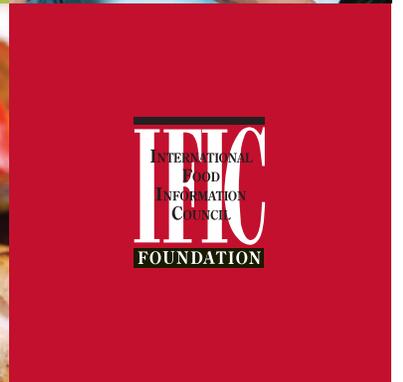
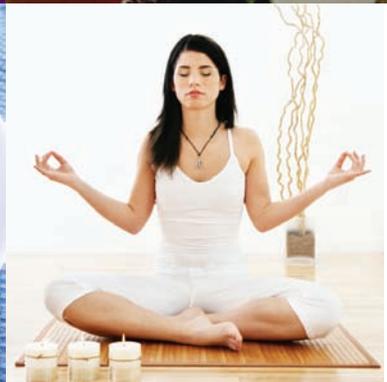
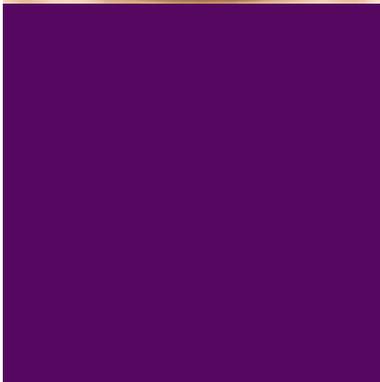
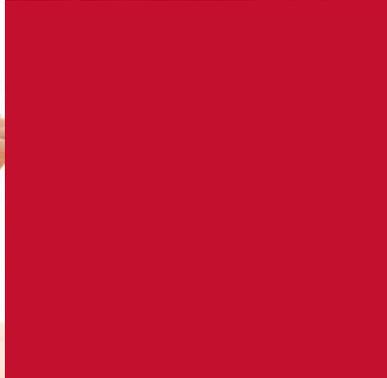


International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation
2008 FOOD & HEALTH SURVEY
Consumer Attitudes toward Food, Nutrition & Health

A Trended Survey



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International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation

The International Food Information Council (IFIC) Foundation's mission is to effectively communicate science-based information on health, nutrition, and food safety for the public good. The IFIC Foundation is affiliated with the International Food Information Council, an organization supported by the broad-based food, beverage, and agricultural industries. This report and other IFIC Foundation materials can be accessed at <http://ific.org>.

Cogent Research

This research was conducted in partnership with Cogent Research. Cogent Research is a marketing research and strategic consulting firm that supports government, associations, and industry in their efforts to understand and track consumer behavior and attitudes in a variety of areas related to food and nutrition. More information regarding the mission and services of Cogent Research can be found at <http://www.cogentresearch.com>.

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The 2008 *Food & Health Survey: Consumer Attitudes toward Food, Nutrition, & Health*, conducted by the International Food Information Council Foundation, is the third annual national quantitative study designed to gain insights from consumers on these important topics. The research provides the opportunity to see how consumers view their own diets, their efforts to improve them, and their understanding of the food components in their diets and how to safely prepare food. In order to create effective nutrition and food safety communications that would help consumers implement behavioral changes, health professionals, educators, and others need to best understand what issues are most important to consumers.

The following are key findings from 2008 with comparisons to results from the 2006 and 2007 editions of the *Food & Health Survey*.

Overall Health Americans' perception of their health status stills shows improvement with 39 percent indicating their health is "excellent" or "very good" compared to 33 percent in 2006. Although there was no real change from year to year, Americans' degree of satisfaction with their health status remained relatively high with 59 percent indicating "extremely satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied."

Weight Americans' concern with their weight appears to be a very strong factor influencing the decision to make a dietary change. Seventy-five percent say they are concerned with their weight, compared to 74 percent in 2007 and 66 percent in 2006. In addition, 69 percent of those who made a change to their diet cite their reason for making dietary changes is "to lose weight," and 57 percent say they are actively "trying to lose weight."

