stewed, dried or preserved fruits.



# What foods contribute most to older children's intake of saturated fat?

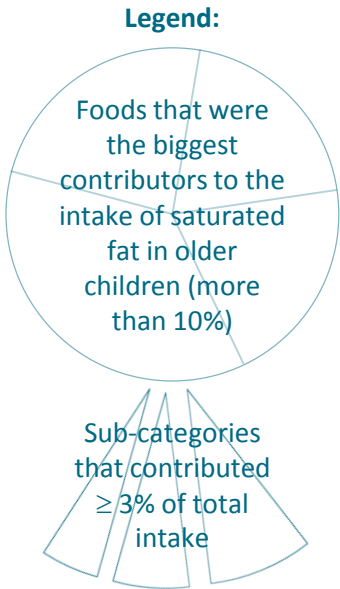


**Saturated fat** shouldn't make up more than 10% of the energy (calorie intake) you get from food and drinks each day, according to UK government recommendations.

However, for older children (aged 11-18 years) in the UK the average saturated fat consumption is 12% of their energy intake from food and drinks.

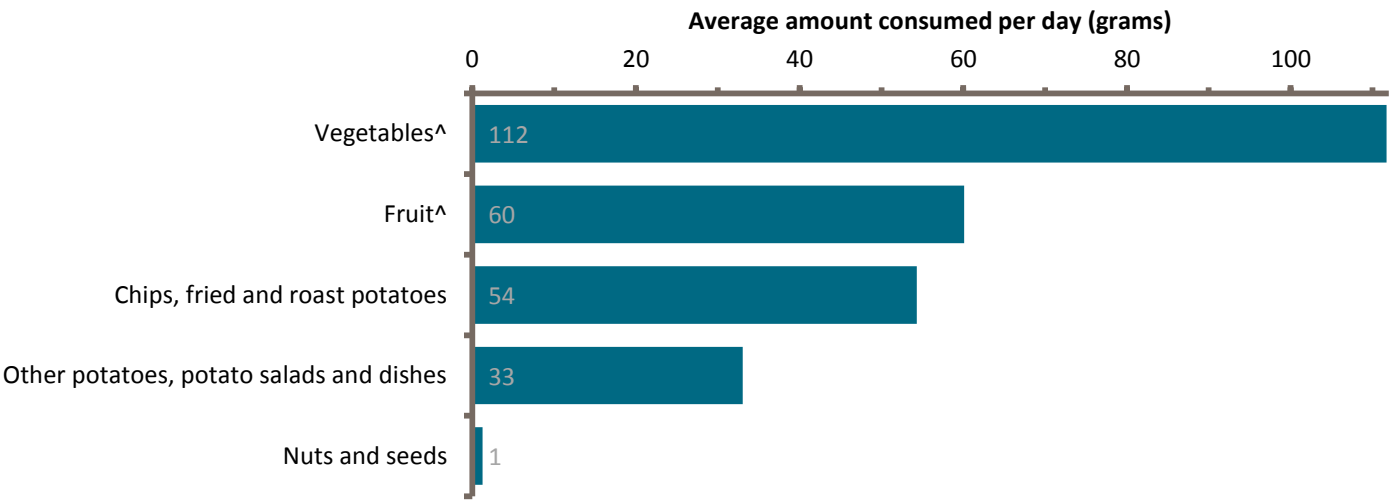
Less than a quarter (23%) of older children meet or consume less than the recommended maximum intake.

Eating a diet that is high in saturated fat can raise the level of cholesterol in the blood. Having high cholesterol increases the risk of heart disease later in life.

