

Dairy Intakes and Compliance with Food Pyramid Recommendations Among Irish Adults



Findings from the National Adult Nutrition Survey

The nutrient-richness of the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group is well-recognised, providing an important source of many essential nutrients. Considering the nutritional credentials, as well as the versatility of this food group, it is no wonder dairy products are among the staple foods in the Irish diet.

To understand more clearly the contribution of these foods to the nutritional quality of the Irish diet, the NDC commissioned dairy-specific analysis of the National Adult Nutrition Survey (NANS).

This survey, carried out by the Irish Universities Nutrition Alliance (IUNA) between 2008 and 2010, represents the most up-to-date information with respect to food and drink intake among adults in Ireland. The current dairy-specific analysis focused on the intake of the 'milk yogurt and cheese' food group among adults aged 18-64 years.

Results from this research provide insights into the dietary habits of Irish adults, for example: the contribution of these foods to the intake of various nutrients; compliance with dietary guidelines for this food group; and comparisons of data from NANS and the North South Ireland Food Consumption Survey (1997-1999).

The tables, overleaf, present the mean daily servings from the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group for Irish adults (18-64 years); and the percentage of the population and various sub-groups achieving the recommended three servings per day. In addition, the adequacy of specific nutrient intakes within the population is also presented.

The full report, as well as further information on NDC research, is accessible at:

www.ndc.ie/health

For further information on dairy nutrition, please contact the NDC nutrition team:

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Mean daily servings from the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group for Irish adults aged 18-64 years

	Total Population (n = 1274)		Total Males (n = 634)		Total Females (n = 640)	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Total dairy	2.04	1.30	2.32	1.46	1.75	1.04
Total milk	1.18	0.96	1.38	1.08	0.99	0.78
Whole milk	0.62	0.90	0.82	1.06	0.43	0.65
Semi-skimmed milk	0.35	0.65	0.35	0.71	0.36	0.59
Skimmed milk	0.08	0.32	0.07	0.35	0.09	0.29
Fortified milk	0.11	0.37	0.13	0.43	0.08	0.30
Non-dairy milk alternative	0.02	0.15	0.02	0.17	0.02	0.12
Total cheese	0.61	0.70	0.72	0.81	0.50	0.54
Hard cheese	0.47	0.66	0.56	0.76	0.37	0.52
Soft cheese	0.09	0.19	0.11	0.21	0.08	0.15
Cottage cheese	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.06	0.00	0.04
Processed cheese	0.05	0.12	0.05	0.13	0.04	0.11
Total yogurt	0.24	0.39	0.21	0.41	0.27	0.38
Yogurt	0.21	0.38	0.18	0.40	0.24	0.36
Drinking yogurt	0.03	0.09	0.03	0.09	0.03	0.09
Non-dairy yogurt alternative	0.01	0.07	0.01	0.06	0.01	0.07

n = number; SD = standard deviation

Numbers of servings were estimated using: Department of Health & Health Service Executive (2012). Your Guide to Healthy Eating Using the Food Pyramid for Adults and Children over 5 Years of Age.

Percentage of the population, adults aged 18-64 years, achieving the recommended three servings per day from the 'milk, yogurt and cheese' food group

Population Types	Number of participants	Under consumers	Consumers	Over consumers	Consumers*
		0 - 2.99 servings	3 - 3.99 servings	> 3.99 servings	2.6 - 3.4 servings
Total Population	1274	80.6	12.1	7.3	12.9
Males	634	73.2	15.5	11.4	16.4
Females	640	88.0	8.8	3.3	9.4
Age 18-35 years	531	78.2	13.4	8.5	13.7
Age 36-50 years	437	82.8	9.6	7.6	11.7
Age 51-64 years	306	81.7	13.4	4.9	13.1

*Consumers of the recommended 3 servings using a range of 2.6 - 3.4 servings

Numbers of servings were estimated using: Department of Health & Health Service Executive (2012). Your Guide to Healthy Eating Using the Food Pyramid for Adults and Children over 5 Years of Age.

The adequacy of nutrient intakes within the total population from food sources and supplements (18-64 years)

Micronutrient	Males (n = 634)				Females (n = 640)			
	EAR	Mean	SD	% meeting EAR	EAR	Mean	SD	% meeting EAR
Total Vitamin A (µg RE/day)	500	1141	995	79.2	400	1028	896	85.3
Vitamin D (µg/day)	10	4.6	7.1	8.0	10	3.9	5.2	6.6
Vitamin B12 (µg/day)	1.25	7.3	6.9	99.2	1.25	8.0	45.3	96.9
Riboflavin (mg/day)	1.0	3.2	6.0	94.2	0.9	3.3	9.2	90.5
Folate (µg/day)	150	401	209	96.4	150	336	387	88.6
Calcium (mg/day)	525	1060	407	93.8	525	824	356	84.2
Salt (g/day)*	6	8.6	11.9	71.6	6	5.4	1.7	32.0

n = number; SD = standard deviation; RE = Retinol Equivalents; EAR = Estimated average requirement (Department of Health UK (1991) Dietary Reference Values of Food Energy and Nutrients for the United Kingdom. London: HMSO)

*Salt recommendations according to SACN (Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (2003) Salt and Health. [Online]

Available: http://www.sacn.gov.uk/pdfs/sacn_salt_final.pdf; percentage values are based on those exceeding the recommendation for salt.