

Assessing the effectiveness of nutrition interventions implemented among US college students to promote healthy behaviours: A systematic review

While most school-based interventions target younger children, university students are at high risk for overweight and obesity. The authors cite “lack of parental oversight, increased eating of cheap, low-quality foods due to budget constraints and decreased physical activity” as causes for weight gain during higher education. Studies examining nutrition education among college students are extremely promising. Therefore, the intent of this paper is to “systematically review nutrition interventions conducted among US college students to assess the effectiveness of the interventions in changing attitudes, beliefs and self-efficacy related to healthy eating, and in promoting healthy eating to ultimately reduce the risk for overweight and obesity.”

The authors found 30 studies that fit all inclusion criteria. Of these, “all studies that used theory had statistically significant changes in outcomes for at least one outcome variable of interest.” However, some had poor study design, collecting data through convenience samples or failing to use a control group. Future studies should use objective measurements and report the theory influencing study design.

Reference: Brace AM, De Andrade FC, Finkelstein B. Assessing the effectiveness of nutrition interventions implemented among US college students to promote healthy behaviors: A systematic review. *Nutr Health*. 2018 Sep;24(3):171-181. doi: 10.1177/0260106018785528