

Final menu labeling rules will help consumers choose better, says American Heart Association

November 26 2014, by Abbey Race

American Heart Association CEO Nancy Brown issued the following comments today on the Food and Drug Administration's two final rules requiring restaurants, vending machines, movie theaters and grocery stores to display calorie information. The American Heart Association, along with other groups, advocated for Congress to include these two rules in the Affordable Care Act.

"Calorie control is key to reversing the nation's obesity epidemic. Thanks to these new FDA labeling rules, Americans will now have easier access to calorie counts for foods and drinks before they place an order or push the buttons on a vending machine.

While eating out, getting a to-go meal, or grabbing a snack from a machine may save us time, it usually doesn't shrink our [calorie intake](#). Research indicates we underestimate the calories in the foods and drinks we choose and, as a result, consume more than we need. The larger portions on our plate served by restaurants also can lead to overconsumption. This not only causes obesity, but puts us at risk for cardiovascular disease and an early death. But under these new FDA regulations, consumers will now be able to compare options before making a selection just as they would when reviewing "Nutrition Facts" labels at the supermarket. According to a recent survey conducted in 17 states, a majority of Americans use available [calorie information](#) on menus when deciding what to order at fast food and chain restaurants.

The association is also pleased that additional nutritional information will be readily available for consumers upon request. This is particularly valuable for those who want to limit specific nutrients, such as a person with hypertension on a low sodium diet.

By requiring movie theater concessions and prepared foods from [grocery stores](#) to meet the same requirements as restaurants, the FDA is empowering consumers to make better food choices wherever food is sold. No matter where you purchase them, foods and drinks that are high in calories or low in nutritional value have the same negative effect on your health.

Armed with this nutrition information before they take their first bite, Americans can make the best food and drink choices to build a healthier life free of heart disease and stroke. We applaud the FDA for releasing these new rules and look forward to seeing them put into practice."

More information: The paper is available online:
www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrh...htm?s_cid=mm6327a1_e

Provided by American Heart Association

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