

Nutrition and You: Trends 2008

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SUMMARY OF FINDINGS: AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION'S PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY *NUTRITION AND YOU: TRENDS 2008*

CHICAGO – The American Dietetic Association has released the findings of ADA's nationwide consumer opinion survey, *Nutrition and You: Trends 2008*. The results were released in Chicago at the American Dietetic Association's annual meeting, the Food & Nutrition Conference & Expo, being held October 25-28 at McCormick Place West.

ADA conducted its first nationwide consumer nutrition trends survey in 1991, with follow-up surveys in 1993, 1995, 1997, 2000, 2002 and 2008. The aims of each survey have been:

- To measure people's attitudes, knowledge, beliefs and behaviors regarding food and nutrition.
- To identify trends and understand how consumers' attitudes and behavior have evolved over time.

"In 2008, as in previous years, the American Dietetic Association's public opinion survey takes a close look at trends in the U.S.," said registered dietitian and ADA President Martin M. Yadrick.

"For the public, the media and researchers alike, ADA's survey provides a clear picture of consumers' current attitudes, valuable insights into people's perceptions of registered dietitians and an outstanding opportunity to trace the evolution of knowledge and beliefs about food and nutrition over the past 17 years," Yadrick said.

The following pages contain a summary of significant results from ADA's *Nutrition and You: Trends 2008* survey. More details can be found in accompanying releases and a PowerPoint presentation posted to www.eatright.org/trends2008.

ADA's survey was conducted by Mintel International between February 15 and March 7, 2008. The survey included telephone interviews lasting approximately 18 minutes with 783 respondents representing a nationally representative sample of the total U.S. population. Results are projected to the 90% confidence interval. Assumed standard deviation for each question is $\pm 3\%$. All survey respondents were 18 or older and not currently employed by or working in advertising, marketing, food industry or nutrition companies.

The American Dietetic Association is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. ADA is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy. Visit the American Dietetic Association at www.eatright.org.

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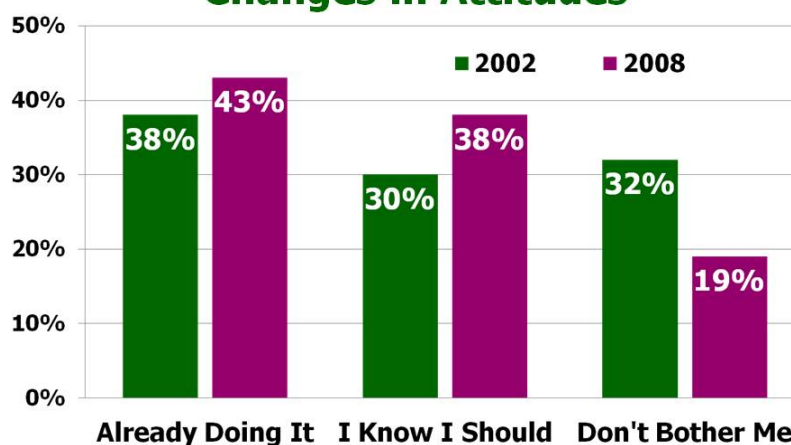
I. Achieving a Healthy, Nutritious Diet: Evolution of Attitudes

In each survey since 1991, ADA has used respondents' answers to a number of different questions to segment consumers into three groups representing people's overall attitudes toward maintaining a healthy diet and getting regular exercise:

- **I'm Already Doing It (43%):** Consumers who feel that maintaining a healthy diet and regular exercise are very important; are concerned about diet, nutrition and overall fitness; and feel they are doing all they can to eat a healthy diet.
- **I Know I Should (38%):** Consumers who feel that maintaining a healthy diet and regular exercise are very important, but may not have taken significant actions to do all they can to eat a healthy diet.
- **Don't Bother Me (19%):** People who do not feel diet and exercise are very important to them and are the least concerned with their overall nutrition and fitness.