Diet and Physical Activity Two-thirds of Americans (67 percent) reported making changes to improve the healthfulness of their diet. The specific types of dietary changes they most often reported are "changing the portion sizes of the meals or snacks I consume" (60 percent) and "changing the number of calories I consume" (57 percent). In addition, 52 percent of those trying to lose or maintain their weight reported "increased physical activity" as a specific diet-related change in 2008.

And while 57 percent of Americans who are trying to lose or maintain their weight say they are making an effort "to reduce the number of calories" they consume, there still appears to be an important disconnect between this reported behavior and Americans' general

knowledge about calories. For example, only 15 percent correctly estimated the recommended number of calories per day for a person their age, height, physical activity, and weight; only 31 percent correctly understand that calories from any source contribute equally to potential weight gain; and 44 percent report that they do not balance diet and physical activity to manage their weight (calories consumed versus calories expended).

Meal Occasions Similar to the 2007 survey, breakfast is named by 92 percent of consumers as the most important meal of the day, followed by dinner (89 percent) and lunch (83 percent); however, less than half (46 percent) of consumers eat breakfast seven days per week. In the 2008 survey, consumers who believe that eating breakfast is most important but do not eat it everyday cite several "barriers" to not eating breakfast everyday, including "not hungry right after I wake up" (59 percent) and "not enough time" (54 percent).

Snacks are also an important part of most Americans' days, with nearly all Americans (94 percent) consuming at least one snack per day.

Foods and Beverages with Added Health and Wellness Benefits While "taste" and "price" continue to have the greatest impact on Americans' decisions to buy foods and beverages, the importance of "healthfulness" remained stable after increasing in 2007 (62 per-



Executive Summary

cent in 2008 versus 65 percent in 2007 and 58 percent in 2006). When given a list of the changes they are making to improve the healthfulness of their diet, Americans indicated they are increasing (37 percent) and decreasing (21 percent) their consumption of a specific food and/or beverage.

Sixty percent or more of Americans either somewhat or strongly believe that certain foods and beverages can provide multiple benefits (for example, heart health). As in 2007, more than 80 percent of all Americans say they are currently consuming or would be interested in consuming foods and/or beverages for such benefits.

Dietary Fats Seventy percent of Americans are concerned with the amount of fat they consume and 68 percent say they are concerned with the type of fat they consume. Continued concern over *trans* fat appears to be an important contributor. Awareness of *trans* fat grew to 91 percent versus 87 percent in 2007 and 81 percent in 2006. Fifty-nine percent of Americans who use the Nutrition Facts Panel say they use *trans* fat information on it, and 79 percent of Americans who are aware of it say they rated *trans* fat as either “not at all healthful” or “not very healthful,” up from 64 percent in 2006.

While Americans know that type of fat is important, knowledge of the types of fats that dietary guidance recommends consuming, including mono- and polyunsaturated fats, is limited. Awareness of both of these healthful fats (63 percent for monounsaturated fats and 71 percent for polyunsaturated fats) is low compared to others. However, the number of Americans aware of those fats who rate monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats as either “somewhat healthful” or “extremely healthful” has increased to 28 percent and 23 percent respectively from 16 percent and 15 percent in 2006.

Carbohydrates and Sugars Americans continue to be concerned with the amount of sugar they consume (69 percent in 2008 versus 70 percent in 2007 and 62 percent in 2006). Among Americans who use the Nutrition Facts Panel, they look for information about sugar more often (68 percent compared to 63 percent in 2007 and 67 percent in 2006). Although there was no significant change in Americans’ concern over the amount of carbohydrates they consume, concern with the type of carbohydrates they consume remained high at 52 percent and 46 percent in 2006.

