



# TrendScan

Q3 2008

HealthFocus has identified 7 major areas of interest in health and wellness in the 2007 HealthFocus Trend Study. Throughout the year, we track interesting happenings under each of those trends to serve as an update prior to the release of the **2009 HealthFocus Trend Study**.

The areas we track are:

1. The Pursuit of Balance in Life & Diet, Daily Energy & Stress Reduction
2. Growth of Functional Foods & Functional Ingredients
3. Interest in Organic, Sustainability & Fair Trade
4. Weight Management
5. Food Safety Concerns
6. Well-being of Kids
7. Prevention & CAM (Complementary and Alternative Medicine)

In the following pages, you will find noteworthy “happenings” for each trend, followed by the detailed story at the back.

## BALANCE, ENERGY, & STRESS REDUCTION: NEWS

**Employers use lifestyle incentives to recruit older workers**—With fewer young people available to fill vacant positions, recruiters will increasingly focus on older workers, luring them with quality of life incentives like flex time and health fairs.

**Initiative lobbies for mandatory vacations for workers**—

Take Back Your Time, a group of academics, journalists, and activists, has proposed The Minimum Leave Protection, Family Bonding and Personal Well-Being Act that would guarantee 3 weeks of vacation to workers and protect them from retaliation by employers.



**Supermarket licenses nutritional rating systems**—Hannaford is licensing its Guiding Stars “nutrition navigation” tool, which assigns ratings to food products based on the balance of positive (vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, whole grains) and negative (saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, added sodium, added sugars) nutritional qualities.

***HFI Note:** Nutritional cues such as Hannaford's rating system may be aiding shoppers in choosing healthy foods. In the 2007 HealthFocus International Trend Report, only 21% of respondents reported being confused about what they should eat to stay healthy, this down from an all-time high of 37% since 1998. And, sixty percent of shoppers always/usually read labels on packages.*

**Research: Work problems lead to sleep dysfunction**, even among employees with regular schedules (University of Michigan). Work stress was reported to be a significant factor in individuals with sleep problems.

***HFI Note:** This is a significant issue for shoppers. According to the 2007 HealthFocus International Trend Report, forty-five percent of shoppers are affected by tiredness/lack of energy and fifty percent report being concerned by this issue. Thirty percent report being affected by stress.*

## BALANCE, ENERGY, & STRESS REDUCTION: PRODUCTS

### Venom Energy

Manufacturer/Brand: [Dr Pepper Snapple Group](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Caffeine, L-carnitine, guarana, ginseng, taurine

Function/Claims: "Piercing energy that strikes back"

Remarks: Resealable aluminum bottle



### Designer Whey Protein Blitz

Manufacturer/Brand: [Designer Whey](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): 30g of "the highest quality protein on the planet" and 7800mg of "muscle-building" Branch Chain Amino Acids

Function/Claims: Better power, better stamina, and better recovery in every bottle

Remarks: Flavors are WTF ... Orange Mango, Can you take this ... Punch, and Grip it good ... Grape



### Drenchers Super Juice

Manufacturer/Brand: [NBI Juiceworks](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Bodyguard, a fortification package of essential vitamins and minerals

Function/Claims: Endurance (Grape Apple); Power (Orange Creme); Restore (Apple Kiwi Mango); Immunity (Berry); Heart Healthy (Apple Kiwi Mango)

Remarks: Provides two servings of fruit and/or vegetables



### Hydra-Flex drinks and snacks

Manufacturer/Brand: [Tandem Rain Innovations](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): ActivMSM, a proprietary ingredient for joint health

Function/Claims: "Takes the traditional short-term benefits of sports food and drinks and adds to them long-term rewards that keep your body healthy and active."



Remarks: Brand is part of new Sports Rejuvenation line of food and drinks

## Walkstation

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Details](#)

Description: An electric, height-adjustable work surface combined with a low-speed treadmill

Function/Claims: Increased physical activity among sedentary workers may benefit the workplace environment and increase the overall health, focus, and productivity of a desk-based workforce.

Remarks: Based on research by Dr. James Levine of the Mayo Clinic

## FUNCTIONAL FOODS: NEWS

**Emerging wellness trends**—A report from the Center for Culinary Development and Packaged Facts says that the coming wave of nutraceuticals and functional foods will address quality of life enhancement rather than disease prevention. Burgeoning trends include “hue-trition” (choosing healthful foods by color); beauty, brain, and mood foods; satiety, immunity, and digestive health.

***HFI Note:** Lifestyle issues populate the top twenty list of health concerns reported in the 2007 HealthFocus International Trend Report; shoppers report anxiety over tiredness/lack of sleep, stress, depression, gastrointestinal problems, wrinkles and overweight along with worrying about chronic illnesses such as heart disease and cancer.*

**FDA okays whole grain claim for brown rice**—The agency has extended the foods permitted to make whole grain health claims to include brown rice, eliminating the dietary fiber requirement.

**Research:** The so-called **Mediterranean Diet** is associated with a reduction in **cancer** incidence (Harvard School of Public Health)...

...and incidence of **diabetes** (University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain).

Higher consumption of **fish and Omega-3** fatty acids corresponds with lower rates of **colorectal cancer** (Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School).

Women who follow the NIH's **DASH diet** are less likely to suffer from **heart disease or stroke** (Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School et al).

Consumption of certain **flavonoids** is associated with lower rates of **lung cancer** in smokers (UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center).

Follow the DASH diet to potentially lower your blood pressure.



ADAM.

**FUNCTIONAL FOODS: PRODUCTS**

[Promise SuperShots](#)

Manufacturer/Brand: Unilever

Relevant Ingredient(s): Plant sterols, less sodium, more potassium



Function/Claims: Cholesterol reduction, reduced risk of high blood pressure

Nestea Green Tea Citrus and Diet Green Tea Citrus

Manufacturer/Brand: [Coca-Cola Company, licensed from Nestlé](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): 50% more antioxidants



Smart Start Strawberry Oat Bites Cereal



Manufacturer/Brand: [Kellogg](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Whole grain oats, potassium, low sodium

Function/Claims: Heart healthy

Marketing/Positioning: [Online tools](#) to help women chart their progress toward a more heart-healthy lifestyle

ZonePerfect Dark Chocolate Nutrition Bars

Manufacturer/Brand: [Abbott Nutrition](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Antioxidants



Function/Claims: Immunity

Friendship All Natural Digestive Health Cottage Cheese

Manufacturer/Brand: [Friendship Dairies](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Probiotic cultures, prebiotic fiber



