

## Certain foods common in diets of US adults with inflammatory bowel disease

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Foods, such as French fries, cheese, cookies, soda, and sports and energy drinks, are commonly found in the diets of United States adults with inflammatory bowel disease, according to a new study by researchers in

the Institute for Biomedical Sciences at Georgia State University.

The researchers analyzed the National Health Interview Survey 2015 to determine the food intake and frequency of consumption for U.S. adults with inflammatory bowel disease. The survey assessed 26 foods. The findings, published in the journal *PLOS One*, reveal that foods typically labeled as junk food were associated with inflammatory bowel disease.

Inflammatory bowel disease, which is characterized by chronic inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract, affects three million U.S. adults. There are two types of conditions, Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis. Common symptoms of inflammatory bowel disease include persistent diarrhea, [abdominal pain](#), rectal bleeding or bloody stools, weight loss and fatigue, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

This study found fries were consumed by a greater number of people with inflammatory bowel disease, and they also ate more cheese and cookies and drank less 100 percent fruit juice compared to people who did not have inflammatory bowel disease.

Intaking fries and sports and [energy drinks](#) and frequently drinking soda were significantly associated with having been told one has inflammatory bowel disease. Consuming milk or popcorn was less likely associated with receiving this diagnosis.

"While foods typically labeled as [junk food](#) were positively associated with inflammatory bowel disease, we found the eating patterns of people with and without this disease to be very similar," said Dr. Moon Han, the study's first author who completed the work as a Ph.D. student in Dr. Didier Merlin's lab in the Institute for Biomedical Sciences and now works as a Health Scientist ORISE Fellow at the CDC. "However, it's unclear whether the survey results reflect a potential change in the food

intake of people with inflammatory bowel disease long before the survey was conducted."

To fully understand the role of [food intake](#) in inflammatory bowel disease risk and prevalence, it's important to explore environmental factors (for example, food deserts), food processing (such as frying) and potential bioactive food components that can induce intestinal inflammation and increase susceptibility to [inflammatory bowel disease](#), the researchers concluded.

**More information:** Moon K. Han et al, Examination of food consumption in United States adults and the prevalence of inflammatory bowel disease using National Health Interview Survey 2015, *PLOS ONE* (2020). [DOI: 10.1371/journal.pone.0232157](https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0232157)

Provided by Georgia State University

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