



[Back to Story](#) - [Help](#)

Britain tops fast-food league, as world obesity grows: study



Wed Jan 2, 6:31 AM ET

Britons are the world's biggest fans of fast food, just ahead of Americans, while famously gastronomic French are the least attracted by quick meals, according to a study published Wednesday.

The survey of 13 countries also confirmed growing concern over obesity worldwide, but noted different priorities and strategies in different parts of the world for tackling it.

"People are inherently contradictory and nowhere is it more obvious than on such a sensitive and important issue as their weight," said Steve Garton of polling body Synovate, who produced the survey jointly with the BBC.

"The results show there's a world of people who cannot deny themselves that hamburger or extra piece of pizza, but probably make themselves feel better by washing it down with a diet cola."

In terms of fast food, Britain 45 percent of Britons agreed with the statement "I like the taste of fast food too much to give it up" ahead of 44 percent for Americans and Canadians at 37 percent.

The French, long proud of their reputation for high-class cuisine, strongly disagree: 81 percent rejected the statement, followed by 75 percent of Singaporeans and 73 percent of people from Hong Kong and Romania.

"Britons love their fish and chips," said Garton, while Synovate's head in France Thierry Pailleux underlined the different Gallic perspective.

"French people take care of their image as a matter of course. Being thin is part of our culture and a point of pride," he said. "On top of this there is increasing awareness of the devastation obesity can cause to one's health."

Overall the obesity problem is fuelling increasing concern worldwide -- although some are more concerned than others.

Fifteen percent of French people and 12 percent of Americans weigh themselves every single day, while at the other end of the spectrum only 15 percent of Hong Kongers get on the scales once or more every week.

In terms of how to shed weight there are also different strategies.

Globally most people say cutting food intake is the best answer, followed by 43 percent who do more exercise.

But there are regional variations: 57 percent of Americans, 56 percent of French and 54 percent of Britons cut down on food to shed pounds, while 14 percent of Malaysians opt for herbs and supplements to cut their weight.

People in the Middle East seem to combine all strategies: Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are among the top users of low-fat products and meal replacements, but also gym memberships and home exercise equipment.

Copyright © 2008 [Agence France Presse](#). All rights reserved. The information contained in the AFP News report may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed without the prior written authority of Agence France Presse.

Copyright © 2007 Yahoo All rights reserved. [Copyright/IP Policy](#) | [Terms of Service](#) | [Help](#) | [Feedback](#)

NOTICE: We collect personal information on this site. To learn more about how we use your information, see our [Privacy Policy](#)