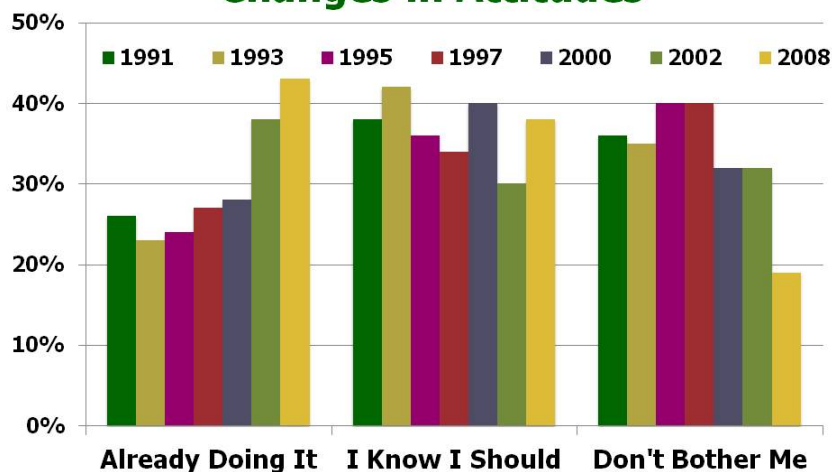
eat right. American Dietetic Association

Changes in Attitudes



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Changes in Attitudes



The percentage of people in the “Don’t Bother Me” category has dropped substantially over the years, especially from 2002 to 2008. The “I Know I Should” percentage has stayed relatively constant, and in fact has returned to its 1991 level.

The “I’m Already Doing It” group has increased steadily and, in each survey, appears to represent movement away from “Don’t Bother Me.”

II. Importance of Diet, Nutrition and Physical Activity

Every ADA survey since 1991 has asked consumers: “Are you doing all you can to achieve balanced nutrition and a healthy diet?” The average number who said “yes” dropped in the mid-1990s, steadily climbed and now appears to have leveled off at just under half of all adults.

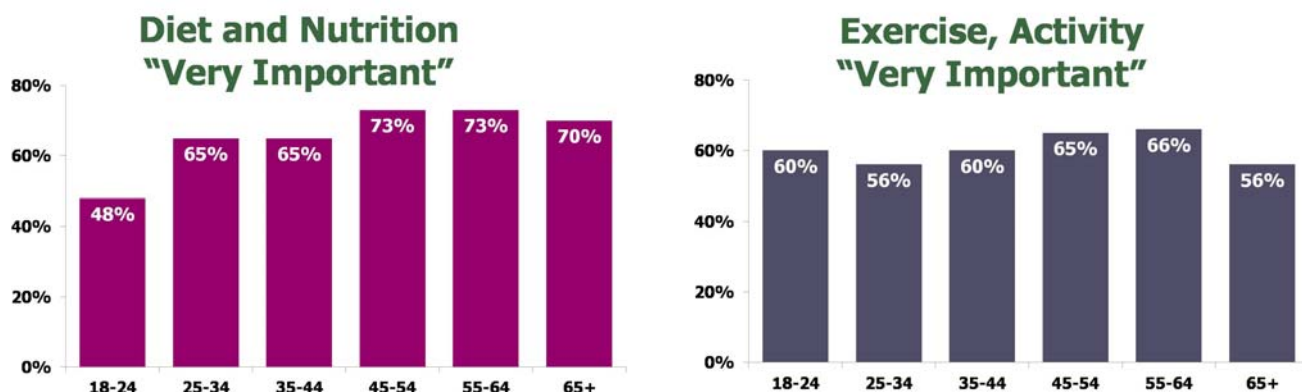
According to ADA’s survey, approximately three in five consumers said diet, nutrition and physical activity are “very important” to them personally:

- Diet and nutrition: 67%
- Exercise and physical activity: 61%

Women were more likely than men to say both are very important.

