



# Participant Information Sheet

## Diet and Eating Behaviours across Early Adulthood Transitions (DEBEAT) study

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### Summary

- Before you decide whether to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.
- Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Discuss it with friends and relatives if you wish. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.
- Please do ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.
- If you would no longer like to take part you can tell us by email or telephone.
- Thank you for your support with our research so far.

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### How to contact us

If you have any questions about this study please contact the study team:  
**[debeat.study@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk](mailto:debeat.study@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk)**

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## About this study

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### Background

What we eat has a huge impact on our health, influencing both our current fitness and wellbeing, as well as our risk of serious health problems as we get older. Early adulthood (age 16-24) is an important period for development of diet and eating habits. There are many aspects of people's lives which are changing through early adulthood; changes in living environment, moving from education into work, perhaps moving to a new city, changes in friends and relationships. All of these changes may influence people's diet and lifestyle.

In September 2023 we will run a large scale longitudinal study recruiting 1,500 students with the aim of increasing our understanding of what influences diet during this period of life.

### Objectives

The objectives of the DEBEAT study are:

1. How does diet change from the final year (Y13) of school/college to 12 months later?
2. How do changes in diet differ between those who transition from secondary school into further/higher education, employment or not in education or employment?
3. How do changes in the environment in which people live, work and study influence changes in eating behaviours and diet quality?

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## 2 Why am I being asked to take part?

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We want to recruit participants who are currently in school year 13. Either your school has agreed to provide you with the information about the DEBEAT study so you can decide whether to participate or not, or you have seen the study advertised and want to find out more information.

### Do I have to take part?

No, it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in the study. You are free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason by contacting the study team directly using the contact information at the end of this information sheet.

If you are interested in taking part but have some questions you can contact the study team using the information at the end of this document. The study team can answer your questions directly or you will be invited to join a group online question and answer information session. We also encourage you to discuss study participation with your parents/caregivers who may also be able to explain any part of the study you don't fully understand.

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## 3 What will happen to me if I take part?

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You will be asked to complete an online consent form to confirm your participation in the study. Once consented, you will be sent web-links to complete 4x short questionnaires (10 minutes each) and 3x diet recalls (15 minutes) across two weeks (see Figure 1).

You will be notified via email and text message when each short questionnaire and dietary recall is due to be completed. Reminder emails and text messages will be sent at regular intervals. All emails will be sent from [debeat.study@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk](mailto:debeat.study@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk) and text messages will be sent from +44 7883 270119.



**Figure 1:** Data collection will be completed over two weeks, including 3x dietary recalls and 4x questionnaires

Once you have completed the above study measures, you will receive an additional invitation to upload location data that your phone has been collecting throughout the study via your google account if you have one. This is an optional part of the study and there will be no negative outcome if you choose not to participate in this. The location data will be used as a means of capturing the neighbourhood food environment for the individual (e.g. the shops and restaurants selling food, and types of food sold, within the geographical area in which the individual spends their time). We will do this by mapping data on the individual's location over the 4-week study period on to food environment data which has already been captured using the Food Environment Assessment Tool (<https://www.feat-tool.org.uk/>) developed within the MRC Epidemiology Unit. This data will allow us to explore whether changes in the neighbourhood food environment are associated with changes in diet quality across early adulthood.

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## 4 Possible benefits and disadvantages of taking part

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### Benefits

Taking part in this study will give you an insight into how research works, and may be something you might like to refer to in a personal statement or job cover letter. Participating in research can be an interesting and novel experience, especially for those interested in further education or a career in science or healthcare. It can also be incredibly rewarding to know that you are contributing to health research to improve the future health of the population.

You will be offered the chance to receive individual summary data on your diet based on the information you submit in the Intake24 dietary recalls. This will be an option for you to request once you have completed your third recall. Additionally, as a thank you for your participation in the study, £50 of Amazon gift vouchers will be available to those who engage well in the study measures; £20 at the end of

phase 1 (Autumn 2023) and £30 at the end of phase 2 (Autumn 2024). The vouchers will be sent at the end of the data collection period to the contact email address provided.

### What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

There are very limited disadvantages to taking part in the study aside from the time it takes you to complete the questionnaires and dietary recalls.

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study you should ask to speak to the research team who will do their best to answer your questions at [debeat.study@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk](mailto:debeat.study@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk)

If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, the normal University of Cambridge complaints process is available to you through the University of Cambridge Clinical School Secretary: telephone: 01223 333543 or email: [SchoolSec@medschl.cam.ac.uk](mailto:SchoolSec@medschl.cam.ac.uk).

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## 5 How will my information be looked after?

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### What will happen to information about me collected during the study?

Information we collect during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential. Any information about you will have your name removed so that you cannot be recognised from it and it will not be used or made available for any purpose other than for research.

With your permission, information will be stored anonymously at the MRC Epidemiology Unit for future research into diet, behaviours, and related chronic disease. Codes connecting your individual identity to the stored data records will be kept separately. The database containing personal

information is on a secured network drive on computers in the MRC Epidemiology Unit, University of Cambridge. Occasionally it may be relevant to share your data with research colleagues overseas or in commercial sectors to enhance learning through research. This will only ever be completed if you have provided permission for us to do so at the time of consent and all data shared will be anonymously.

The contact information you provide such as email address, phone number(s) and home address will be used by the research team to keep you informed about your participation in the study. In any such event that it may be necessary for the study team to use an external company to manage this process, for example an SMS, the company will be GDPR compliant.

Approval will be sought from you at the time of providing informed consent to also use your email address for the purpose of sending study related communications such as newsletters from MRC Epidemiology Unit, study specific updates and invites to study related events. A secure service will be used, provided by a GDPR-compliant company. You will be able to change your mailing preferences at any time.

Occasionally our studies may be monitored by our Sponsors. This is to ensure our research is conducted soundly. This procedure is routine and carried out by fully qualified personnel and data confidentiality will be adhered to at all times. At the end of the study the confidential records will be kept for 20 years and then destroyed.

University of Cambridge is the sponsor for this study based in the United Kingdom. We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this. University of Cambridge will keep identifiable information about you up to 20 years after the study has finished.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally-identifiable information possible.

You can find out more about how we use your information at <https://www.medschl.cam.ac.uk/research/privacy-notice-how-we-use-your-research-data/>

### **What will happen to the results of the study?**

When the study is completed, the results will be published in research journals so that researchers, health professionals and policymakers can see the results. Your identity and personal details will always be kept confidential. No information that could identify you, like your name, will be published in any report about this study. We will provide you with a summary of our findings from the study through our newsletters, emails and social media.

### **Who is organising and funding the study?**

This trial is organised by the MRC Epidemiology Unit, part of the University of Cambridge. The funder is the Medical Research Council.

### **Who has reviewed the study?**

This trial has been reviewed by an independent group of people, called the Research Ethics Committee, to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity. The study has been given a favourable opinion by Cambridge Psychology Research Ethics committee.

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## 6 Contact for further information

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If you have any questions regarding the study or how you might be involved further contact information can be found below.

### Study Coordinator

Emma Lachasseigne  
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Medicine  
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Cambridge CB2 0QQ  
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### Principal Investigator

Dr Eleanor Winpenny  
Principal Investigator and Senior Research  
Associate  
Behavioural Epidemiology and Interventions in  
Young People  
MRC Epidemiology Unit  
University of Cambridge

**Thank you for taking the time  
to consider taking part in this  
study.**