

Attractive names sustain increased vegetable intake in schools

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The age-old parental struggle of convincing youngsters to eat their fruits and vegetables has some new allies: Power Punch Broccoli, X-Ray Vision Carrots—and a host of catchy names for entrees in school cafeterias. Cornell University researchers studied how a simple change, such as using attractive names, would influence elementary-aged children's consumption of vegetables.

In the first study, plain old carrots were transformed into "X-ray Vision Carrots." 147 students ranging from 8-11 years old from 5 ethnically and economically diverse schools participated in tasting the cool new foods. [Lunchroom](#) menus were the same except that carrots were added on three consecutive days. They found, for example, that by naming plain old carrots "X-ray vision carrots," fully 66 percent of the [carrots](#) were eaten, far greater than the 32 percent eaten when labeled "Food of the Day"—and the 35 percent eaten when unnamed.

"This research suggests that schools have a low-cost or even no-cost solution to induce children to consume more [nutritious foods](#)," said Brian Wansink, lead author of the study and professor of marketing at the Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell. His co-authors are Cornell associate professor of marketing David Just, Collin Payne of New Mexico State University, and student Matthew Klinger.

"These results demonstrate that using attractive names for healthy foods increases kid's selection and consumption of these foods and that an

attractive name intervention is robust, effective and scalable at little or no cost," Wansink said. "This research also confirms that using attractive names to make foods sound more appealing works on individuals across all age levels."

More information:

foodpsychology.cornell.edu/outreach/whatname.html

Provided by Cornell Food & Brand Lab

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