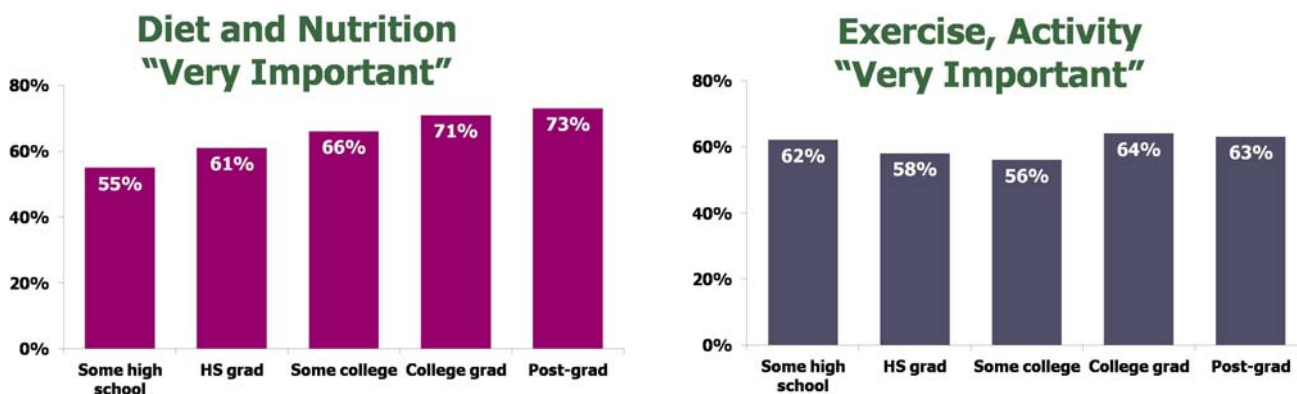
- Women: diet and nutrition 73%; exercise and physical activity 62%
- Men: diet and nutrition 55%; exercise and physical activity 58%

Younger adults were much less likely than older people to consider diet and nutrition “very important,” while exercise and physical activity were seen as very important by all age groups:



Among people 25 and older, these figures represent slight but consistent increases in recent years.

People with a college education and beyond were more likely to say diet and nutrition are very important than people with a high school degree or less:

