

Students try new food, lifestyles for health

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By the end of 2018, the massive amounts of candy at the front of some local drug stores will have decreased drastically. CVS Pharmacy has decided to abandon the candy counter in favor of more healthier food options. The company is rolling out a plan that will significantly reduce the counter space it devotes to junk food, like chips and soda, to make room for health foods, vitamins and supplements and cosmetics.

This plan takes advantage of a new trend toward healthy eating. According to Forbes, concerns about foods' health benefits have increased over the past few years. In fact, 88 percent of consumers are willing to pay more for healthy foods. Lifeskills teacher Julie Cutler feels that this trend is a positive change and that CVS is smart to take advantage of it.

"I think it's great. I think it's a good marketing tool for them as well to get people into their stores who are into those trends, like 'I'm trying to eat healthier, let's go in and see what CVS has to offer.' So I think if more stores did that and took away those not as good options, I think it could help," Cutler said. "We're so in tune with the marketing around us and if stores are more willing to offer healthy foods, I think it can only have a positive effect on our culture."

It's not just stores offering more healthy options. Certain healthy foods like kale, avocados and quinoa have become increasingly popular as many turn toward a more healthy diet. Some are even choosing to take on lifestyle diets, such as vegetarianism and veganism, that they believe will not only improve their personal health but also benefit the environment.

Junior Brandon Babcock is a vegan and found it relatively

simple to change his diet.

"It's easy to eat in 2017 with all of the different alternatives that they have. In restaurants you can get vegan food and Kroger has so many different options," Babcock said. "So all the stuff that I used to eat I can find a different alternative for so it's pretty easy to steer clear of my old foods."

Junior Sophie Kehrig said that the increase in the popularity of healthy eating help make society more physically fit. She says that a well balanced diet is important to her because she thinks that it will help her live longer and feel better.

"I feel like all that stuff and the culture of eating that way is what has promoted an epidemic of obesity," Kehrig said, "It would be a lot better for people in our country if it was that way where (healthy food) was promoted and advertised to them."

Diets and health terms

Gluten free

Gluten is a protein found in grains and grain-like plants including rice and corn, making it something people eat almost every day.

Gluten is not an essential part of a balanced diet. But by trying to avoid foods containing it, people may lack necessary nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and fiber.

One reason some people choose to exclude gluten from their diet is that they have Celiac Disease. For people with this disease, eating gluten can cause symptoms of bloating, nausea and other stomach issues. It can also eventually lead to permanent damage to the small intestine.

Sophomore Maddie Mills's mom has Celiac Disease. So, a few years ago she decided to adopt a gluten-free lifestyle. Initially it was to support her mom, but when Mills began consuming gluten again, she felt its adverse effects.

"I stopped eating it a couple of summers ago. I just did it over the summer. Then I started eating it again and I started getting really bad headaches and stomach aches," Mills said. "So, my mom was like 'you're not going to eat it anymore.' So it's kind of by choice, kind of allergies. It's a little bit of both I guess."

Mills said that from time to time she'll eat gluten versions of foods such as pasta or cookies, but doesn't eat them as often because they aren't as healthy.

Contrary to popular belief, gluten-free foods can actually be more unhealthy than foods that contain it. When removing gluten from a food, more sugar is added, causing the foods to have more calories.

Vegetarian

Meat is a staple in the average person's diet, and has been for thousands of years. Vegetarianism is one of the many diets that avoid eating meat altogether.

Junior Lee Daniel has been a vegetarian for almost eleven and a half years, and doesn't plan on going back to eating meat anytime soon.

"When I was five, I was talking to my mom one night after dinner and I was like ... 'Mom, I feel bad for the animals I don't want to eat meat anymore,'" Daniel said. "And she had been thinking of going vegetarian anyway so she did it with me and I just kind of stuck with it."

Vegetarian diets run some of the same risks a gluten free diet does. It can lead to nutrient and iron deficiencies, among other things. Foods like legumes, nuts, dairy products and meat substitutes are necessary for vegetarians to maintain a healthy diet.

But as long as they make sure to supplement the nutrients that meat generally provides for a well balanced diet, vegetarianism can have health benefits. For instance, a diet high in fruits, grains and vegetables and low in saturated fats can reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and other chronic illnesses.

"Once you figure out, I guess just like substitutes for meat and different meals, it's really easy," Daniel said. "(It's) a lot healthier and better for the environment to be vegetarian."