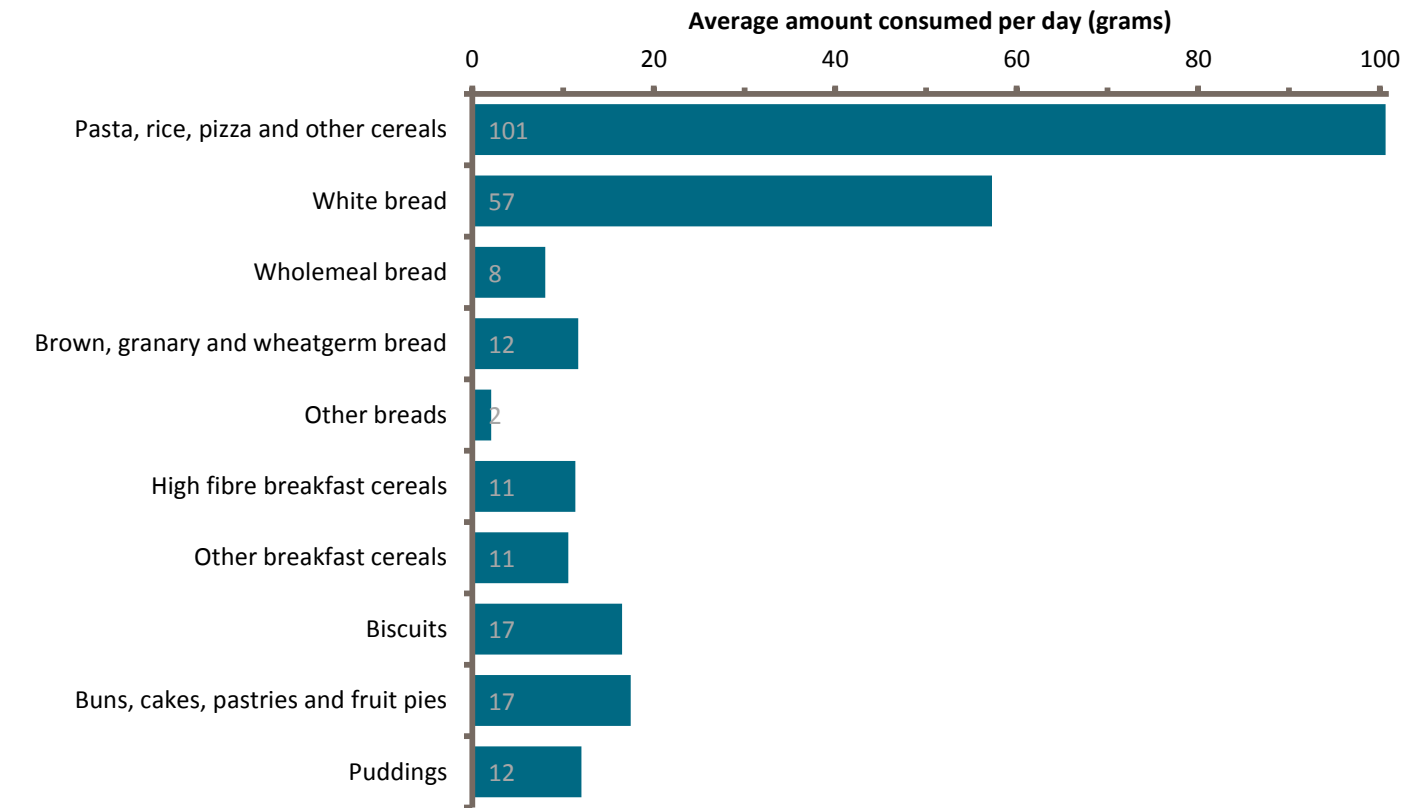


# What is the average daily consumption for each type of food?

## Fruit, vegetables and potatoes



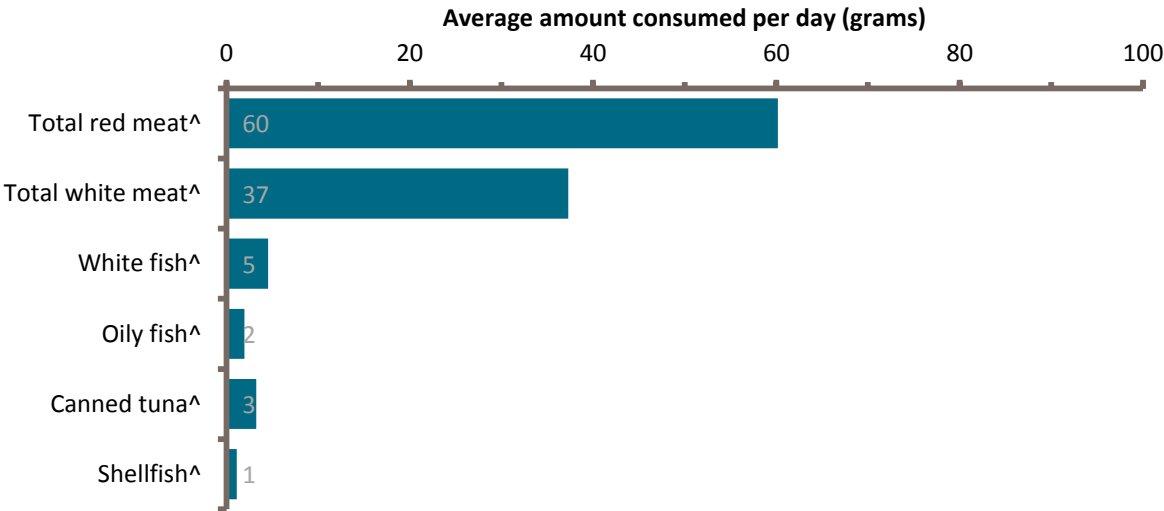
## Cereals and cereal products



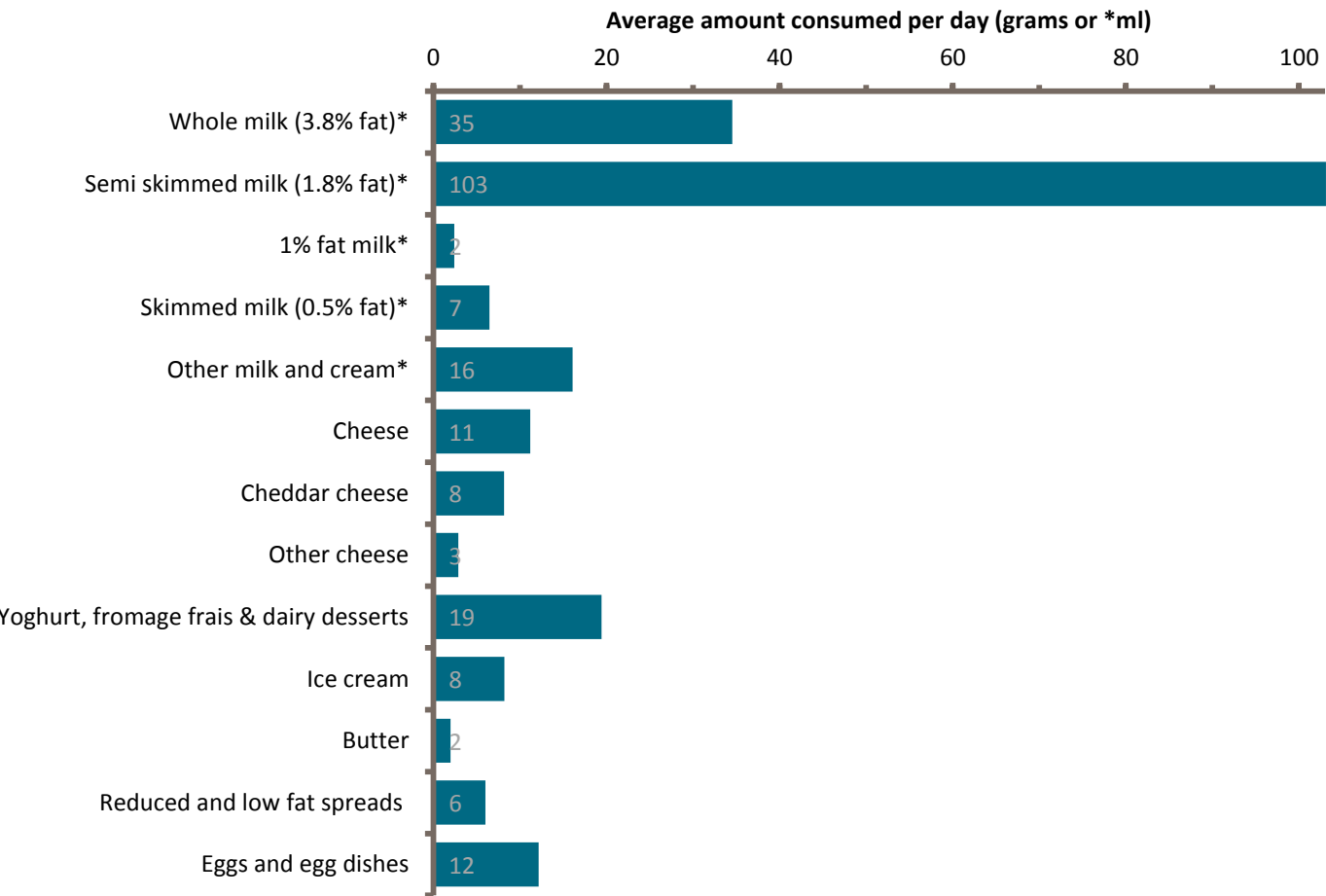
^ Disaggregated data: foods such as fruit and vegetables, meat and fish can be eaten on their own or as part of a mixed dish. The amounts shown above are the total of all that food eaten e.g. minced beef in bolognese, apples in apple crumble, or carrots in stew are counted in the totals