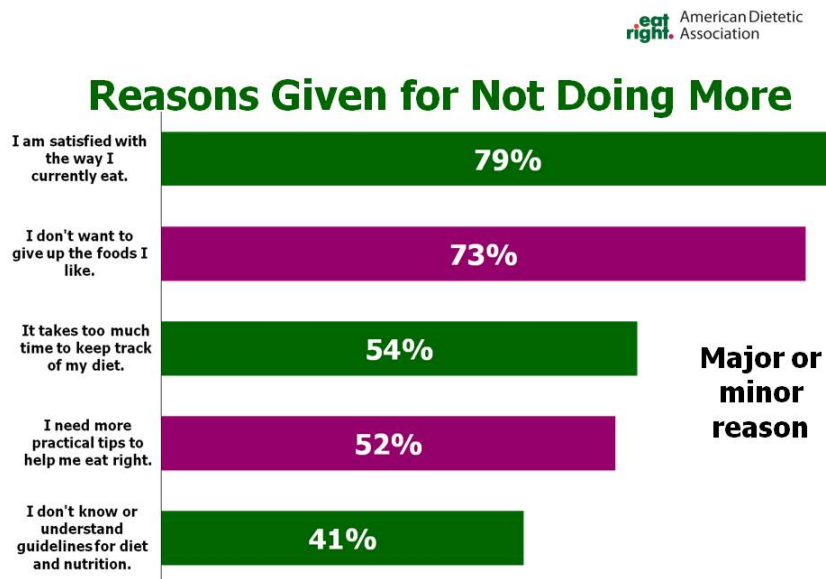


III. People Like What They Eat...And Eat What They Like

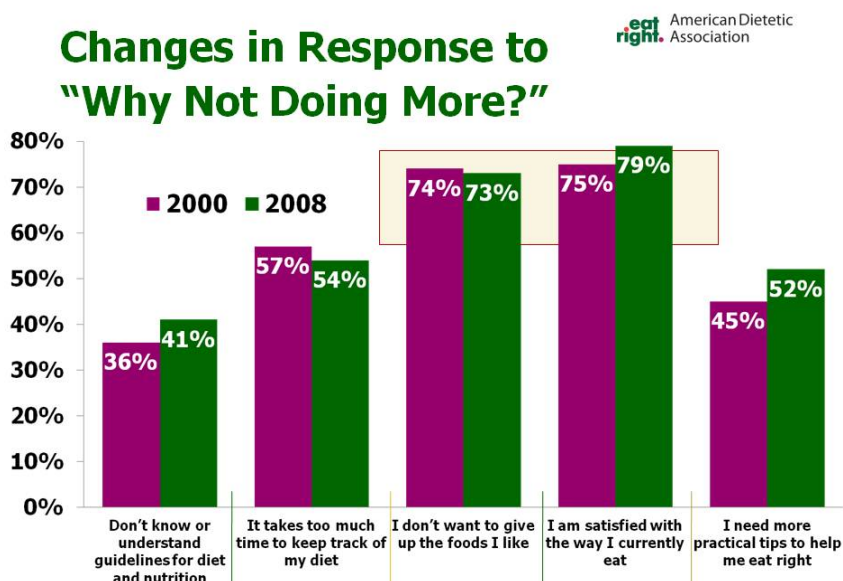
In 2000 and 2008, respondents to ADA's survey have been asked:

As I read the following statements, please tell me if this is a reason for you not doing more to achieve balanced nutrition and a healthy diet. For each statement, please tell me if it is a major reason, a minor reason or not a reason for you personally.

According to the 2008 survey, more than 70% of adults don't do more to achieve a balanced diet because they are satisfied with the way they eat (79%) and they don't want to give up their favorite foods (73%).



Not wanting to give up foods you like and being satisfied with the way you currently eat have not changed much since 2000 as important reasons for people eating the way they do.



IV. Agree or Disagree?

In every ADA survey, respondents have been asked how much they agree or disagree with several statements about food and nutrition, answering on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 means “strongly disagree” and 7 means “strongly agree.” The percentages of those who strongly agreed (answered 6 or 7) in 2008 are as follows, compared with previous years’ results:

- ***Based on the information I’ve heard, I believe there are some foods that I should never eat.***
The percentage who strongly agree has risen since the question was previously asked in 2002.
2008: 54%
2002: 43%
- ***I consider body weight to be an indicator of a healthy diet.***
The percentage who strongly agree has stayed relatively constant since the question was first asked in 1991.
2008: 45%
2002: 44%
2000: 41%
1997: 38%
1995: 41%
1993: 43%
1991: 43%
- ***I actively seek information about nutrition and healthy eating.***
The percentage who strongly agree has been increasing steadily since 2000.
2008: 40%
2002: 36%
2000: 19%
- ***It seems like I’m always hearing information about what not to eat, rather than what I should eat.***
The percentage who strongly agree with this statement has remained relatively constant since 2000.
2008: 38%
2002: 41%
2000: 41%