Function/Claims: Digestive and bone health

### ROC20 Antioxidant Enhanced Drink Mix

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Nutralite](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Red Orange Complex, shown in clinical studies to combat free radical damage

Function/Claims: Helps protect cells inside and out



### GoodBelly

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Manufacturer/Brand: [NextFoods](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Probiotics, antioxidants

Function/Claims: Digestion, immunity

Remarks: NextFoods founder Steve Demos is the creator of Silk soymilk

### Function: Night Life

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Function Drinks](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Macuna pruriens, tyrosine to stimulate dopamine levels, the reward and desire neurotransmitter; epimedium, niacin, cnidium for circulation

Function/Claims: Sexual health

Marketing/Positioning: Developed by physicians



### Hearts&Minds Peanut Butter

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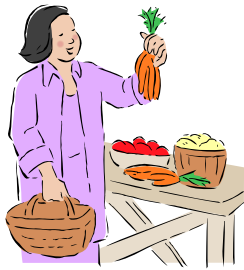
Manufacturer/Brand: [Hearts&Minds](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): **Ocean Nutrition Canada's** MEG-3 brand Omega-3 EPA/DHA

Function/Claims: Brain function, heart health



## ORGANICS: NEWS



**Food prices could spur healthier eating**—Sticker shock at the supermarket could actually motivate shoppers to make more healthful, more local, food choices as marketers of processed foods that rely on fossil fuels for production and distribution are forced to hike their prices.

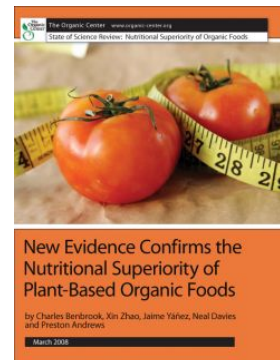
**HFI Notes:** *The cost of basic food/groceries is of concern globally. In the 2008 HealthFocus International Global Trend Study, forty-four percent of all shoppers were extremely/very concerned about the price of food. Substantially more shoppers in the Americas and Europe reported concern, while slightly fewer in Asia registered the same level of concern as this global weighted average.*

**Community-supported agriculture is cultivating members**—Corresponding to the burgeoning locavore and slow food movements, widespread appreciation for sustainability, and escalating food prices is the growing participation in community-supported agriculture. The number of CSA farms has swelled from less than 100 in the early 1990s to about 1,500 today.

**2008 sees a flurry of cosmetics certification programs**—At least 4 major entities have developed certification standards for natural and/or organic cosmetics: Certech, Natural Products Association, OASIS, and NaTrue.

**Research: Organic plant-based foods contain higher levels of 8 nutrients** (The Organic Center; University of Florida; Washington State University).

**HFI Notes:** *Shoppers view organic foods to be more nutritious than their conventional counterparts. On average globally, twenty-four percent reported this opinion in the 2008 HealthFocus International Global Trend Study. Thirty-six percent of respondents view organic foods as healthier overall compared to non-organic foods.*



## ORGANICS: PRODUCTS



### Sam's Choice Organic, Rainforest Alliance, and Fair Trade Certified coffees

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Wal-Mart](#)

Remarks: Roasted by the world's first CarbonNeutral roaster.

### Wild Harvest organic and natural products across numerous food categories

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Supervalu](#)

Marketing/Positioning: Priced 15% lower than branded organic and natural products

Remarks: Supervalu operates a 2,450-store grocery chain under about a dozen brands, including Albertsons, Jewel-Osco, and Shop 'n Save.



### Homemade Baby Fresh Organic Baby Food

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See the "Kids' Well-Being" section of TrendScan.

### Popumz Bite-Sized Organic Multi-Grain Crisps

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See the "Kids' Well-Being" section of TrendScan.

### Spectrum Organics DHA supplements

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See the "Kids' Well-Being" section of TrendScan.

## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT: NEWS

**GSK says slimming supplements make disease claims**—GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare, which makes the OTC weight loss product Alli, has petitioned the FDA regarding weight loss supplements. GSK, the American Dietetic Association, and others contend these supplements are making disease claims because obesity is a risk factor in many serious diseases, and the products should be regulated accordingly.

**Research: The U.S obesity rate increased** to 25.6% of U.S. adults in 2007 compared to 23.9% in 2005 (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

**Low-carb and Mediterranean diets are more effective than low-fat for cholesterol and weight management** (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Israel, et al). The tightly controlled study was funded in part by the Atkins Foundation and its conclusions have been disputed.

**As the percentage of overweight people in G.B. has grown, the tendency of those who are overweight to “diagnose” themselves as such has declined** (Cancer Research UK Health Behaviour Research Centre, University College London).

***HFI Note:** The 2008 HealthFocus International Trend Survey also found a significant disconnect between British shoppers’ perception of their weight and reality. Whereas 31% of British shoppers describe themselves as obese/overweight, twice as many in fact fall into that category, based on Body Mass Index (BMI). The rate of denial is even higher among shoppers who are more vulnerable to obesity-related diseases due to their age.*

**Adding certain seasonings to food causes people to eat less** (Smell & Taste Treatment and Research Foundation, Chicago).

Higher intake and blood concentration of **Omega-3s are associated with greater satiety** immediately after and 2 hours after meals (University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain).

**Dieters who kept food journals lost more weight** than those who did not (Kaiser Permanente’s Center for Health Research).



## WEIGHT MANAGEMENT: PRODUCTS

### AquaSlim

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Manufacturer/Brand: [MetaboLife](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Super CitriMax, an appetite suppressant from the rind of the Garcinia cambogia fruit; calcium-rich spring water

Function/Claims: Hydrates, strengthens bones, curbs appetite

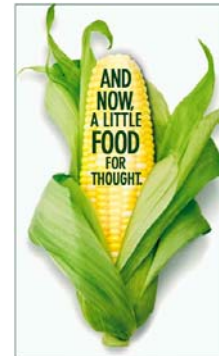
Remarks: Users are instructed to drink 1 bottle 30 minutes prior to each meal.



## FOOD SAFETY: NEWS

**FDA pronounces HFCS “natural”**—A New Jersey woman sued Cadbury Schweppes, calling Snapple’s claims of being “all natural” deceptive since the beverages she was paying a premium for contained high fructose corn syrup (HFCS). The judge said she would leave the definition of “natural” to the FDA, which ultimately concluded HFCS is not artificial and is therefore natural.

**Consumer advocates call for produce traceability**—Tracking the salmonella outbreak back to peppers imported from Mexico took months, and consumer watchdogs are now urging the FDA to implement traceability regulations. The produce industry says it is already working on it.