Low-Calorie Sweeteners More Americans who are aware of these low-calorie sweeteners report they are

trying to consume less aspartame (43 percent), saccharin (45 percent), and sucralose (44 percent) in 2008 compared to 2007. However, there is no significant difference in approach to consumption of these low-calorie sweeteners when comparing this year’s responses to those from 2006. In addition, Americans’ belief that low-calorie sweeteners can play a role in weight loss or weight management was 44 percent in 2008.

Caffeine Consumption When asked to describe their level of caffeine consumption, 64 percent of Americans say they “consume caffeine in moderation.” Twenty-two percent describe themselves as consuming “more caffeine than the average person,” and 14 percent say they have “eliminated caffeine” from their diets.

Food Additives/Colors Consumers were asked to answer a new question this year about their beliefs pertaining to the accuracy of several statements about food additives/colors. The result was that 85 percent of Americans believe food additives can provide at least one of the following benefits: they can extend the freshness of certain foods/act as a preservative (68 percent); add color to food products (65 percent); help keep or improve the flavor of food products (61 percent); and reduce the presence of harmful bacteria in food products (36 percent).

Safe Food Preparation New to this year’s survey were questions regarding safe food preparation at home. Eighty-two percent of consumers say they are confident in their ability to safely prepare foods at home. Almost all Americans (96 percent) say they are regularly taking at least one food safety precaution when cooking, preparing, and consuming food products, and a majority of Americans (79 percent) are confident in their ability to understand and follow microwave meal cooking instructions. However, fewer report following key basic food safety practices, such as using a different cutting board for each type of food (48 percent) and using a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of meat and poultry items (29 percent).

Consumer Use of Information Sources In addition to the information gathered on the Nutrition Facts Panel and the food label, consumers were asked about their awareness and use of the United States Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) *MyPyramid* food guidance system. Eighty-seven percent of Americans say they are aware of *MyPyramid* and 26 percent of individuals report having used *MyPyramid* in some way.

The *IFIC Foundation Food & Health Survey* provides ongoing insights into the many disconnects Americans have between the food they eat and their health. The initial wave of this survey was conducted in 2006 and acts as a benchmark study, with the *2007* and *2008 Food & Health Surveys* serving as the follow-up, trending surveys. Over time, this survey will provide consumer insights to help guide and shape future education and communication initiatives as well as trend data to measure the progress made toward following the recommendations made in the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

Areas of Inquiry

The 2006 survey focused primarily on how consumers approach overall diet, physical activity, and weight to manage their physical health. Other questions explored consumer knowledge and attitudes toward principal nutrients such as fats, sugars, and carbohydrates. Finally, questions addressed consumer attitudes towards and usage of information sources such as the Nutrition Facts Panel and *MyPyramid* in making food choices.

The 2007 survey repeated many of the questions asked in 2006 for trending purposes, with the majority regarding overall diet, physical activity, and weight as key determinants of health. Several new questions were added to better understand consumers' knowledge and use of information about calories to help them manage weight, health, and meal occasions. Other questions were also added to explore consumer attitudes toward and awareness and interest in the benefits food can contribute to physical health as well as a sense of well-being.

The 2008 survey repeated many of the questions asked in 2006 and 2007 for trending purposes, with the majority regarding overall diet, physical activity, and weight as key determinants of health. Other questions were asked to determine consumers' knowledge of dietary fats and caffeine, carbohydrates, sugars, and low-calorie sweeteners. Several new questions were added to better understand consumers' knowledge and practices regarding safe home-food preparation, using either a stove, oven, or a microwave.

Methodology

This research was conducted by Cogent Research of Cambridge, MA in partnership with the IFIC Foundation. All data for this study were collected from



February 21 to March 11, 2008 via a Web-based survey consisting of 129 questions. The outgoing e-mail list for this study was constructed to be reflective of the U.S. population on key census characteristics, adjusting for groups with historically lower response rates. To ensure the final results were representative of the adult population in the United States, the survey data were weighted against the latest U.S. Census projections on specific key attributes. The data presented in this report reflect these weighted data. (See Figure 1, page 4)

Throughout this report, 2008 data is compared to the 2006 benchmark study (collected in November 2005) and the 2007 data (collected February/March in

Introduction

2007). The 2006 benchmark study and 2007 study also utilized a Web-based methodology and surveyed a representative population of the U.S. on key demographic variables. Statistically significant differences among 2006, 2007, and 2008 are noted in the report by up or down arrows.



