

Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition consults on lower carbohydrate diets for people with type 2 diabetes

Status: Closed

Date launched: 5 March 2020

Closing date: 30 April 2020

Public Health England (PHE) asked SACN – an independent committee of scientific experts that advises government on nutrition and related health matters – to review the best available evidence base on lower carbohydrate diets alongside current UK government advice, for people with type 2 diabetes.

FSA is leading on the launch of the publication in Northern Ireland and would welcome NI stakeholders to respond to the consultation.

The comprehensive review of existing systematic reviews and meta-analysis was conducted by a joint working group comprising members of SACN and members nominated by Diabetes UK, NHS England, the British Dietetic Association, Royal College of Physicians and Royal College of GPs.

The effect of lower compared to higher carbohydrate diets were considered on a range of outcomes important in the management of type 2 diabetes - including body weight and measures of blood glucose concentrations.

Following a robust, systematic assessment of the available evidence, SACN's draft conclusions are:

- For body weight, there is no overall difference between lower and higher carbohydrate diets in the long-term (at or beyond 12 months).
- For blood glucose (sugar) levels, lower carbohydrate diets may have benefits over higher carbohydrate diets in the short term, but their longer-term effects are unclear, based on the evidence considered.
- People with type 2 diabetes are currently advised to follow healthy eating advice for the general population. Current UK government advice (represented by the Eatwell Guide) is that for the general population, around 50% of total dietary energy should be from starchy carbohydrates (such as potatoes, bread and rice), opting for higher fibre or wholegrain versions where possible. This is based on recommendations made by SACN following its 2015 review of the evidence on carbohydrates and health.

Dr Adrienne Cullum, head of nutrition science at PHE, said:

'The Scientific Advisory Committee on Nutrition (SACN), with support from a range of partners including Diabetes UK and NHSE, have undertaken a thorough review of the evidence on low-carb diets for adults with type-2 diabetes.'

'SACN is consulting on the draft report to make sure it has considered all the relevant evidence, and to invite comments on the draft conclusions.'

Once SACN has considered all the responses to the consultation, it will publish its final report and make recommendations to government. SACN will also consider research recommendations based on limitations in the current evidence base.

[The consultation on the draft report on lower carbohydrate diets for people with Type 2 diabetes](#) opens today, 5 March 2020 and closes 30 April 2020.

Publication of response summary

Within three months of a consultation ending we aim to publish a summary of responses received and provide a link to it from this page.

You can find information on how we handle data provided in response to consultations in our [Consultations privacy notice](#).

Further information

This consultation has been prepared in accordance with [HM Government Consultation Principles](#). If an Impact Assessment has been produced, this is included in the consultation documents. If no Impact Assessment has been provided, the reason will be given in the consultation document.