***HFI Note:** Shoppers are concerned about food safety. In the 2008 HealthFocus International Global Trend Study, forty-eight percent of respondents reported being extremely/very concerned about Salmonella and E. coli in their food. This, along with environmental concerns probably contributes to their preference to purchase food that is locally sourced or grown.*

**AHPA challenges Bayer Aspirin with Heart Advantage**—The American Herbal Products Association has asked the FDA to clarify its position on drug-dietary supplement combination products. FDA has warned manufacturers against marketing such products in the past, says AHPA, but now Bayer has an aspirin/phytosterols product on the shelves.

**Outbreaks of foodborne illnesses could benefit locally grown**—In a survey commissioned by Deloitte, three-quarters of respondents said they are increasingly concerned about food recalls, and 70% would pay more for locally produced foods.

**Research: Frequent consumption of energy drinks is associated with risky, “toxic jock” behavior.**

## FOOD SAFETY: PRODUCTS

### Rice Chex

Manufacturer/Brand: [General Mills](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Barley malt syrup replaced with molasses

Function/Claims: Reformulated to be gluten-free

Marketing/Positioning: To generate awareness of the condition, General Mills has partnered with the **Celiac Disease Foundation**, which defines it as an autoimmune intestinal disorder triggered by a toxic reaction to the ingestion of gluten that interferes with the absorption of nutrients.



## KIDS' WELL-BEING: NEWS

**AAP recommends aggressive measures to ward off heart disease**—The American Academy of Pediatrics is recommending cholesterol screening for children at risk of heart disease, as well as pharmaceuticals, if warranted, raising concerns about medicating youngsters.

**FTC cites improvements in marketing food to kids**—In a new report, the Federal Trade Commission praises the food industry for making strides toward promoting better nutrition and fitness among American kids, but there is much yet to be accomplished, including the establishment of “meaningful marketing standards.”

**Parents want doctors to discuss diet, exercise with adolescents**—According to the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, diet/nutrition and sports/exercise are the topics parents most want doctors to discuss with adolescents during checkups.



Charlene Elliott says that the artificiality of certain foods—considered to be a bad thing in food for adults—is as a selling feature for children's food. / Photo courtesy Carleton University

**Research: Most Products marketed as “fun foods” for kids are of poor nutritional quality**, even those that make healthful claims (University of Calgary, Canada).

**Reducing kids' salt intake would also reduce consumption of sugary soft drinks** (St. George's University of London, England).

**KIDS' WELL-BEING: PRODUCTS**

**Eating Right Kids**

Manufacturer/Brand: [Safeway](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Eating Right Kids, an extension of the chain's successful Eating Right brand, is a better-for-you line of 100 food products for children. Products are reportedly formulated based on the most recent dietary recommendations and regulations from federal and state agencies.



Through a partnership with Warner Bros., Looney Tunes characters will be integrated into the "Spot Your Needs" reference system, which helps shoppers identify the nutritional benefits of each product.

Marketing/Positioning: "Eating Right Kids is the first broad product line to feature entertainment characters and be dedicated solely to a healthier eating philosophy."

Remarks: The line includes breakfast foods, portable meals, dairy, snacks, and beverages.

**Beech-Nut DHA plus+, Good Morning, and Good Evening line extensions**

Manufacturer/Brand: [Beech-Nut Nutrition Corp.](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Depending on product, DHA, prebiotics, soluble fiber, and/or whey protein

Function/Claims: Depending on product, promotes healthy digestion, mental and visual development, concentration, and/or growth

Marketing/Positioning: 17 "firsts" in nutritionally functional foods and beverages; Stage 3 DHA plus+ Sweet Potatoes & Wild Alaskan Salmon is the first-ever jarred seafood option for babies



**Spectrum Organics DHA supplements**

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Spectrum Organics](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): life'sDHA, Martek Biosciences' patented, vegetarian form of DHA

Function/Claims: Brain, eye, heart health

Remarks: Products are Spectrum Prenatal DHA for Pregnant and Nursing Mothers, Spectrum Toddler DHA, Spectrum Chewable Children's DHA, Spectrum Vegetarian DHA



**Popumz Bite-Sized Organic Multi-Grain Crisps**

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Dr. Sears](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): Organic ingredients, Ocean Nutrition Canada's MEG-3 Omega-3 fish oil

Function/Claims: Omega-3 DHA for brain power and better behavior, organic, multi-grain for fuel, protein for growth and strength, convenient and portion controlled



**Homemade Baby Fresh Organic Baby Food**

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Manufacturer/Brand: [Homemade Baby](#)

Relevant Ingredient(s): So Smooth (6-8 months), single-ingredient dishes, e.g., Just Peas; Good Mushy (9-12 months), more textures and combinations, e.g. Squapples; Kinda Chunky (12+ months), yet more adventurous textures and mixtures, e.g., Baby Tex Mex

Function/Claims: Hand prepared, kettle-cooked under a chef's supervision, packaged for maximum freshness using a cook-chill process

Marketing/Positioning: "America's freshest all-organic baby food" is available in the chilled dairy section at natural foods retailers nationwide. Meal Integrity System enables consumers to trace ingredients to the specific field where they were grown. The company says producing jarred and frozen organic baby foods consumes five times more energy than fresh.



**PREVENTION & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE: NEWS**

**NCCAM urges care providers to ask, patients to tell**—The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine has kicked off Time to Talk, an educational campaign designed to initiate a dialogue about CAM between healthcare providers and their patients to ensure safe, integrated, coordinated care.

**Research: Omega-3s, antioxidants, nutrients can promote cognitive function and enhance mood** (UCLA Medical School).

***HFI Note:** The message about Omega-3s is out. Fifty percent of respondents in the 2008 HealthFocus International Global Trend study reported being extremely/very interested in Omega-3s. For certain countries, this percentage rises dramatically.*

**Meditation's health benefits originate at the cellular level** (Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital et al).

**NEW CAM AND PREVENTION-ORIENTED PRODUCTS****Spectrum Organics DHA supplements**

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Please see the "Kids' Well-Being" section of TrendScan.

## Detailed Information

This section provides more in-depth data and reference information on the news and stories presented in the front section of TrendScan.

**BALANCE, ENERGY, & STRESS REDUCTION**

**NEWS & TRENDS**

**Employers use lifestyle incentives like flextime to recruit older workers**

With lower birth rates in the late 1960s and 1970s resulting in fewer young people available to fill vacant positions in the workforce, **recruiters will increasingly focus on Baby Boomers and other older workers.** A Penn State survey of 208 U.S. employers found that 58% offer flex time schedules as incentives for older job seekers and employees. Among the other practices respondents consider especially important in creating work environments that are attractive to these employees are extended lunch breaks and health fair participation. Furthermore, what older employees want most from their jobs is that the work be challenging.