The findings presented here rely primarily on univariate analyses and cross-tabulations. All questions were cross-tabulated by a set of key variables, including primary demographic characteristics (e.g., age, income), health-based characteristics (e.g., BMI¹, health status), and attitudinal characteristics (e.g., satisfaction with health status).

A sample of 1,000 respondents is subject to a maximum sampling error of ± 3.1 percentage points (at the 95 percent confidence level). Comparisons of data from 2007 to 2006 are subject to a maximum sampling error of ± 4.4 percentage points (at the 95 percent confidence level).

¹ BMI calculated from self-reported weight and height and categorized according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) standards.

FIGURE 1: Methodology

Methodology	Web survey
Population	Representative sample of Americans aged 18+
Data collection period	February 21–March 11, 2008
Sample size (error)	n=1,000 (± 3.1 for 2008) (± 4.4 among 2008, 2007, 2006)
Data weighting*	Data weighted on age, income, education, and race

* Weighting is a widely accepted statistical technique that is used to ensure that the distribution of the sample reflects that of the population on key demographics. With any data collection method, even when the outgoing sample is balanced to the Census, some populations are more likely than others to respond.

Perceptions of Health Status

Americans' perceptions of their health status continue to be more positive today than they were in 2006. Significantly more Americans describe their health as being "excellent" to "very good" in 2008 (39 percent) than in 2006 (33 percent), while fewer Americans describe their health as being "poor" (three percent in 2008 vs. six percent in 2006). (See Figure 2)

Americans who are more likely to rate their health status as "excellent" or "very good" include:

- Those with an income of \$100,000 or more
- Those with some college education or higher
- Those without children
- Those who are satisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those with a BMI in the normal or overweight range
- Those who are not concerned with their weight
- Those who are physically active



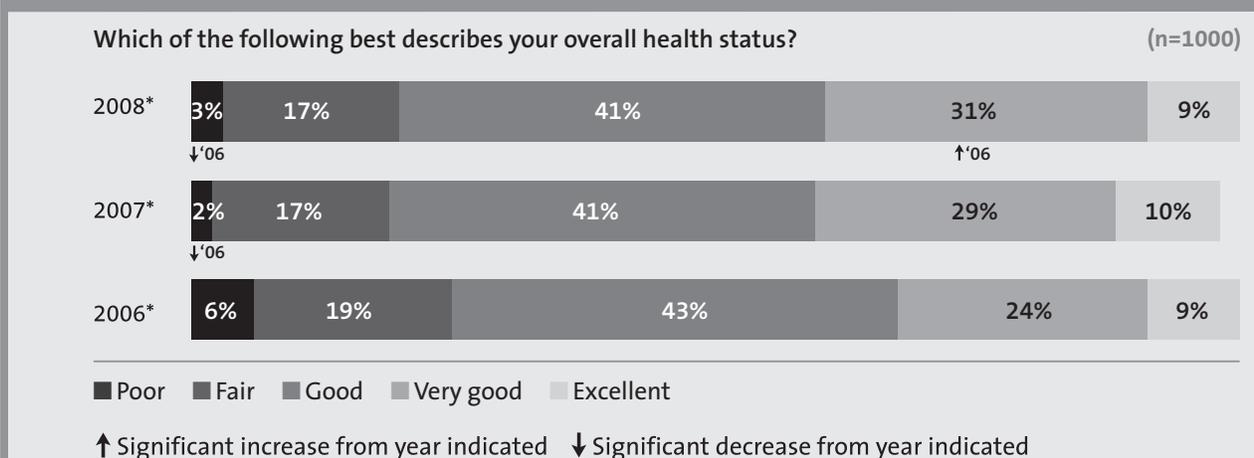
Satisfaction with Health Status

Americans' satisfaction with their health status remains stable from 58 percent in 2007 to 59 percent in 2008. Meanwhile, the number dissatisfied with their health status dropped significantly from 2006 with 30 percent

to 25 percent in 2007, but became stable in 2008 with 24 percent. (See Figure 3, page 6)

