

## Conference Goals

The goals of the Fourth International Conference on Dietary Assessment Methods are to enhance our understanding of changing dietary patterns as they relate to diet and health and to facilitate development and monitoring of nutrition-related health objectives through the use of better methods of assessing food and nutrient intakes. Specific aims include:

1. To provide a forum for sharing new knowledge and ideas. This conference will facilitate an ongoing exchange of information, stimulate national and international collaborative research, and encourage innovative approaches to improving methods for collecting and analyzing dietary data.
2. To promote a better understanding of the strengths and limitations of current dietary assessment methodologies. Recognizing that all methods of assessing food intake have both strengths and weaknesses, the appropriateness of different dietary assessment methods will be analyzed for specific applications, specific nutrients and non-nutrients, and for specific populations.
3. To stimulate interdisciplinary approaches to dietary assessment research. This conference will bring together expertise from many disciplines such as biostatistics, psychology, anthropology, sociology, physiology, biochemistry, nutrition, and linguistics to develop and improve dietary assessment tools. Together, these experts will provide information on the design and evaluation of methodological studies, and on the development of methods appropriate for heterogeneous populations in developing and developed countries, including various ethnic/minority and low-income groups, will be encouraged.
4. To focus attention on methodological issues of particular concern. Such issues include: design of studies involving comparison and evaluation of methods; validity and reliability of specific methods; sources of inter- and intra-individual variability, effect of combined sources of error measurement; behavioural factors related to eating patterns; standardization and other quality control procedures involved in collecting and processing dietary data; and state-of-the-art approaches to statistical analysis and interpretation of data, including time– trend analysis.
5. To address methodological issues involved in comparison of international studies. Such issues include differences in food availability and food consumption patterns, differences in study design and methods of data collection and nutrient calculation that are available in developing and developed countries and the use of aggregated data for food balance sheets and other community level indicators of dietary patterns.
6. To identify progress and future research priorities in diet assessment methodology. This conference will be able to report on progress made in the identified research gaps and priorities since the previous conference. An outcome will be a progress report and guide for future efforts.