**REGULATION & STANDARDS**

**Initiative lobbies for mandatory vacations for workers**

**Take Back Your Time** is a U.S./Canadian initiative of The Simplicity Forum formed to challenge what it describes as “the epidemic of overwork, over-scheduling, and time famine that now threatens our health, our families and relationships, our communities and our environment.” The group of academics, journalists, and activists is campaigning for a bill that would amend the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Minimum Leave Protection, Family Bonding and Personal Well-Being Act would:



- guarantee 3 weeks of vacation to anyone who has been employed in the same job for a year and
- protect workers who take all the vacation they’re entitled to from retaliation such as replacement, demotions, or lost promotions by employers.

The group has designated October 24 as “Take Back Your Time Day” and urges the public to observe it by engaging in simple measures like sleeping late, hosting events, spreading the word and alerting their local media, and otherwise becoming active in the campaign for leisure-time reform.

**Supermarkets shop around nutritional rating systems**

**Hannaford is licensing its Guiding Stars “nutrition navigation” tool** to food stores, vendors, health care groups, and other interested parties. The Maine-based supermarket chain has affixed 1-, 2-, or 3-star ratings to food shelf tags based on nutritional value. Foods are scored based on a balance of credits (vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, whole grains) and debits (saturated fat, trans fat, cholesterol, added sodium, added sugars) per 100

Nutrition Facts (Left - NO STARS)		Nutrition Facts (Right - 3 Stars)	
Serving Size (25g)   100% Daily Value*		Serving Size (25g)   100% Daily Value*	
Amount Per Serving		Amount Per Serving	
Calories 90   Calories from Fat 50		Calories 90   Calories from Fat 5	
% Daily Value**		% Daily Value**	
Total Fat 5g	10%	Total Fat 5g	10%
Saturated Fat 3g	6%	Saturated Fat 1g	2%
Trans Fat 0g	0%	Trans Fat 0g	0%
Cholesterol 10mg	20%	Cholesterol 5mg	10%
Sodium 150mg	30%	Sodium 20mg	4%
Potassium 100mg	20%	Potassium 150mg	30%
Total Carbohydrate 40g	80%	Total Carbohydrate 20g	40%
Dietary Fiber 5g	10%	Dietary Fiber 10g	20%
Sugars 10g	20%	Sugars 5g	10%
Vitamins A 20%   Vitamin C 10%		Vitamins A 10%   Vitamin C 100%	

calories. Nearly 30% of 25,500 foods rated have been starred. No stars mean a product has flunked the nutrition test or simply hasn't been evaluated.

Guiding Stars was launched in 2006 and awareness is currently at a record 81%. Half of those consumers say they use the system fairly often. Hannaford has seen increased selection of packaged foods with stars and decreased selection of meat without stars.

Similarly, Topco, a supermarket operator, and Griffin Hospital, an affiliate of Yale University School of Public Health, have **developed the NuVal Nutritional Scoring System**, which rates foods on a scale of 1 to 100 based on 30 different factors. The parties hope to score 40,000 grocery products by September 2009 and have formed a joint venture to market the program.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**Work problems lead to sleep dysfunction**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	Researchers' aim was to clarify the relationship between <b>work</b> and <b>sleep quality</b> among all workers, not just those with unusual schedules (e.g., night shifts, doctors on rotation). <b>This is thought to be the first study to analyze the average worker.</b>
Researcher affiliation	University of Michigan
Study design & population	Analysis of two nationally representative surveys that monitored 2,300 U.S. workers for about 10 years
<b>RESULTS</b>	Respondents who were subjected to <b>psychological stress at work were 1.7 times more likely to have sleep problems.</b> Work-family conflicts and the children under 3 years old in the household were strong predictors of declines in sleep quality. This was the first such study examining the average worker.

*Presented at the annual meeting of the Population Association of America*

## FUNCTIONAL FOODS

### NEWS & TRENDS

#### Brain, beauty foods, “hue-trition” among emerging wellness trends

The 2008 Culinary Trend Mapping Report on Emerging Health & Wellness, published by the Center for Culinary Development and Packaged Facts, says that the coming wave of nutraceuticals and functional foods will address quality of life enhancement rather than disease prevention.

- **“Huetrition,”** referring to the nutrients that are inherently linked with certain pigments, is an emerging trend. The idea is that consumers can balance their diets by choosing foods by color. Confectionery is a prime multi-color delivery system.
- **Beauty foods** with skin improving compounds are also poised for market, with smoothies, shakes, and confectionery the ideal providers of indulgence combined with natural ways of improving appearance.
- **Smart foods** contain ingredients that boost brain function and should be a particular hit with consumers aged 35-plus.
- **Satiety foods** are increasingly being fortified with fiber, protein, and fatty acids to promote fullness. In the past, manufacturers have relied mainly on bulk to for satiety effects.
- **Mood foods** contain B vitamins, amino acids, and botanicals that fire up alpha brainwaves and induce feelings of well-being. Researchers anticipate a slate of products evoking different moods for different times of the day.
- **Immunity enhancers** typically contain antioxidants or probiotics. A number of foods and beverages are already being marketed with immunity claims.
- Product development for **digestive health via probiotics** is taking place outside the dairy category.

### REGULATION & STANDARDS

#### FDA okays whole grain claim for brown rice

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration has extended the foods permitted to make **whole grain health claims to include brown rice**, eliminating a prior requirement that foods making the claim had to contain a certain amount of dietary fiber. The claim reads:

*“Diets rich in whole grain foods and other plant foods and low in total fat, saturated fat, and cholesterol may reduce the risk of heart disease and some cancers.”*



**HFI Notes:** Whole grains are of mounting interest to the US shopper. Data from the HealthFocus International 2007 Trend Report shows that sixty-one percent of shoppers report boosting their intake of whole grains in the past two years. This represents a spike of 17 points since the previous report in 2005 and a 27-point jump since the 1998 report.

