



Nutrition for Family Living

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November, 2008 Topics

CDC's Nutrition for Everyone website has reliable, basic nutrition information
Cultural Attitudes Toward Weight, Diet, and Physical Activity Among Overweight African American Girls
Key Trends in Food, Nutrition and Health 2008

CDC's Nutrition for Everyone website has reliable, basic nutrition information

By Susan Nitzke

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) maintains a website with basic nutrition information that helps consumers sort through nutrition research information and dietary advice. Topics covered include:

- **Food Groups** with information on *MyPyramid* and the *DASH Eating Plan* as research-based guides for healthy eating
- **Water** with information on beverage choices and the how to meet daily fluid needs
- **Dietary Fat** with information on Trans fat, saturated fat, cholesterol polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats, and controlling fat in your diet
- **Carbohydrates** with information to help separate hype from truth for issues like dietary fiber, choosing carbohydrates wisely, and “good” vs. “bad” carbs
- **Protein** covers what foods have protein and what happens when we eat more protein than we need
- **Vitamins and Minerals** explains why these organic substances and inorganic elements are needed for normal growth and development and reminds consumers that the best way to get enough vitamins is to eat a balanced diet with a variety of foods
- **Fruits and Vegetables** is a section with tips, recipes, and preparation suggestions

This website also has links to other resources that have been reviewed by the CDC for other nutrition and physical activity subjects. You can find CDC's *Nutrition for Everyone* website at: http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/nutrition/nutrition_for_everyone/

Implications for Extension Educators: This website complements other resources to help educators and consumers find reliable information to answer common topics in food and nutrition.

Related Resources:

Extension-oriented “webography” with links to food and nutrition resources in 11 topic areas: <http://steenbock.library.wisc.edu/extension/nutrition/sub-topics.html>



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American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide, 3rd edition (book available at book stores and www.eatright.org) and ADA's Good Nutrition Reading List (online list of recommended books at

http://www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/nutrition_4927_ENU_HTML.htm)

SNAP-Ed Connection database:

http://snap.nal.usda.gov/nal_display/index.php?info_center=15&tax_level=1

Medline Plus at <http://medlineplus.gov> has health information from the world's largest medical library, the National Library of Medicine. Health professionals and consumers alike can depend on it for information that is authoritative and up to date. The news and health topics links are especially helpful.



Cultural Attitudes Toward Weight, Diet, and Physical Activity Among Overweight African American Girls

By Gayle Coleman

There is a need for effective nutrition and physical activity education for African American teen girls. For the time period of 1999 through 2002, African American females aged 12 to 19 years had the highest prevalence of overweight (23.6%) compared with white (12.7%) and Mexican American girls (19.9%). Compared with young white females, young African American females were less likely to eat the recommended amounts of fruits, vegetables and whole grains, and more likely to consume high amounts of fat and sodium. Despite this need, there is little information about the psychosocial factors (beliefs, attitudes and perceptions) toward weight, diet and physical activity among African American teen girls. Understanding attitudes and perceptions toward weight, diet and physical activity can help educators develop and implement more effective interventions for healthful eating and physical activity behaviors.

A research team from the University of North Carolina conducted five semistructured group interviews averaging one hour per interview to explore attitudes on weight, diet and physical activity. Between October 2005 and July 2006 they recruited overweight girls, aged 12 to 18, from a pediatric diabetes screening and prevention program at a large urban hospital in North Carolina. None of the girls had been diagnosed with diabetes, prediabetes or metabolic syndrome. Of the 12 girls who completed the study, most were from low-income families.

Interview questions were designed to assess six key areas: 1) definition of personal health; 2) dietary and physical activity habits; 3) perceptions of personal health and body; 4) important figures and role models; 5) social support; and 6) culture and environmental factors. Five themes emerged from the girls' responses: weight and body size preferences; food choices; engagement in physical activity; participation in structured exercise; and celebrities as role models.

Weight and body size preferences were primarily determined by the individual and her immediate social circle. The girls reported that self-satisfaction with size was more important than objective criteria for size. Large breasts and buttocks were perceived as physically attractive. Their reference for body size was their families and cultural group.

Food choices depended on texture, taste, and appearance. Healthy foods were not generally perceived as filling. They also stated that traditional African American foods were made unhealthy by the way they are prepared, not because of the foods.

The girls were less enthusiastic about discussing physical activity. They reported a preference for group activities such as step and dance teams and basketball. Barriers to participating in these activities were that they weren't offered at their schools, had more people interested in participating than could be accommodated or had qualifying prerequisites such as weight and blood pressure that the girls could not

meet. Other factors for limited recreational physical activity and structured exercise that they reported were perceived lack of time, maintenance of personal aesthetics (hair and nails), and neighborhood safety.



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Most of the girls acknowledged that adult females were their role models. However, African American celebrities such as Toni Braxton and Oprah Winfrey were not perceived as role models for weight because they were perceived to have assets not available to the girls, such as personal trainers. Mo’Nique (“Nicky Parker”), an African American celebrity who is the largest of these three celebrities and positively promotes her large size, was perceived as a realistic role model and a testament that one can be successful despite one’s large size.

Implications for Extension Educators: Exploring the needs and interests of learners is a critical part of learner centered education. This study provides information to help educators understand potential motivators and barriers that may need to be address in nutrition and physical activity lessons for teen audiences.

