

Smartphones deliver nutrition labelling study

November 5 2015

An exciting five-week study on nutrition labelling using smartphones is underway at the National Institute for Health Innovation at the University of Auckland.

The Starlight trial uses smartphone technology to deliver the study intervention ([nutrition labels](#)) to participants and to record participant information, so there are no clinic appointments to attend and adults from all over New Zealand can take part.

"New front-of-pack labels deliver simple, 'at-a-glance' nutrition information to buyers. Our aim is to see if these labels have an effect on the healthiness of foods bought by New Zealand shoppers," says lead researcher, Professor of nutrition at NIHI, Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu.

Eligible participants download a free study-specific smartphone application (app). The interactive app guides participants through all stages of the study, from registration to final data collection.

The app enables completion of study questionnaires, delivery of the allocated nutrition labels (participants scan barcodes of food products to view the nutrition labels on their smartphone screen), collection and transmission of food purchasing data, and delivers regular reminder messages.

"Poor diets and obesity are leading risk factors for ill-health in New Zealand" says Professor Cliona Ni Mhurchu.

"The New Zealand Government recently announced initiatives to prevent and manage obesity in children and young people. One of these initiatives was related to food labelling," she says. "Nutrition labels inform consumers about the composition of foods and can support healthier choices, but many people find current nutrition labels hard to understand."

Study [participants](#) receive up to \$90 worth of vouchers in appreciation of their efforts. More than 1400 people have taken part since the study started in September 2014 and the Starlight team is now looking for its final 100 volunteers to complete the study. Recruitment closes on 11 November 2015.

More information: Anyone interested in taking part in the study should visit the study website for more information:

diet.nihi.auckland.ac.nz/content/starlight

Provided by University of Auckland

Citation: Smartphones deliver nutrition labelling study (2015, November 5) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-11-smartphones-nutrition.html>

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