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Mediterranean diet reduces cancer risk

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>The Mediterranean diet reduces incidence of heart disease—what about cancer?</b>
Researcher affiliation	Harvard School of Public Health and others
Study population	25,623 Greeks participating in European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and nutrition (EPIC)
Study design	Food-frequency questionnaires and interviews; 8 years of followup; adherence to Med diet rated on scale of 1-10
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>A 2 point increase in adherence corresponded to a 12% reduction in cancer incidence; unsaturated fat consumption (e.g., olive oil) reduced risk by 9%.</b>

*British Journal of Cancer (2008) 99*

### Mediterranean diet reduces risk of diabetes

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Researchers sought to assess the impact of the Med diet on incidence of diabetes, which will reach pandemic levels by 2030.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain
Study population	13,380 Spanish university graduates without diabetes
Study design	Food-frequency questionnaires; 4.4 years of followup; adherence to Med diet scored on 9 point index
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Moderate adherence was associated with 59% lower risk of diabetes, highest rates of adherence corresponded to 83% risk reduction.</b>

*British Medical Journal, June 14, 2008*

### Fish and Omega-3 intake reduce colorectal cancer risk

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Human studies linking fish intake and colorectal cancer risk in men have been inconsistent.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Columbia University School of Public Health, Harvard School of Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School
Study population	21,376 men enrolled in the Physicians' Health Study
Study design	Food-frequency questionnaires and 22 years of followup
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Highest intake of fish was associated with 40% lower incidence of colorectal cancer; of Omega-3, with 26% risk reduction.</b>

*Cancer Epidemiology Biomarkers & Prevention, May 1, 2008*

### DASH diet protects women from heart disease

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Does the DASH diet developed by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, which has a beneficial effect on blood pressure, protect against coronary heart disease and stroke in women?</b>
Researcher affiliation	Simmons College Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School, American Cancer Society
Study population	88,517 women enrolled in the Nurses' Health Study and without cardiovascular disease or diabetes
Study design	Food-frequency questionnaires and 24 years of followup; adherence to DASH diet assessed and scored
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Women in the top 20% of the DASH score were 24% less likely to have heart disease and 18% less likely to have a stroke.</b>

*Archives of Internal Medicine, April 14, 2008*

**Flavonoids reduce risk of lung cancer in smokers**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Laboratory studies suggest that flavonoids protect against cell mutation and cancer.</b>
Researcher affiliation	UCLA's Jonsson Comprehensive Cancer Center
Study population	558 people with lung cancer and 837 without
Study design	Food-frequency questionnaire; portion size estimates; food composition data.
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Epicatechin, catechin, quercetin, and kaempferol corresponded with reduced risk of lung cancer among smokers.</b>

*Cancer, May 15, 2008*

## ORGANICS

### NEWS & TRENDS

#### Food prices could spur healthier eating

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**Sticker shock at the supermarket could actually motivate shoppers to make more healthful choices. That's because the prices of many processed foods will rise** due to their reliance on fossil fuels for production and distribution and on pricier commodities used to make ingredients like high fructose corn syrup. This could cause consumers to indulge less in prepared foods and snacks. In addition, if fewer consumers are willing to spend their scant discretionary income dining out, even on fast food, they might even find they enjoy cooking at home with fresh, organic, locally produced, fruits and vegetables, dairy products, and meat.

#### Community-supported agriculture is cultivating proponents

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**Corresponding to the burgeoning locavore and slow food movements, widespread appreciation for sustainability and escalating food prices is the growing participation in community-supported agriculture (CSA).** According to *The New York Times* (July 10), the number of CSA farms has swelled from less than 100 in the early 1990s to about 1,500 today.

In CSA, members of a given community pay membership fees of about \$500 to \$800 to local farmers in exchange for a share of the harvest throughout the growing season. Depending on the agreement, primarily vegetables, but also sometimes fruit, herbs, flowers, meats, dairy products, and even baked goods, are delivered weekly to homes or farmers' markets. Benefits include:

- for the consumer, fresher, higher quality food;
- for the farmer, a financially stable operation, better prices by selling direct to consumers, and less need to spend time and money on marketing;
- and for the environment, fewer resources devoted to the processing, transportation, and distribution of food.

**REGULATION & STANDARDS**

**2008 witnesses a flurry of natural and organic cosmetics certification programs**

**“A shakeup of the natural cosmetics industry is expected to begin this year as a number of natural and organic standards are introduced,”** Organic Monitor predicted in March, with 2008 “a defining year in which the adoption of private standards leads to a clear demarcation between pure natural/organic cosmetic and pseudo products.”

Indeed:

CERTIFIER	DESCRIPTOR	GRAPHIC
Certech Registration (U.S. and Canada)	Natural & Organic	
Natural: 95% of the product must be of natural origin. Organic: must use certified organic ingredients. Recyclable packaging, no animal testing, no synthetic or harmful substances.		
Natural Products Association (U.S.)	Natural	
95 percent “truly” natural ingredients from renewable sources; no harmful ingredients; minimal processing; non-natural ingredients okay only when no alternative		
OASIS (Organic And Sustainable Industry Standards), established by industry participants (U.S.)	Organic; Made with Organic	
Made with organic: 70% minimum organic content with additional criteria for the remaining 30% of ingredients. Organic: 85% organic content in finished products. “Green” chemistry only. Requirements will become stricter to give suppliers time to catch up.		
NaTrue, a trade group (Europe)	Natural cosmetics; Natural cosmetics with organic components; Organic cosmetics	
Natural: Certain natural, nearly natural, and nature-identical materials can be used; no undefined substances. Natural with organic components: 70% of natural substances must be certified organic. Organic cosmetics: 95% of natural substances must be certified organic.		

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**Organic foods have more nutrients**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>A comprehensive review of the scientific literature comparing nutrient levels in organic and conventional food has not been completed since 2003.</b>
Researcher affiliation	The Organic Center; University of Florida; Washington State University
Study population	Meta-analysis of 97 studies
Study design	
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Organic plant-based foods contain higher levels of 8 of 11 nutrients studied, including polyphenols and antioxidants, and are 25% more nutrient dense.</b>

[The Organic Center](#)

**WEIGHT MANAGEMENT**

**REGULATION & STANDARDS**

**GSK contends OTC diet supplements are drugs**

GlaxoSmithKline Consumer Healthcare (GSK) has been joined by the American Dietetic Association, Obesity Society, and Shaping America's Health in **petitioning the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to rule that dietary supplements purporting to promote weight loss are actually making disease claims** and should be regulated accordingly. To support their request, the petitioners state:

- First, the condition of being overweight is a significant risk factor for several serious diseases, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.
- Second, many Americans understand the health risks of being overweight and they rely on dietary supplements to lose weight.
- Third, there is little, if any, evidence, indicating that dietary supplements marketed for weight loss actually work. As a result of these three facts, many Americans are being thwarted in their efforts to lose weight, and reduce the risk of disease, by ineffective weight loss supplements. In fact, the Federal Trade Commission recently reported that more consumers are defrauded by weight loss products than any other product it evaluated.

