

November 2000

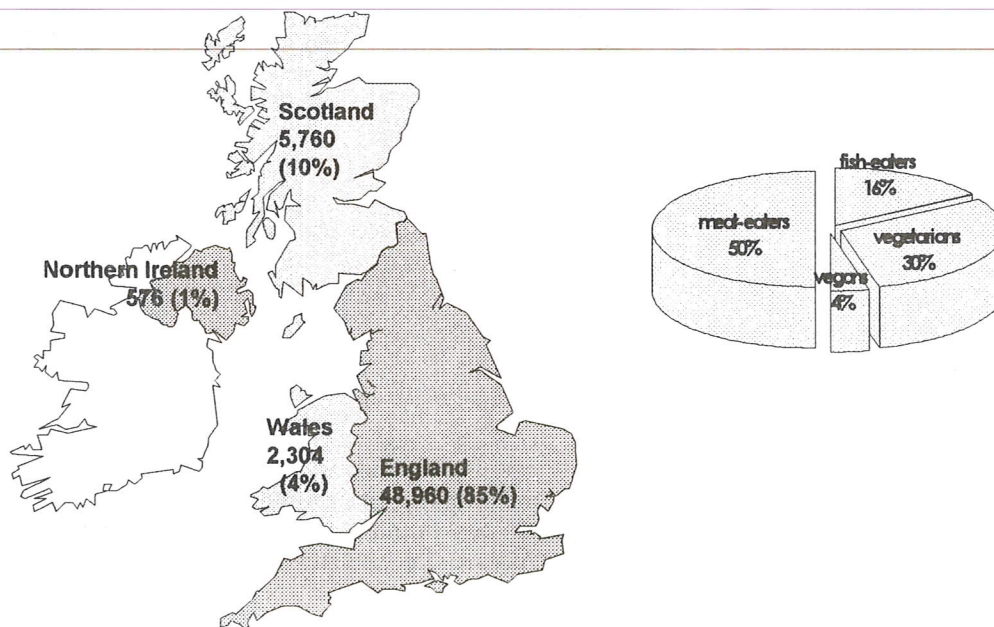
Dear EPIC participant

About five years ago you kindly helped us by completing a questionnaire about your diet and other aspects of your lifestyle, and perhaps by also providing a blood sample. 400,000 people in 9 European countries have now filled in questionnaires for EPIC, which is the largest detailed study of nutrition and health in the world.

We would now like you to help us again by completing the enclosed form. The information you give will help us to keep track of your diet, your health and various other aspects of your lifestyle. Some of the questions will be familiar to you and others are new. Even if you feel that you have given some of the information previously please give it again so that we can be sure that the data are as complete as possible. We guarantee that all information provided will be treated with absolute confidentiality and used only for medical research.

Progress of EPIC

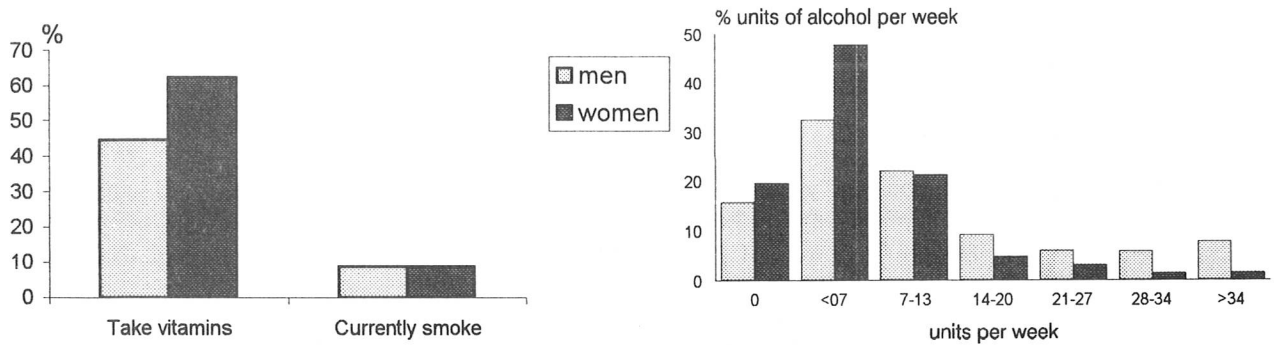
Between 1993 and the end of 1998 EPIC in Oxford received 57,600 questionnaires from people living all over the United Kingdom:



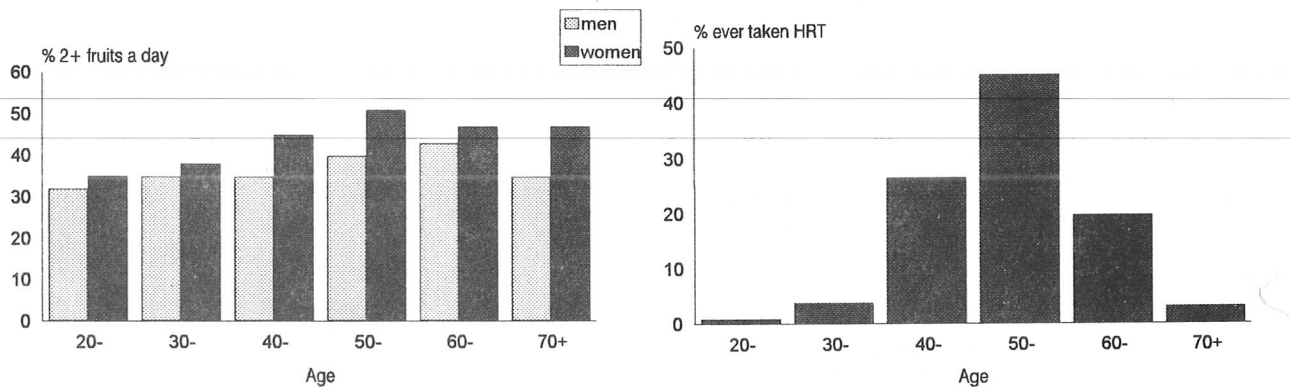
The map shows the distribution of participants throughout the UK, and the pie-chart shows the proportion of meat-eaters, fish (but not meat)-eaters, vegetarians and vegans. As you can see, of the 57,600 participants, 50% have a meat-free diet. This is an exceptionally valuable contribution to understanding the effects of diet on long-term health.

Some facts about EPIC participants

The following graphs show that more women than men participants take supplementary vitamins, whereas smoking is rare in both men and women. Alcohol consumption varies between men and women: fewer men than women are non-drinkers, more women than men are occasional drinkers and more men than women are heavy drinkers.



It is generally recommended that a healthy diet should include the consumption of five or more portions of vegetables and/or fruits a day. The following graph shows that women consume more fruit than men at all ages and that daily fruit consumption is lowest in the younger age-groups and highest in middle-age. Hormone replacement therapy (HRT) is increasingly being prescribed to women, primarily to compensate for hormone loss at menopause. The graph shows that almost half the women aged 50-59 at entry to the study have taken HRT at some time.



Future plans

Over the next five years, EPIC should produce many important advances in our understanding of the effects of nutrition on health. The first major analyses of the data will look at the association of diet with the risk for coronary heart disease and for cancers of the bowel, breast and prostate. The results will be published in scientific journals and publicized through the media.

Please help us again by completing the form and sending it back in the pre-paid envelope to:
**Dr T Key, EPIC Study, University of Oxford, Gibson Building, Radcliffe Infirmary,
 Woodstock Road, Oxford, OX2 6HE.** If you have any queries please phone 01865-516329