Vegan

Veganism is a diet in which vegans refrain from consuming animal products including meat, dairy, eggs and other animal substances.

Junior Brandon Babcock has been a vegan for a little over a year. His sister became a vegan two years before him which sparked his interest in the diet.

"I was researching stuff on the internet about the different types of diets. A vegan video came up and then I just started watching all of these videos on it," Babcock said. "Just seeing all of the videos of the animals being harmed in the factories for meat and dairy-I couldn't eat it anymore."

According to Babcock, there is a variety of food alternatives to substitute for meat and dairy. A few of the alternatives Babcock eats include vegan chicken tenders, burgers, and cheeses.

After his switch to veganism, Babcock said he has had more energy than before, and began to feel better as he began eating more nutritional food choices.

"Before I went vegan I just felt like eating healthy was never really on my mind," Babcock said. "Now I just feel like I'm making a conscious effort to eat healthy and it is affecting the planet in a positive way. It's all around such a good diet."

GMOs

In recent years, genetically modified organisms have become one of the most controversial terms in the food world. Stores such as Whole Foods have even began removing foods containing GMOs from their shelves.

Junior Sophie Kehrig said that the negative way people view GMOs comes from the fact that people aren't properly educated about them and understand what they do.

"I think they can be used in a really great way," Kehrig said. "(There's) a lot of fear-mongering and people don't necessarily read the right sources. So instead of a website that might be a little more intimidating or a little bit more challenging, it's easier to just look at a blog or something like that and sources that aren't as reliable."

Lifeskills teacher Julie Cutler has a similar mindset in the way that she feels more people need to educate themselves about GMOs before formulating an opinion.

"This is a controversial topic, and I've heard both sides where some people will argue that GMOs are really good because they're helping people grow higher quantities of food.

But then others will argue that it's taking away that natural, earth way it's supposed to be done, it's like messing with mother nature," Cutler said. "I know where I stand, I'm not going to say, but again I think if somebody's interested in it they need to research it and figure out if they think GMOs are in fact bad or if they aren't bad, but it's a personal thing."

Foods that are labeled as "natural" have the same connotation issue as GMOs, but in the opposite way.

The Food and Drug Association doesn't have a lot of requirements for what types of foods can be labeled as natural, so many foods that aren't necessarily healthy have used the label because it is associated with being healthy.

"Natural is a rather subjective term, so it's really hard to put a set guideline on it, and because it's so subjective it's something people like to use as this hot-button word to make people think it's healthy even though it's not," Kehrig said. "So it's less about the FDA regulating what is set as natural and what it's said that isn't, and instead people just educating themselves that that doesn't necessarily mean it's good."

In the same way, organic and natural have almost become interchangeable, even though they are completely different. The FDA has a lot more guidelines and requirements pertaining to what can be labeled as organic than it does for what is labeled as natural.

Organic foods, for example, are one of the best ways to be able to tell if a food is genetically modified or not since organic foods prohibit the use of GMOs.

Cutler thinks that if someone is interested in healthy eating, they need to really take the time to educate themselves about what labels like organic and natural mean.

"There's different levels of all natural and organic, and I'm not an expert on knowing exactly what those are," Cutler said. "So I think if that's something someone is interested in they need to look at those labels and see what they actually mean, because each label can mean something slightly different."



MICHAEL RUPPRECHT

What to look for on a Nutrition Facts Label

Do you check the nutrition label before purchasing new foods? According to a 2008 FDA survey, 46 percent of people sometimes, rarely or never reference a food label. Some participants even said that they do not know how to read the label. This quick guide will teach you the correct way to read a nutrition facts label.

Serving Size: States the size of one serving and the number of servings in the package. The other nutritional information is based on one serving.

Total Fat/Cholesterol/Sodium: Limit these nutrients. Generally, Americans eat too much of them. This can lead to higher risk of heart disease, some cancers and high blood pressure.

Dietary Fiber/Vitamin A, C/Calcium/Iron: Most Americans do not get enough of these nutrients in their diet. They can improve health and lower the risk of some diseases.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Servings Per Container About 8	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 230	Calories from Fat 40
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	12%
Dietary Fiber 4g	16%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 3g	
Vitamin A	10%
Vitamin C	8%
Calcium	20%
Iron	45%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily value may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

% Daily Value: States the percent of nutrients that is received from one serving. It is based on a 2,000 calorie diet, as stated in the footnote. Five percent DV or less is low. Twenty percent DV or more is high.