Source: Boyington JEA, Carter-Edwards L, Piehl M, Hutson J, Langdon D, McManus S. Cultural attitudes toward weight, diet, and physical activity among overweight African American girls. *Prev Chronic Dis* 2008;5(2). http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2008/apr/07_0056.htm. Accessed October 24, 2008.



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Key Trends in Food, Nutrition and Health 2008

By Gayle Coleman

Two recent articles highlighted trends in food, nutrition and health in the United States and internationally. *The Top 10 Functional Foods in America* described trends in American's food choices based on the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT) report and Food Marketing Institute data. *10 Key Trends in Food, Nutrition and Health 2008* provided an annual review of international trends. The information in this publication was based on case studies, supermarket sales and over 350 interviews with food and marketing industry executives.

Overall, the IFT reported that Americans want a healthy household and 57% are making a lot of effort to eat healthier. They reported that Americans are controlling their diets because they are concerned about weight, cholesterol, blood sugar, blood pressure and diabetes. Similarly, the international research and market trends group reported several trends related to consumers concerns about weight and health.

Both articles reported that weight management is more about maintaining than losing weight. They found that consumers are shifting from weight-loss programs to managing weight via smaller portions, specific food restrictions and light/low-fat foods that provide satiety with fewer calories. The IFT reported that the U.S. weight loss market continues to grow.

As the number of older adults in the United States and other countries continued to increase, the demand for condition-specific foods and foods to manage or prevent chronic diseases increased. The IFT reported that older Americans are consuming more omega-3s, polyphenols, flavanols, and plant sterols. Internationally, antioxidants were perceived to be the biggest wellness ingredient and a source for multiple benefits ranging from beauty to heart health to mood.

Both articles reported that consumers also are interested in a preventive lifestyle that includes fortified foods and beverages. Consumers are making a strong effort to get more vitamin C, calcium, B vitamins, fiber, antioxidants, vitamin E, omega-3s/DHA/fish oil, vitamin A, potassium, iron and folic acid from the food and beverages they consume.

Both groups identified a trend to select foods that promote digestive health. An example of foods that tout digestive health are products fortified with fiber and gluten-free foods.

Another trend mentioned by both groups was 'superfruit' and the health benefits of superfoods. The success of SunSweet PlumSmart was given as an example of a superfruit. Superfoods mentioned by the IFT were blood oranges, goji berries, mangosteens, garbanzo beans and specialty mushrooms.

'Naturally healthy,' organic foods and beverages, and simpler foods or products with fewer ingredients continued to gain popularity. The IFT reported that consumers are interested in locally-grown foods and do not want hormones in foods.

Another trend reported by both groups is the popularity of 'beauty foods' – foods that enhance skin, hair and nails from the inside. One example given for this trend is Danone, a company creating a line of products that includes yogurt, probiotics and green tea.



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Both groups reported that consumers are trying to eat healthier snacks. Consumers are looking for low-calorie favorites. 100-calorie snack packs are popular. The international research market trends group reported that some consumers are willing to pay 50 percent more for the same fruit when it is delivered in a more convenient form. They also reported that consumers are willing to pay for foods and brands that they consider healthier, a trend referred to as 'a tipping point for the premiumisation of health.'

The IFT reported that consumers look to foods to boost their energy, help them wake up, increase their stamina/physical endurance, or improve their mental alertness. They reported that about one-third of consumers drink energy beverages for a mental boost. Ginseng, guarana and taurine are among the key ingredients in emerging beverages.

The IFT noted that in the United States, increased accessibility of healthy food products through a variety of channels including convenience stores is an important factor driving the healthy and functional foods market.

The international research and market trends group reported that consumers are interested in 'mood foods.' Tea is given as an example of nature's mood food.

The international research and market trends group also reported a trend in kid's nutrition. The example given for this trend is a successful Cali-Yum project in Malaysia.

Although there were several differences between the trends reported by the IFT and the international research and market trends group, there were many similarities. It is not clear whether some trends mentioned in one report and not the other may be present in both the United States and internationally but not mentioned because they just didn't make it into their top ten results.

Implications for Extension Educators: Awareness of trends gives us insight into consumers' attitudes and beliefs. Both low-income and general audiences could benefit from sound information and learner centered programs that help them spend their food dollars wisely, for example, planning ways to take advantage of new/improved products without needless spending on fads or products that are based mainly on marketing "hype."

Source: Research and Markets website, *Ten Key Trends in Food, Nutrition & Health 2008*.
http://www.researchandmarkets.com/product/415225/ten_key_trends_in_food_nutrition_he,
accessed October 24, 2008.

Institute of Food Technologists (IFT), *The Top 10 Functional Food Trends in America*.
<http://www.newswise.com/p/articles/view/539944>, accessed October 27, 2008.



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MyPyramid for Preschoolers released

By Gayle Coleman

MyPyramid for Preschoolers is now available at the [MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) website. The website offers advice to parents and caregivers on helping their children develop healthy eating habits. It includes a new MyPyramid for Preschoolers poster/handout, information on growth and development, things that parents/caregivers can do to promote healthy eating and being physically active, food safety messages and sample meal and snack patterns.

Source: American Dietetic Association, Food and Nutrition Conference and Exhibit, October 26, 2008. <http://www.MyPyramid.gov> accessed October 27, 2008.