



fighting heart disease
and stroke

european heart network

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There is no reason to question current nutrition recommendations

EHN's Expert Group on nutrition has very recently reviewed all the latest scientific evidence as part of an ongoing process to update our guidance on diet and cardiovascular disease (CVD). In direct contrast to the conclusions of Dr Salim Yusuf's speech in Davos (February 2017), the Expert Group finds that the evidence base remains robust for recommendations to limit salt intake, replace saturated fats with unsaturated fats and fibre-rich complex carbohydrates, and consume five or more portions a day of fruits and vegetables.

Specifically in relation to salt, well-designed prospective studies that use reliable methods to measure sodium intakes continue to show a clear linear relationship between sodium intake and both CVD and all-cause mortality. Some studies which appear to suggest that lower salt intake might be associated with 'increased' risk of CVD events (a 'J-shaped' curve) suffer from measurement errors.

In relation to dietary fat, the results quoted by Dr Yusuf do not appear to take into consideration that the health impact of reducing fat intakes also depends on what replaces such fats in the diet. It is important that saturated fats, for example, be replaced by unsaturated fats and fibre-rich complex carbohydrates, rather than refined carbohydrates and free sugars.