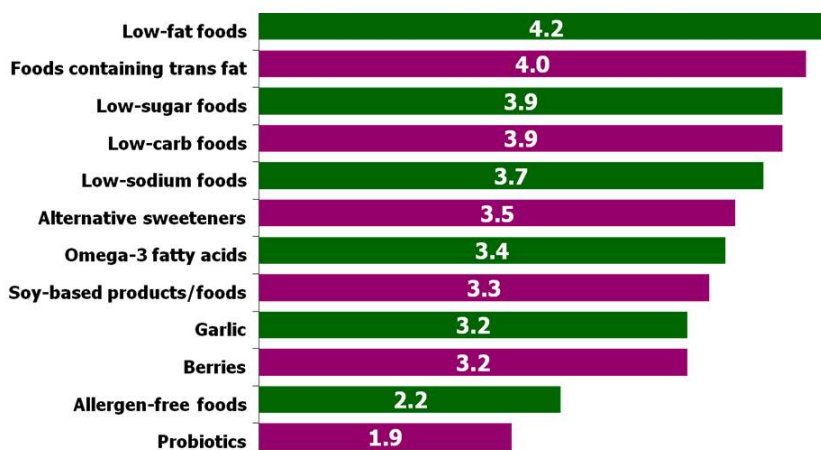
V. Knowledge and Consumption of Health-Related Foods and Nutrients

Respondents were asked – on a 1-to-5 scale – how much they had heard about possible health-related effects of various foods or nutrients, including omega-3s, foods containing trans fats, probiotics, garlic or berries (see chart below for full list). Respondents were also asked if the amount of these foods and nutrients they consumed has increased, decreased or stayed the same in the past five years.

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How Much Have Consumers Heard?

On 1 - 5 scale



Consumers' knowledge:

More than three in four people (78%) have heard a lot about low-fat foods, and 72% have heard a lot about foods containing trans fat. Meanwhile, 3.5% said they had heard little or nothing about low-fat foods and 7.5% said the same about foods with trans fat.

Allergen-free foods and probiotics command much less of the public's attention. Less than 20% of respondents said they had heard a lot about these two items.

Increased consumption:

Foods and nutrients of which people were most likely to increase consumption in the past five years included low-fat foods (48%); omega-3 fatty acids (38%); garlic (36%); low-sugar foods (34%); and low-sodium foods (32%).

Decreased consumption:

By a wide margin, foods containing trans fat were most likely to see their consumption reduced in the past five years, with 56% of respondents saying they had cut back on these foods. Low-sugar foods (20%); alternative sweeteners (18%); and low-carbohydrate products (17%) were the next most-often named.

No change in consumption:

At least half of all respondents said they had not changed their consumption of the following foods and nutrients: allergen-free foods (81%); probiotics (76%); soy-based products (63%); garlic (58%); low-carb foods (56%); berries (54%); omega-3 fatty acids (53%); and low-sodium foods and alternative sweeteners (52% each).

VI. Consumption of Specific Foods

Respondents to ADA's survey were asked about their consumption (increased, decreased or stayed the same) over the past five years of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, fish, chicken, dairy, pork and beef.

The largest percentages of people said they have increased their consumption of whole-grain foods (56%), fruits (50%) and vegetables (48%).

The survey found people 65 and over were the least likely to have increased their consumption of any of these foods in the past five years, while adults between 18 and 34 were the most likely to have increased consumption, especially of whole-grain foods.

Asked if they had decreased their consumption of any of these foods, 23% said they had cut back on dairy foods; 33% said they had cut back on pork; and 41% said they had decreased their consumption of beef.

On the other hand, most people reported their consumption of these foods stayed the same in the past five years:

- Dairy: 62%
- Pork: 54%
- Beef: 49%



Consumption of Specific Foods in Past Five Years

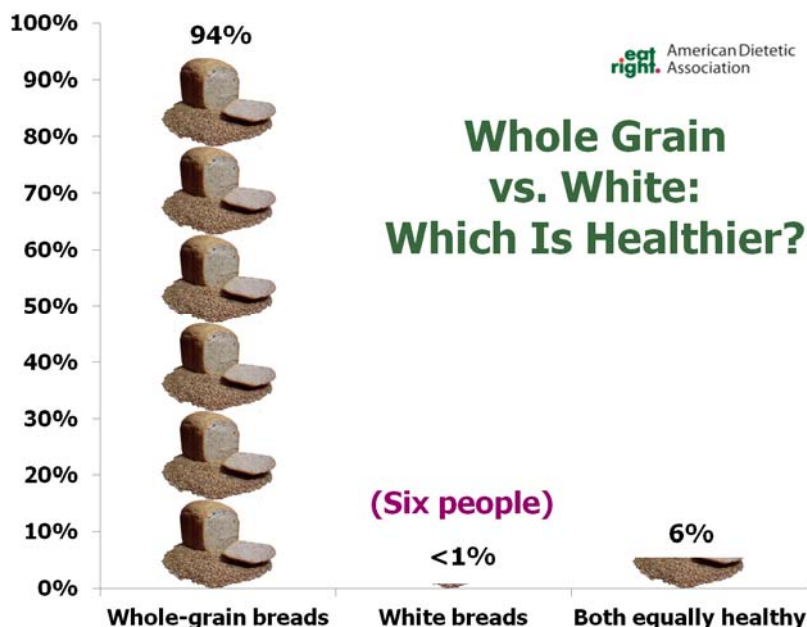
Foods	% Increased	% Decreased	% Stayed the Same
Whole-grain foods	56	7	36
Vegetables	50	6	43
Fruits	48	8	44
Fish	43	10	45
Chicken	42	8	50
Dairy	14	23	62
Pork	10	33	54
Beef	9	41	49

VII. Organically Grown and Whole-Grain Products

Survey respondents were asked what they think about organically grown products, specifically whether they think organics are more or less healthy than regularly grown produce. And they were asked whether they believe whole-grain breads are more healthy than white.

More than half (54%) said organically grown fruits and vegetables are healthier than regularly grown; 38% said there is no difference; and 8% said regularly grown products are healthier. Research is inconclusive on whether organically grown is nutritionally healthier than regular.

In the closest thing to a unanimous verdict in ADA's entire 2008 survey, 94% of respondents (731 out of 780 who answered the question) said they believe whole-grain bread is healthier than white bread – a belief that is backed up by research; 6% said they are equally healthy and just six people (four of whom were men) said white bread is healthier.



Of those who said whole grain is healthier, 61% believe it is much healthier than white; 23% said it is somewhat healthier; and 6% said it is slightly healthier.

VIII. Sources of Food and Nutrition Information: Popularity and Credibility

According to ADA's survey, Americans get most of their food and nutrition information from television and magazines. That is not to say, however, that these *popular* sources are also people's most *credible* sources of information.

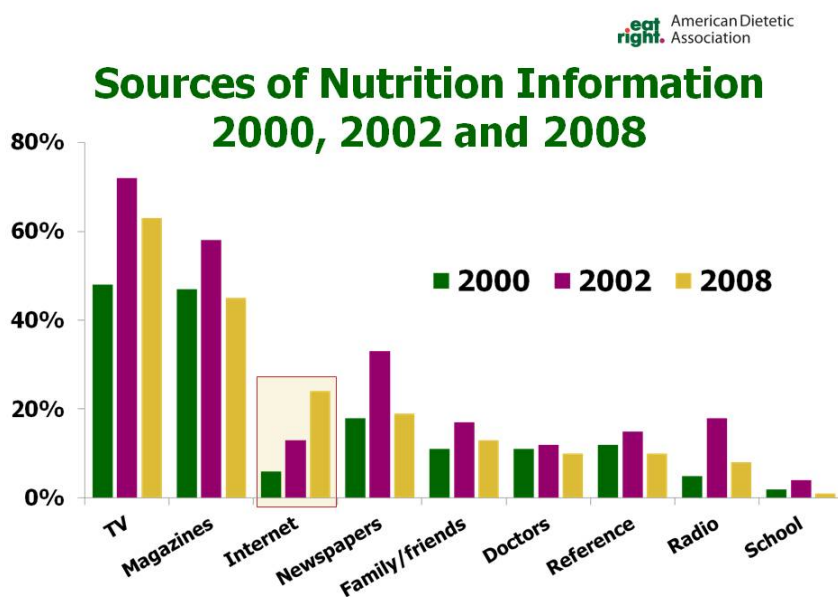
Popularity of Sources:

By a wide margin, the most popular sources of food and nutrition information were TV (63%, down from 72% in ADA's 2002 survey) and magazines (45%, down from 58% in 2002).