# What is the average daily consumption for each type of food?

## Meat, meat products and fish



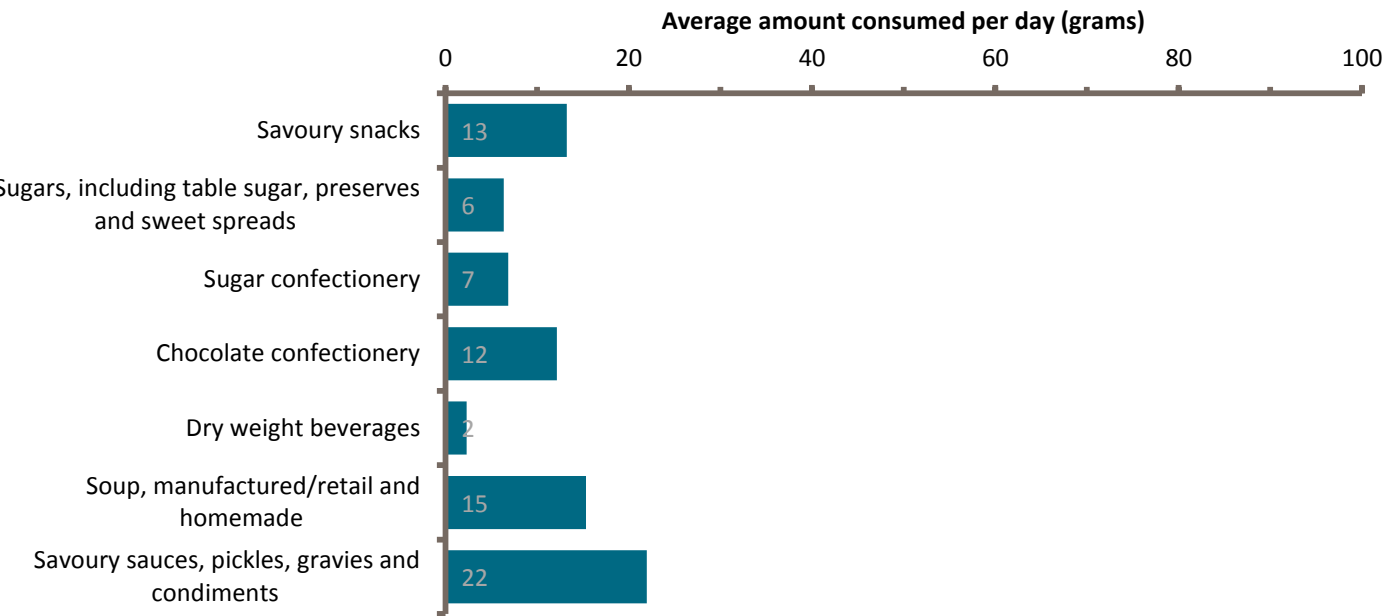
## Milk, milk products, fat spreads and eggs



*^ Disaggregated data: foods such as fruit and vegetables, meat and fish can be eaten on their own or as part of a mixed dish. The amounts shown above are the total of all that food eaten e.g. minced beef in bolognese, apples in apple crumble, or carrots in stew are counted in the totals*

# What is the average daily consumption for each type of food?

## Snacks, confectionary and miscellaneous



## Beverages

