

Updates to nutrient composition databases can influence observed changes in nutrient intakes: results from national surveys of diet among children in Scotland in 2006 and 2010

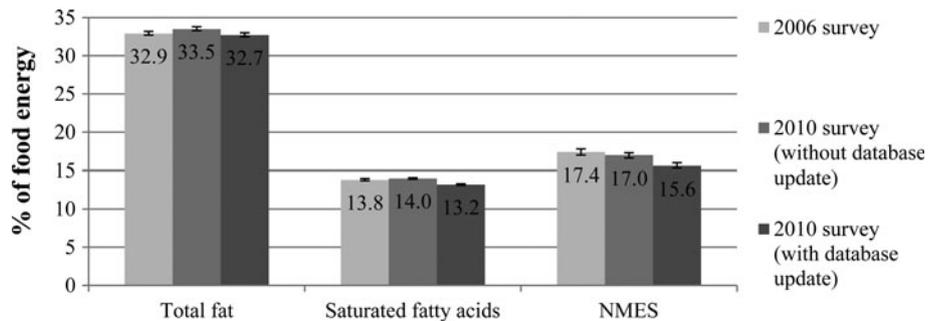
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Results from national surveys in children in Scotland suggest that intakes of saturated fatty acids (SFA) and non-milk extrinsic sugars (NMES) decreased between 2006 and 2010⁽¹⁾. These surveys assessed diet using the Scottish Collaborative Group Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ), and the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (NDNS) databank was used for the nutrient analysis. In 2010, the FFQ nutrient composition database was updated to reflect changes in the NDNS databank as many food codes used in 2006 were no longer present in the databank and nutrient composition of some foods had been updated. The main changes were in the codes for pizza, spreads, crisps and savoury snacks. We aimed to assess to what extent updates to the FFQ nutrient composition database influenced the observed changes in SFA and NMES intakes between 2006 and 2010.

FFQs from 1674 children aged 3–16 years in the 2010 survey were re-analysed using the nutrient database developed for the 2006 survey. Weighted mean (95% CI) nutrient intakes (as a percentage of food energy) were calculated using Stata/SE 11.2.

When the nutrient database was kept constant, there was a much smaller decrease in NMES intake between 2006 and 2010 than when using the updated nutrient database. Similarly, there appeared to be no change in dietary behaviour that would account for a decrease in total fat or SFA intake between 2006 and 2010.



Decreases in SFA and NMES intakes observed between 2006 and 2010 are influenced by updates to the FFQ nutrient composition database, and any changes in dietary intake should not be interpreted as being due to changes in food intake alone. Updates to nutrient composition databases may influence nutrient intakes calculated in other surveys monitoring dietary intake.

1. Masson LF, Bromley C, Macdiarmid JI *et al.* (2012) *Survey of Diet Among Children in Scotland. (2010). Volume 1: Diet, Obesity and Physical Activity.* Food Standards Agency in Scotland. http://foodbase.org.uk/results.php?f_report_id=777

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