There has been substantial growth in the use of the Internet as a source of information; it is the third most-often named source, replacing newspapers. The Internet was named as a source of food and nutrition information by 24% of respondents – nearly double the 13% who said they got information from the Internet in 2002.

Newspapers experienced a large drop in popularity since 2002, from 33% to 19%. Almost every leading source of information has dropped in popularity in the past six years except for the Internet.

ADA's survey found use of the Internet to find food and nutrition information varies widely with age: from 42% of adults age 25-34, down to just 5% of those 65 and over.



Credibility of Sources:

Survey respondents were read a list of sources and asked how credible they believe each one is. At 78%, registered dietitians were listed as the most credible. RDs were considered especially credible by younger adults and people with the most education. Doctors were named as credible sources by 61% and nurses by 57%.

The complete “very credible” listing is:

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| ▪ Registered dietitian: 78% | ▪ School: 39% | ▪ Newspapers: 21% |
| ▪ Nutritionist: 78% | ▪ Personal trainer: 39% | ▪ Family/friends: 17% |
| ▪ Doctor: 61% | ▪ Package labels: 35% | ▪ TV: 14% |
| ▪ Nurse: 57% | ▪ Health club/gym: 29% | ▪ Radio: 13% |
| ▪ USDA/MyPyramid: 46% | ▪ Magazines: 25% | ▪ Grocery store: 11% |
| ▪ References/books: 43% | ▪ Internet: 22% | ▪ Food manufacturers: 9% |

IX. Registered Dietitians: Public Awareness

ADA’s survey shows 86% of adults have heard of registered dietitians, statistically the same as the 2002 level of awareness. Consumers believe by nearly a 3-to-1 margin (74% to 26%) that there is a difference between an RD and a nutritionist.

Approximately two in five respondents (43%) said they would be interested in a diet and nutrition consultation with a registered dietitian – up from 30% in 2000, the last time the question was asked.

That figure increased to 49% when respondents were read a definition of a registered dietitian: “an experienced health professional with a college degree and training in food and nutrition science.”

And the percentage of consumers interested in a consultation with an RD jumped to 61% if the visit were covered by the person’s health insurance.

Keeping with the survey’s findings on the perceived credibility of information sources, younger Americans were much more likely than the average 29% to be “very influenced” by an RD’s recommendations on purchasing a brand or product.

Another 53% said an RD’s recommendation would “somewhat” influence them.

X. Consumer Awareness of ADA and Web Site

Participants in the survey were asked about their awareness of the American Dietetic Association, and the credibility of ADA and its Web site, eatright.org, as a source of information. According to the survey, 62% of American adults have heard of ADA, which is up substantially from 51% in 2002.

Fifty-six percent of consumers believe ADA would be a very credible source of information on diet and nutrition, with people under age 55 the most likely to feel that way.

About one in seven respondents to the survey said they were familiar with ADA’s Web site, www.eatright.org. And when all respondents were asked if they would be interested in visiting the site for food and nutrition information, that number jumped to 59%.

Finally, in keeping with people’s belief that the American Dietetic Association is a very credible source of information, 55% (including more than 60% of women and well over 60% of younger adults) said www.eatright.org is also a very credible source.

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Editor’s Note:

For more information about ADA’s *Nutrition and You: Trends 2008* survey or to interview an ADA spokesperson, journalists may contact ADA’s Public Relations Team at 800/877-1600, ext. 4802, or e-mail media@eatright.org.