GSK is the maker of Alli, which it says is the only FDA approved over-the-counter weight loss product. One year after its June 2007 launch, alli had reportedly helped "more than 4 million people get a new lease on life." alli contains the fat blocker orlistat and is designed to be used as part of a comprehensive weight-loss program.

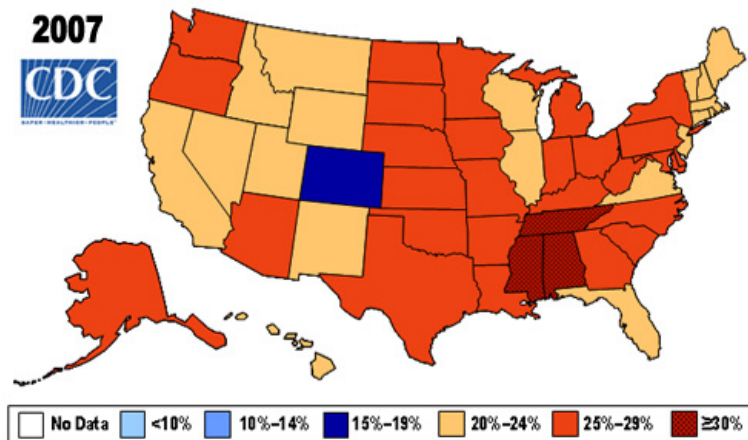


**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**U.S obesity rate increases 1.7 points**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>This study was conducted as part of an ongoing tracking by the U.S. government of the nation's health.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Study population	CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, the largest telephone health survey in the world, based on interviews with 350,000 adults every year
Study design	
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>About 25.6% of U.S. adults reported being obese in 2007 compared to 23.9% in 2005. Obesity is more prevalent in the South and least in the West. None of the 50 states or the District of Columbia has achieved the Healthy People 2010 goal to reduce prevalence of obesity to 15% or less.</b>

*Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, July 18, 2008*



**Low-carb and Mediterranean diets are more effective than low-fat... maybe**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Studies comparing the safety and effectiveness of weight-loss programs are often restricted by short followup times and high attrition rates.</b>
Researcher affiliation	S. Daniel Abraham International Center for Health and Nutrition, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, Beer-Sheva, Israel, and others
Study population	277 moderately obese men and 45 moderately obese women, average age 52 years
Study design	Subjects randomly assigned to a low-fat, restricted-calorie; Mediterranean, restricted-calorie; or low-carb, unrestricted-calorie diet for 2 years
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Participants lost more weight on the low-carb (5.5 kg) and Med (4.6 kg) diets than the low-fat diet (3.3 kg). Low-carb dieters saw the most improvement in their cholesterol levels, while the Med diet had the most favorable impact on glucose levels.</b>

*New England Journal of Medicine, July 17, 2008*

The study was funded in part by the Atkins Foundation, which was established by low-carb guru, the late Dr. Robert C. Atkins. The press pounced on the findings as a vindication of the Atkins diet, but there were also plenty of detractors. Dean Ornish M.D., who advocates a very low fat diet for the reversal of heart disease and other health benefits, responded that the study was fundamentally flawed:

- Low-fat dieters decreased their fat intake by less than 2 percentage points. Their diets were not really low in fat.
- It is physiologically impossible that low-fat dieters ate fewer calories than the other study subjects but lost less weight, as investigators reported.
- The low-carb dieters were advised to derive their fat and protein from vegetarian sources, and to consume saturated fat in moderation. In other words, they were not actually following the Atkins diet, which derives protein and fat from virtually unlimited portions of foods like red meat, eggs, and mayonnaise.

In her July 16 blog, *New York Times* health writer Tara Parker-Pope observed that what the study's findings ultimately prove is that "diets mostly fail," as participants lost an average of 6 to 10 pounds after 2 years. While the study seemed designed to demonstrate the superiority of the Atkins program, "in the end, all it really showed is that dieters can put forth tremendous effort and reap very little benefit."

**British people are more overweight, but less inclined to admit it**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Have British individuals' perception of their own weight changed over time?</b>
Researcher affiliation	Cancer Research UK Health Behaviour Research Centre, University College London
Study population	853 men and 944 women in 1999; 847 men and 989 women in 2007
Study design	Household surveys of two representative samples in Great Britain
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>As the percentage of overweight people in G.B. has grown, the tendency of those who are overweight to "diagnose" themselves as such has declined.</b>

*British Medical Journal, July 10, 2008*

Possible factors in the tendency of British people to underestimate their overweight include:

- the tendency of the media to portray severely obese people when addressing the subject, leading the less corpulent to believe they don't have a weight problem;
- A societal normalization of overweight so it is less noticeable and more acceptable;
- Conversely, the stigma of overweight that might account for the disconnect between perception and reality.

Study authors wrote:

"Despite media and health campaigns aiming to raise awareness of healthy weight, increasing numbers of overweight people fail to recognize that their weight is a cause for concern. This makes it less likely that they will see calls for weight control as personally relevant."

***HFI Note:** The 2008 HealthFocus International Global Trend Survey also found a significant disconnect between British shoppers' perception of their weight and the reality. Whereas 31% of British shoppers describe themselves as obese/overweight, twice as many in fact fall into that category, based on Body Mass Index (BMI). The rate of denial is even higher among shoppers who are more vulnerable to obesity-related diseases due to their age.*

**Adding seasonings to food causes people to eat less**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Flavoring food with no-calorie savory and sweet seasonings can promote satiety and decrease food consumption.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Smell & Taste Treatment and Research Foundation
Study population	2,436 overweight or obese volunteers; 100 controls
Study design	Salt- and sugar-free flavored crystals liberally sprinkled by subjects on their food for 6 months
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Subjects' average BMI fell from 34 (obese) to 29 (overweight), with an average weight loss of 32 pounds, compared to 2 pounds for control group.</b>

*Findings presented at The Endocrine Society's Annual Meeting*

Dr. Alan Hirsch, the neurologist and psychiatrist who founded the Smell & Taste Treatment and Research Foundation in Chicago, maintains that by making bland foods like tofu and vegetables more flavorful, "tastants" could promote more healthful eating. Dr. Hirsch has also created Sensa Tastants, a commercially available "Natural Weight Loss System." According to promotional literature, this is how the product works:

- Scents from Sensa Tastants travel through your nose to nerve receptors.
- The receptors send signals to the brain that stimulate the olfactory bulb.
- The olfactory bulb, in turn, signals the satiety center in the hypothalamus.
- The hypothalamus sends signals to the pituitary gland that triggers the release of hormones that suppress hunger and appetite.

