

and cured and smoked meats should be avoided.

- 10 In the presence of an adequate, balanced diet, dietary supplements (such as vitamins) are 'probably unnecessary, and possibly unhelpful' for reducing cancer risk.

In addition to these dietary changes, they also recommended adequate physical exercise, avoiding being overweight, and drastically reducing alcohol intake and tobacco smoking.

## SUMMARY

As the examples in this chapter indicate, a large number of diseases can be linked to dietary beliefs and practices, though these cultural factors are mainly relevant where enough food is available for nutrition in the first place. Attempts to modify or improve diets should therefore take into account the important cultural roles that food plays in all societies and cultural groups.

## KEY REFERENCES

- 1 Levi-Strauss, C. (1970). *The Raw and the Cooked*. London: Jonathan Cape, pp. 142, 164.
- 8 Greenwood, B. (1981). Cold or spirits? Choice and ambiguity in Morocco's pluralistic medical system. *Soc. Sci. Med.* 15B, 219–35.
- 11 Chowdhury, A.M., Helman, C. and Greenhalgh, T. (2000) Food beliefs and practices among British Bangladeshis with diabetes: implications for health education. *Anthropol. Med.* 7(2), 209–226.
- 15 Enticott, G. (2003) Lay immunology, local foods and rural identity: defending unpasteurised milk in England. *Sociologia Ruralis* 43(3), 257–270.
- 21 Greenhalgh, T., Helman, C. and Chowdhury, A. M. (1998). Health beliefs and folk models of diabetes in British Bangladeshis: a qualitative study. *Br. Med. J.* 316, 978–83.
- 28 Keesing, R. M. and Strathern, A.J. (1998) *Cultural Anthropology*, 3rd edn. London: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, pp. 440–4.

- 29 Lang, T. (1999). Diet, health and globalization: five key questions. *Proc. Nutr. Soc.* 58, 335–43.
- 30 Drewnowski, A. and Popkin, B. M. (1997). The nutrition transition: new trends in the global diet. *Nutr. Rev.* 55, 31–43.
- 44 World Health Organization (2005) Obesity and overweight. *WHO Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health*: <http://www.who.int/dietphysicalactivity/publications/facts/obesity/en> (Accessed on 14 July 2005)
- 49 Speiser, P.W., Rudolf, M.C.J, Anhalt, H. *et al.* (2005) Consensus statement: Childhood obesity. *J.Clin. Endocrinol. Metab.* 90, 1871–87.
- 51 Pollock, N.J. (1995) Cultural elaborations of obesity – fattening practices in Pacific societies. *Asian Pacific J. Clin. Nutr.* 4, 357–60.
- 60 Harrison, G. G., Zaghoul, S. S., Galal, O. M. and Gabr, A. (1993). Breastfeeding and weaning in a poor urban neighbourhood in Cairo, Egypt: maternal beliefs and perceptions. *Soc. Sci. Med.* 36, 1–10.

See <http://www.culturehealthandillness.com> for the full list of references for this chapter.



## RECOMMENDED READING

- Counihan, C. and van Esterik, P. (eds) (1997) *Food and Culture: a Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Dettwyler, K. A. (1992). The biocultural approach in nutritional anthropology: case studies of malnutrition in Mali. *Med. Anthropol.* 15, 17–39.
- Farb, P. and Armelagos, G. (1980). *Consuming Passions: the Anthropology of Eating*. Boston: Houghton Muffin.
- Lang, T. (1999). Diet, health and globalization: five key questions. *Proc. Nutr. Soc.* 58, 335–43.
- Maher, V. (ed.) (1992) *The Anthropology of Breast-Feeding*. Oxford: Berg.
- World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Research (1997) *Food, Nutrition and the Prevention of Cancer: A Global Perspective*. London: WCRF/AICR.
- World Health Organization (2003) *Diet, Nutrition and the Prevention of Chronic Disease*. (Technical Report Series 916). World Health Organization.