While 80 percent of Americans rated their health status as "excellent," "very good," or "good," in 2008, only 59 percent said they were "somewhat" or "extremely satisfied." This gap suggests that some Americans who consider

FIGURE 2: Perceptions of Health Status



* Total does not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Overall Health

themselves to be healthy still see room for improvement. In 2008, Americans who are more likely to be “somewhat” or “extremely satisfied” with their health status include:

- Women
- Those who are 65 or older
- Those with an income of \$50,000 or more
- Those with a college degree or higher
- Those who perceive their health status to be “very good” or “excellent”
- Those without children
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those who are not concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to maintain their current weight
- Those with a BMI in the normal or overweight range (rather than obese)
- Those who are physically active

NOTE:

The survey instrument explained “diet” to respondents as follows:

By diet, we mean everything you consume, including foods, beverages, and dietary supplements.

Diet

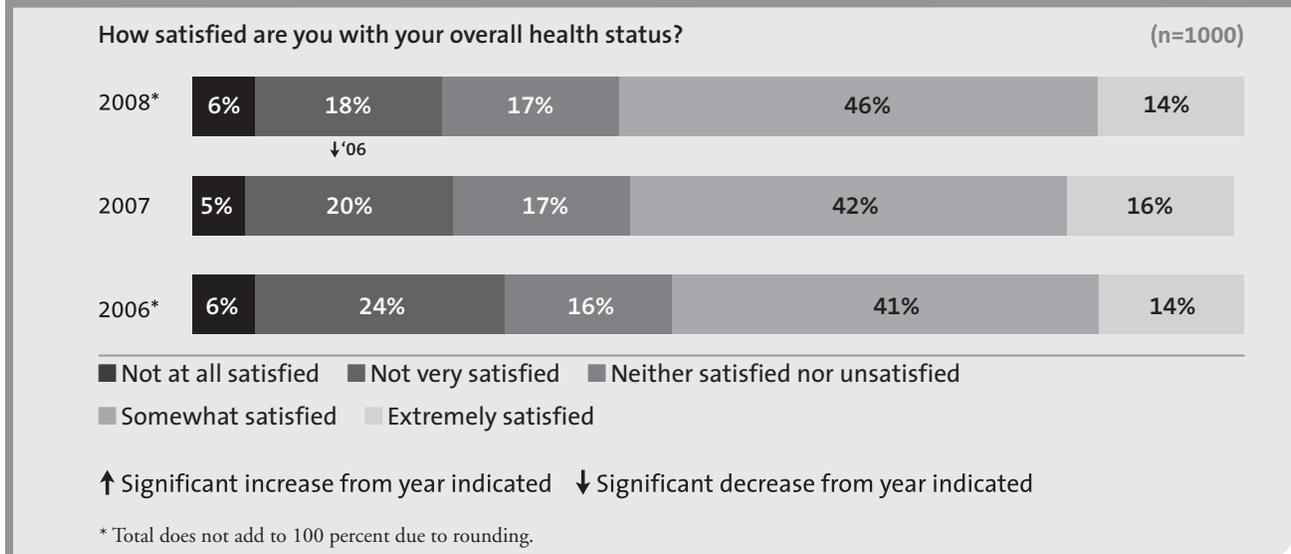
Perception of Healthfulness of Diet

Americans’ perceptions of the healthfulness of their diets remained stable over the past two years, with more than half (58 percent) describing their diet as healthful. Among those who describe their diet as healthful, most consider it “somewhat healthful” (51 percent). More than one in five Americans (22 percent) describes their diet as either “not very” or “not at all” healthful. (See Figure 4, page 7)