**Omega-3s promote satiety**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Researchers aimed to determine whether Omega-3 long chain fatty acids affect appetite in a calorie-restricted weight loss diet.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Department of Physiology and Nutrition, University of Navarra, Pamplona, Spain
Study population	232 overweight or obese volunteers
Study design	8-week calorie-restricted balanced diet containing a low or high dose of Omega-3s; hunger sensations gauged with visual analogue scale; blood testing for Omega-3 concentration
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Higher intake and blood concentration of Omega-3s are associated with greater satiety immediately after and 2 hours after meals.</b>

*Appetite, published online June 14, 2008*

**Food journaling assists in weight loss**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Kaiser Permanente’s Weight Management Initiative recommends food journaling as a strategy for losing weight.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Kaiser Permanente’s Center for Health Research
Study population	1,685 overweight or obese participants on medications for hypertension and/or dyslipidemia, average age 55
Study design	Participants were instructed to attend weekly group meetings, follow the DASH diet, which is high in fruits and vegetables and low in fat, exercise moderately, and keep a food diary.
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Average weight loss after 6 months was 13 pounds, with those who kept their food diaries faithfully shedding twice as many pounds as those who did not.</b>

*American Journal of Preventive Medicine, August 2008*

## FOOD SAFETY

### REGULATION & STANDARDS

#### FDA: HFCS isn't—no, is—"natural"

Stacy Holk, a New Jersey resident, filed a lawsuit in 2007 on behalf of herself and other consumers who paid a premium for Snapple beverages believing their claims of "all natural." In fact, said the plaintiff, **the high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) in Snapple's iced tea and juice drinks is not a natural ingredient**, but a highly processed substance produced via "enzymatically catalyzed chemical reactions in factories."

In an e-mail to FoodNavigator-USA.com, an FDA representative agreed with Holk, saying that because of the use of synthetic fixing agents, "we would object to the use of the term 'natural' on a product containing HFCS." The New Jersey judge in the case ruled that the court would leave food regulatory policy to the regulators; and, in fact, the FDA later concluded that because HFCS is not artificial or synthetic, it can be labeled a natural substance.

In June, the Corn Refiners Association ran full-page ads in national newspapers inviting consumers to "get the facts" about HFCS by visiting [www.sweetsurprise.com](http://www.sweetsurprise.com).



A little sweetness in life is good. And what sweetens lots of our favorite foods and beverages are sugars from corn, such as high fructose corn syrup. It has the same natural sweeteners as table sugar and honey. And the same number of calories. But like most foods, sweeteners should be enjoyed in moderation. Please visit our website and learn the facts. We welcome a healthy discussion.

#### Consumer advocates call for produce traceability

Tracing the salmonella outbreak that sickened 1,300 consumers to peppers imported from Mexico took officials more than two months, prompting consumer watchdogs to **exhort the Food and Drug Administration for traceability regulations**. The Center for Science in the Public Interest and the Consumer Federation of America are urging the agency to require farm-of-origin, packer, distributor, and retailer tracking for all produce.

For its part, the Produce Marketing Association says it has been implementing traceability improvements since 2006, when spinach contaminated with E. coli caused 280 illnesses.

#### Herb group asks FDA to clarify drug-supplement marketing policy

In May, the American Herbal Products Association asked the Food and Drug Administration to clarify its **regulations on marketing drug-dietary supplement combination products**. In the past, says the letter, FDA has advised manufacturers

not to market such products because, for instance, the addition of another ingredient to an OTC drug product could have an adverse effect on the safety and efficacy of that drug.

Specifically, AHPA references **Bayer Aspirin with Heart Advantage**, a product that contains both aspirin and phytosterols.



"If...there is a new policy, it appears as if the marketplace may now be open to other OTC drug-dietary supplement products," AHPA's letter observes.

**THE CONSUMER**

**Outbreaks of foodborne illnesses could benefit locally grown**

**An online survey of 1,110 consumers commissioned by Deloitte in April showed three-quarters are more concerned about food recalls than they were 5 years ago.** They are particularly mistrustful of imported foods. About 90% say they would like to see locally produced fruits and vegetables at their grocery store and 70% would pay more for it.

"In today's environment, consumers are seeking fresher ingredients, giving locally grown food providers an important advantage they haven't really had in the past," researchers stated. "If food safety concerns continue to grow, consumers may be increasingly likely to shop outside the grocery store for fresh meats, produce, and dairy products."

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**Frequent consumption of energy drinks is associated with risky behavior**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>The consumption of energy drinks has implications for public health concerns.</b>
Researcher affiliation	University at Buffalo's Research Institute on Addictions
Study population	795 male and female undergraduate students
Study design	Surveys followed by linear regression analyses
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>College undergraduates' frequent consumption of energy drinks may be a predictor of "toxic jock" identity, which is associated with health-compromising behavior, including alcohol and substance abuse, sexual risk-taking, interpersonal violence, academic misconduct, delinquency, and suicide attempts.</b>

*Journal of American College Health, March/April 2008; Journal of Adolescent Health, June 2008*

France and Germany already restrict the energy drinks' ingredients or distribution, and the European Food Safety Authority is currently looking into possible regulation.

## KIDS' WELL-BEING

### REGULATION & STANDARDS

#### American Academy of Pediatrics advises aggressive measures against heart disease

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The American Academy of Pediatrics issued a new policy statement July 7 recommending **cholesterol screening for children** who have a family history of high cholesterol or heart disease or who have risk factors like obesity, hypertension, or diabetes. Children over the age of 8 who have high levels of the so-called "bad" cholesterol are possible **candidates for cholesterol-lowering medications**, says the AAP, on the premise that benefits outweigh potential risks. Weight reduction, exercise, and nutritional counseling are recommended for younger patients.

Reaction to the announcement was swift. Some pediatricians felt the AAP's criteria for medicating kids are too lax, while others expressed concern about the lack of long-term studies on the effects and risks of statins on children.

#### FTC praises food industry for strides in marketing to kids

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In its July study, "Marketing Food to Children and Adolescents: A Review of Industry Expenditures, Activities, and Self-Regulation," the Federal Trade Commission reported that 44 leading food and beverage companies spent \$1.6 billion in 2006 to market their products to young people under the age of 18. Most ad campaigns integrate traditional media with promotions, including tie-ins with 80 movies, TV shows, or cartoon characters.

The report essentially lauds the food industry for taking important steps toward promoting better nutrition and fitness among American kids since the launch of the Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative by the Council of Better Business Bureaus. The FTC recommends the adoption of meaningful marketing standards and further improvement of nutritional profiles by food companies, and asked entertainment companies to limit their licensing programs to more healthful foods.