Protein: The DV will appear if the food contains a high amount of protein, which is stated somewhere on the wrapper.

Footnote: The asterisks relates to the Percent Daily Value and states that it could change based on calorie intake per day. The chart below lists the amount of calories.

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Source: FDA
LYNDSAY KLUGE

Healthy alternatives: Q & A with lifeskills teacher Julie Cutler

North Pointe: Why is it important to eat healthy?

Julie Cutler: I believe if you eat healthy, you're physically going to feel better. You're going to have more energy, you're going to be able to think better. So it's really important for your body to get those proper nutrients.

NP: What are some common problems that people face when trying to eat healthier?

JC: I think in our society, food that's not as healthy for you is so easy to find ... it's just always right there. So I think that's the biggest struggle is putting the effort into finding and preparing healthy foods, instead of doing those fast, easy, not as healthy foods that are so easily ready.

NP: What are some things people can do to avoid cravings?

JC: I don't really know a whole lot about avoiding cravings, I think if you do want to start eating healthy though, the main thing is you need to put in the time to prep your food, prep those healthy foods. Or be willing to pay a little more to have somebody prep them for you. Because the healthier the foods, you have to take time to prep them yourself.

NP: What types of food should people try to avoid?

JC: I think sugar is probably ... the worst thing you can eat, and it's snuck into a lot of foods. It's added to a lot of things you wouldn't even think it'd be added to, like pasta sauce or something. For me, personally, I try to avoid sugar, I think it's the worst culprit.

NP: What are some healthier alternatives people can eat when looking for a snack?

JC: My go-to thing is nuts, like a handful of nuts, dried fruit, because they fill you up. They have good protein. Fruit in general is kind of my go-to snack and also baked snacks instead of your greasy chips and stuff.

NP: What foods should people eat more of?

JC: I think fruits and vegetables, raw fruits and vegetables, are the best things I would say for you. Whole grains, I try and do quinoa and brown rice and stuff like that. Just try and venture out and eat natural foods, not things that come in a bag and are already made for you.

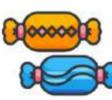
NP: Are diets like veganism and vegetarianism necessarily more healthy than a normal diet?

JC: Again, I think it's a personal thing. You need to look at your family history and see if anything runs in your family, like high cholesterol or heart disease and stuff like that, and you might want to avoid certain (foods). I know some people personally who try and avoid meat altogether because they believe it leads to certain types of cancers, high blood pressure and higher cholesterol levels. So again, you have to look at what is important to you and your health and your family history and figure out what diet is best for you. But if someone wants to try a vegetarian diet, I think it's great.

NP: Do you think that healthy eating has become more popular or almost a trend in recent years?

JC: Yeah, I would think so. I think it's kind of a millennial thing. People are looking into GMOs and maybe doing vegan and vegetarian diets, so it is sort of trendy. But I think it's good because obesity rates have gone up so high and quickly over the last thirty years.

Healthy alternatives for common snacks

<p>Soda</p>  <p>Soda contains high amounts of natural and artificial sweeteners, including sugars such as high fructose corn syrup or fruit juice.</p>	➔	<p>Kombucha</p>  <p>Kombucha is a variety of fermented teas that provide numerous health benefits such as improved digestion and mental clarity.</p>
<p>Ice Cream</p>  <p>Ice cream is high in saturated fats and contains high amounts of sugar.</p>	➔	<p>Vegan Ice Cream</p>  <p>Vegan ice cream contains a base of bananas, with additional fruits and flavors such as raspberries, mangos and peanut butter.</p>
<p>Candy</p>  <p>Candy contains high amounts of sugar and is sometimes above one's daily recommended value in saturated fat.</p>	➔	<p>Frozen Grapes</p>  <p>Frozen grapes are a healthy substitute for candy without all of the added sugar. Leave them in the freezer for 4-5 hours and they become a sweet treat.</p>
<p>Pizza</p>  <p>Pizza is made from yeasted flatbread and is usually topped with pizza sauce and cheese. It is high in sodium and can be coated grease from the cheese.</p>	➔	<p>Vegetable Pizza Bites</p>  <p>Vegetable pizza bites can be made using a variety of vegetables including zucchini, eggplant or mushrooms and topped with pizza toppings.</p>

Source: Spoon University
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