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Nutrition: Experts and the Public Agree

A couple of months ago, I was asked to participate in a nutrition survey. I don't usually answer surveys, but this was a request through the American Society of Nutrition (I'm a member) and we were told we'd get a chance to view the data, so I decided to do it. For comparison they also surveyed 2,000 people who were not in the nutrition field, and we'd get to see that data as well. The New York Times health writers published an article on the results (1). I decided to look at the data and do my own analysis. Let's take a look.

There were some foods that both groups agreed on. Kale, oranges, apples, and extra virgin olive oil were considered healthy foods. Regular soda was considered not healthy by both groups.

What was a little surprising to me was that both groups considered diet soda not healthy as well. The public opinion doesn't surprise me, but nutrition professionals should be aware that there's no science to suggest that diet sodas with artificial sweeteners are unhealthy.



Here's one that did surprise me: both experts and the public said that they evaluate whether foods are healthy by the vitamins and minerals they contain. I understand the professionals saying that, but not the public; how many people look beyond calories and fat when judging foods?

We'll take a look at where they did not agree on Thursday. The writers from the Times didn't ask us not to share the actual survey data so if you want to see the response, you'll find the links in references 2 and 3.

What are you prepared to do today?

Dr. Chet

References:

1. <http://nyti.ms/29jIE12>
2. <http://bit.ly/29r6jub>
3. <http://bit.ly/29HFQt5>

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