

## Cuttings from the media

### MEDIA LITE

#### WHO: Sugar and spice, and all things not nice

New recommendations from the World Health Organization suggest that adults and children must slash the amount of sugar they consume by roughly half to lower their risk of obesity and tooth decay.

WHO's recommendations cover free sugars such as glucose and fructose, and sucrose or table sugar added to processed foods and drinks. They do not cover sugar found naturally in fresh fruit, vegetables and milk. A strong recommendation is that people should aim to reduce the amount to less than 10% of their daily energy intake – or to about 50 g or 12 teaspoons of sugar for adults. The current average in Western Europe is about 101 g.

A conditional recommendation of the report is for people to aim to cut consumption to less than 5% of their daily energy intake (25 g or 6 teaspoons). This would be even better at helping prevent chronic diseases linked to poor diets including heart disease, cancers and diabetes.

*Reuters*  
4 March 2015



#### Changes to the rules: Prescription fines for long-term conditions

People with life-long conditions, including diabetes, are being fined up to £100 for collecting their free prescriptions because of a change to exemption rules that were not properly publicised.

The system changed in 2002 and a new medical exemption certificate that needed renewing every 5 years was introduced. But those issued the old exemptions were not informed of the change, and are now receiving fines since a new body took over the responsibility for checking patient eligibility.

*BBC News*  
20 February 2015

#### Do statins increase the risk of type 2 diabetes?

A 6-year study from Finland has linked statin use to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes. The study, comprising almost 9000 men found that statin use could increase the risk of diabetes by 47%.

However critics have pointed out that this study was not a randomised controlled trial and those being prescribed statins were already likely to have a higher risk of diabetes. The study cohort included 8739 men aged between 45 and 73 years. None had diabetes at the start of the study and just over 2100 of the participants were on statins. By the end of the trial, 625 men were diagnosed with diabetes, and the risk of diabetes rose in line with the dose of the statins prescribed, according to the study.

*The Telegraph*  
5 March 2015

#### Type 1 diabetes: Increase risk of death in women

Research published in the *Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology* has shown that women with type 1 diabetes face a greater risk of dying from a range of conditions, particularly heart disease, compared with men with the same condition.

Researchers from the University of Queensland, Australia, analysed data from more than 26 studies, involving about 200 000 people with type 1 diabetes. They found that women had a 40% increased risk of death from all causes, and were at greater risk of stroke than men. The reason for the difference in mortality is currently unknown, and charities have called for urgent changes to care.

*BBC News*  
6 February 2015

#### Uncontrolled diabetes tied to poorer brain power

A new US study has shown that people with uncontrolled diabetes with high glucose levels score worse on tests of brain power later in life that those whose blood glucose levels are under control.

These findings in *Annals of Internal Medicine* suggest that good control of metabolic health may have a protective effect on brain health.

It is well-understood that there is a link between diabetes and dementia risk, but this study sheds light on the relationship between glucose control and cognitive decline, which precedes dementia.

*Reuters*  
1 December 2014