A separate statement by FTC Commissioner Jon Leibowitz, while by no means a dissention, called entertainment tie-ins "pervasive" and "ubiquitous" and decried the share of ad budgets earmarked for marketing sugary carbonated beverages to teens as well as the amount spent on advertising and toys by fast food restaurants targeting kids under 12.

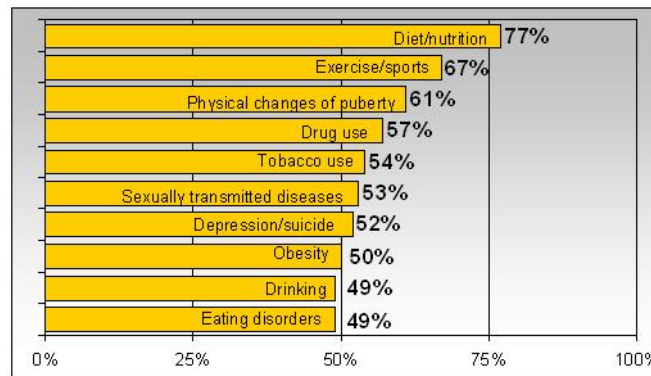
### THE CONSUMER

#### Parents want doctors to discuss diet, exercise with adolescents

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According to the C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, **diet/nutrition and sports/exercise are the topics parents most want doctors to discuss with kids aged 11 to 17** during checkups. Obesity is considered less of a priority than drug use, sexual activity, and depression but more urgent than drinking or eating disorders.

**Figure 1. Top 10 Topics Parents Consider Very Important for Doctors to Discuss with Adolescents**



Source: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, August 2007

The online survey was distributed to a random sample of 2,060 adults who were members of Knowledge Networks' KnowledgePanel. C.S. Mott Children's Hospital is affiliated with the University of Michigan.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**Products marketed as “fun foods” for kids are of poor nutritional quality, even those that make healthful claims**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>The objective of this study was to investigate the nutritional profile of foods targeted specifically at children in Canadian supermarkets.</b>
Researcher affiliation	University of Calgary, Canada
Study design	Excluding candy, soft drinks, sweet baked goods, and snacks like chips, 367 products were evaluated for their nutritional composition and subjected to a 36-point assessment.
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>89% of the products assessed were high in sugar, fat and/or sodium.</b>

*Obesity Reviews (July 2008)*

Assistant professor Charlene Elliott, whose work is funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research, is engaged in a 3-year national study on kids' and parents' responses to food products marketed to youngsters. Her current evaluation focused on “fun foods,” which may promote play and fun, be interactive or actually undergo transformation (e.g., shape, color), or have packaging that sports cartoon characters or is linked to TV shows or movies. In additional findings, 62% of the foods with substandard nutrition made positive nutrition claims on their packages, such as the presence of essential nutrients or the absence of artificial flavors, and 8% bore an official nutrition symbol of some kind.

“Such foods are presented as edible entertainment, to be consumed for reasons that have little to do with sustenance or nutrition,” Dr. Elliott stated. “It’s strange that the artificiality in food—generally considered to be a bad thing—is actually framed as a selling feature within children’s food. It is equally troubling that the behaviors believed to cause or support obesity in adults—using food as a distraction, eating for entertainment or sport—are precisely the behaviors encouraged by fun foods.”

**Reducing salt intake among kids also reduces consumption of soft drinks**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Dietary salt intake increases fluid consumption in adults, but researchers have yet to investigate links between salt intake and sugar-sweetened soft drink consumption in children.</b>
Researcher affiliation	St. George's University of London, England
Study population	1,688 4 to 18 year olds
Study design	Analysis of data from National Diet and Nutrition Survey in Great Britain based on 7-day dietary records
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Reducing salt intake by 1 gram each day would reduce sugar-sweetened soft drink consumption by 27 grams per day, with implications for hypertension and obesity.</b>

*Hypertension. 2008;51:629*

**PREVENTION & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**

**NEWS & TRENDS**

**NCCAM urges care providers to ask, patients to tell**

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) has kicked off Time to Talk, **an educational campaign designed to initiate a dialogue about CAM between healthcare providers and their patients**, particularly those aged 50-plus. Sixty-three percent of respondents in this demographic have used CAM, but less than one-third have discussed it with their care providers, according to a survey by the agency and AARP. The most common reasons for not having the conversation are:

- The doctor didn't ask (cited by 42%).
- The patient didn't know they were supposed to tell the doctor about their CAM use (30%).
- There wasn't enough time to do so during the office visit (19%).

The majority of respondents who did discuss CAM with their physicians brought the subject up themselves. During these conversations, effectiveness was the most frequently discussed topic (67%), followed closely by what type of therapy to use (64%), whether or not to pursue a CAM approach (60%), and safety (57%).



About two-thirds of CAM users were aiming to treat a specific ailment, with the same proportion doing so for overall wellness.

The Time to Talk campaign is designed to ensure safe, integrated, coordinated care. NCCAM advises physicians who are not familiar with CAM therapies to refer their patients to credible sources of research and information like PubMed or Medline Plus. The agency has also developed a toolkit of educational materials for care providers and patients.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

**Omega-3s, antioxidants, nutrients promote healthy brain function**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Nutrients can affect cognitive processes and emotions.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Departments of Neurosurgery and Physiological Science, UCLA Medical School
Study population	Meta-analysis of 160+ studies
Study design	Omega-3 fatty acids improve learning and memory, combat kids' behavioral problems, fight mood and mental disorders. Calorie restriction and antioxidants reduce oxidative damage in the brain. Folate supplementation and the spice curcumin prevent cognitive decline.
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>Nutrients can affect cognitive processes and emotions.</b>

*Nature Reviews Neuroscience, July 2008*

**Meditation's health benefits originate at the cellular level**

<b>INQUIRY</b>	<b>Mind-body practices that induce the relaxation response (RR) have been used for millennia to prevent and treat disease. RR may result in characteristic gene expression changes that can be used objectively to measure physiological responses.</b>
Researcher affiliation	Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital, Chestnut Hill, Harvard Medical School, Boston, and others
Study population	19 practitioners of daily RR, 19 healthy controls, and 20 individuals who completed 8 weeks of RR training
Study design	Comparison of gene-expression patterns, analysis of changes in cellular metabolism and generation of/response to oxidative stress
<b>RESULTS</b>	<b>RR practitioners suppressed twice as many stress-related genes than non-practitioners, indicating the practice can combat cellular damage caused by chronic stress.</b>

*PLoS ONE 3(7): e2576 doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0002576*