

Men and women differ in their eating habits: study



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Men and women have different tastes in food, with men favoring meat and poultry, and women fruits and vegetables, researchers said in what was touted as the most extensive study to date of gender differences in eating habits.

More than 14,000 adult men and women were surveyed from May 2006 to April 2007, for the Foodborne Disease Active Surveillance Network (FoodNet), to determine their eating habits, including high risk foods such as undercooked meat and eggs.

"There was such a variety of data, we thought it would be interesting to see whether there were any gender differences," said Beletshachew Shiferaw, a lead researcher on the study.

"To our knowledge, there have been studies in the literature on gender differences in eating habits, but nothing this extensive," the epidemiologist told the 2008 International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases in Atlanta, Georgia.

Researchers found that men were more likely to eat meat and poultry, especially duck, veal, and ham, and certain shellfish such as shrimp and oysters.

Women instead were more likely to eat vegetables, especially carrots and tomatoes, and fruits, especially strawberries, blueberries, raspberries and apples.

Women also preferred dry foods, such as almonds and walnuts, and were more likely to consume eggs and yogurt when compared with men.

There were also some exceptions to the eating trends of each gender: men were significantly more likely to eat asparagus and brussels sprouts than women, while women were more likely to consume fresh hamburgers as opposed to the frozen kind, which the men preferred.

And regarding high risk foods, the researchers found that significantly more men consumed undercooked meat and eggs than women, while more women were more likely to eat alfalfa sprouts.

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