



The fourth National Family Health Survey unveils interesting data on the dietary preferences and nutritional status of a significant percentage of the population. By **RAMESH CHAKRAPANI**

More than 70 per cent of women and nearly 80 per cent of men aged 15-49 in India consume fish or meat, according to data from the fourth National Family Health Survey, published recently by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

However, the frequency of consumption varies by State, religion, and caste. Besides, the percentage of men or women who consume fish or meat daily is barely six on an all-India basis.

In contrast, the consumption of milk or curd, pulses or beans, and dark, green leafy vegetables was high across the board for both men and women, which offers an interesting insight into the dietary preferences of a good

chunk of the nation's population.

Outside of the north-eastern States, West Bengal, Kerala, Goa, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh had a high proportion of people consuming fish or meat at least once a week, while Punjab, Rajasthan, Haryana, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh had the lowest percentage.

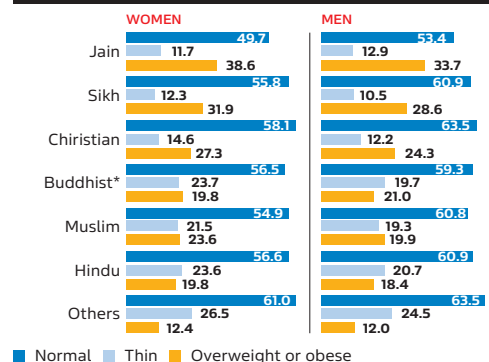
Nutritional statistics showed that the prevalence of mildly or severely thin people was highest in the 15-19 age group, among both men and women, while the prevalence of excessive weight or obesity jumped after the age of 29, for both and men.

Religionwise, the Jain community had the highest percentage of overweight or obese people in their population.

PART 2 OF A SERIES

HEALTH PATTERNS

All-India nutritional status (in per cent)

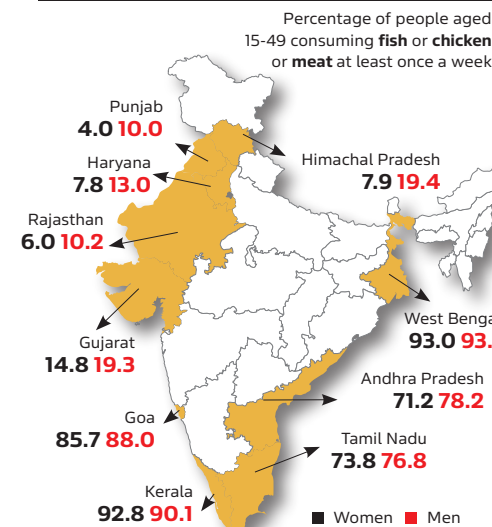


All-India age group nutritional status (in per cent)

Age	Normal	Mildly thin	Thin*	Overweight	Obese
MEN					
15-19	50.4	21.9	23.0	3.8	1.0
20-29	66.3	6.1	12.6	12.8	2.2
30-39	62.9	4.1	8.0	21.1	4.0
40-49	59.4	4.4	8.1	23.4	4.6
WOMEN					
15-19	53.8	18.7	23.2	3.4	0.8
20-29	60.5	10.1	15.1	11.3	2.9
30-39	56.7	6.3	9.4	20.7	7.0
40-49	52.6	5.7	7.9	24.4	9.3

*includes moderately and severely thin

All-India fish/meat consumption



Fish/meat consumption (in per cent)

	Frequency of consumption			
	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Never
WOMEN AGE 15-49				
Fish	5.6	28.4	30.9	35.1
Chicken or meat	1.1	31.5	35.7	31.8
Fish or chicken or meat	6.1	36.6	27.3	29.9
MEN AGE 15-49				
Fish	4.8	33.8	34.2	27.3
Chicken or meat	1.8	38.9	36.3	23.0
Fish or chicken or meat	5.7	43.3	29.5	21.6



All-India food consumption (in per cent)

	Frequency of consumption			
	Daily	Weekly	Occasionally	Never
WOMEN AGE 15-49				
Milk or curd	45.0	22.9	24.7	7.3
Pulses or beans	44.8	45.1	9.5	0.6
Vegetables	47.2	38.3	14.1	0.4
Fruits	12.4	33.2	51.8	2.6
Fried foods	9.8	35.7	49.8	4.7
Aerated drinks	4.5	19.5	59.5	16.5
Eggs	4.0	37.4	29.4	29.3
MEN AGE 15-49				
Milk or curd	46.2	28.8	20.0	5.0
Pulses or beans	46.5	44.1	9.0	0.4
Vegetables	46.6	41.5	11.4	0.5
Fruits	10.9	39.6	47.6	1.9
Fried foods	9.8	35.6	47.1	7.5
Aerated drinks	6.5	25.6	56.2	11.6
Eggs	4.9	44.7	30.7	19.6



Meat consumption patterns NE States

% of people aged 15-49 consuming fish or chicken or meat at least once a week

WOMEN	
Assam	80.4
Tripura	79.2
Manipur	77.2
Meghalaya	75.3
Arunachal Pradesh	67.7
Sikkim	67.5
Nagaland	61.4
Mizoram	60.3
MEN	
Tripura	94.8
Manipur	86.4
Mizoram	83.8
Assam	82.3
Arunachal Pradesh	80.9
Meghalaya	76.3
Nagaland	63.1
Sikkim	49.1

Meat consumption patterns by religion

% of people aged 15-49 consuming fish or chicken or meat at least once a week

WOMEN	
Christian	74.2
Muslim	67.3
Other	60.1
Buddhist*	52.1
Hindu	38.3
Jain	8.6
Sikh	4.8
MEN	
Christian	75.6
Muslim	73.1
Other	70.6
Buddhist*	61.3
Hindu	44.8
Jain	3.5
Sikh	10.8

*Includes neo-Buddhist

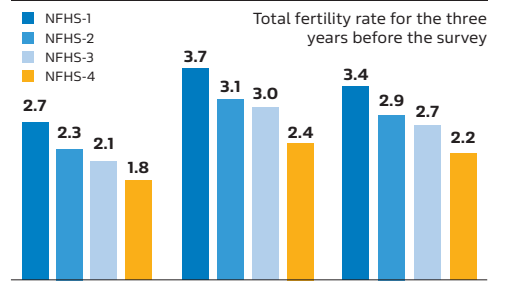
Meat consumption by caste (in per cent)

WOMEN	
Scheduled Caste	44.8
Scheduled Tribe	43.1
OBC*	39.4
Other	46.6
MEN	
Scheduled Caste	50.6
Scheduled tribe	50.1
OBC	46.7
Other	50.7

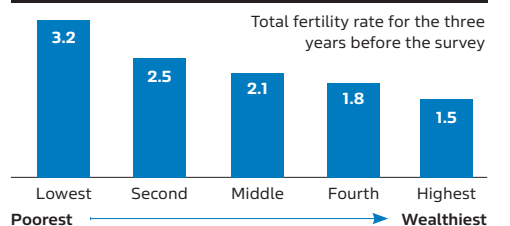
*Other Backward Classes

INFOGRAPHICS: T.S. VIJAYANANDAN

Trends in fertility by residence



Fertility by household wealth



Consanguineous marriages by States & Union Territories