Segments of the American public that are more apt to view their diet as unhealthy include:

- Those who are under age 65
- Those with incomes of less than \$50,000 (vs. more than \$100,000)

FIGURE 3: Satisfaction with Health Status



- Those who did not graduate from college
- Those with children
- Those who perceive their health to be “fair” or “poor”
- Those who have made no changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are doing nothing or are trying to lose with regard to their weight
- Those who are dissatisfied with their health status
- Those whose BMI is in the overweight or obese range or who perceive themselves to be overweight or obese
- Those who are not physically active

Servings of Fruits and Vegetables per Day

The survey asked respondents to indicate the average number of servings of fruits and vegetables they eat per day.² Similar to 2006, only 13 percent of Americans report eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day.³ In contrast, more than half of Americans (55 percent) say they eat one or two servings of fruits and vegetables per day. On average, Americans report eating 2.55 servings of fruits and vegetables per day, which is increased from 2007 (2.52 servings).

Prevalence of Dietary Changes

This year, Americans say they are making an effort to improve the healthfulness of their diet (67 percent), which remains consistent from last year but is a significant increase from 2006 (57 percent). (See Figure 5, page 8)

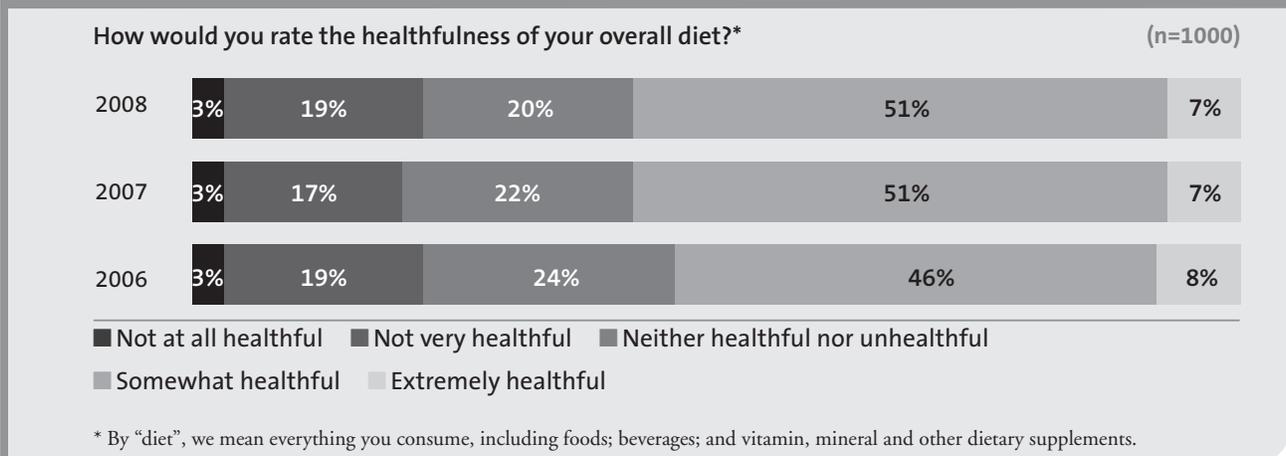


Those more apt to have made a change to their diet include:

- Women
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those whose BMI is in the obese range or who perceive themselves to be overweight or obese
- Those who are concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those who are physically active four or more days a week

Among Americans who have made a change to their diet, the principle reasons they are doing so are to improve overall well-being (69 percent) and to lose weight (69 percent). (See Figure 6, page 8)

FIGURE 4: Perceptions of Diet



² A serving was defined for respondents to be one medium-sized piece of fruit or one cup of vegetables, which fits into the size of a woman’s hand.

³ The United States Department of Agriculture recommends that adults consume 4-5 cups of fruits and vegetables per day. The *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* recommends that adults eat five to nine servings of fruits and vegetables per day.

FIGURE 5: Prevalence of Dietary Changes

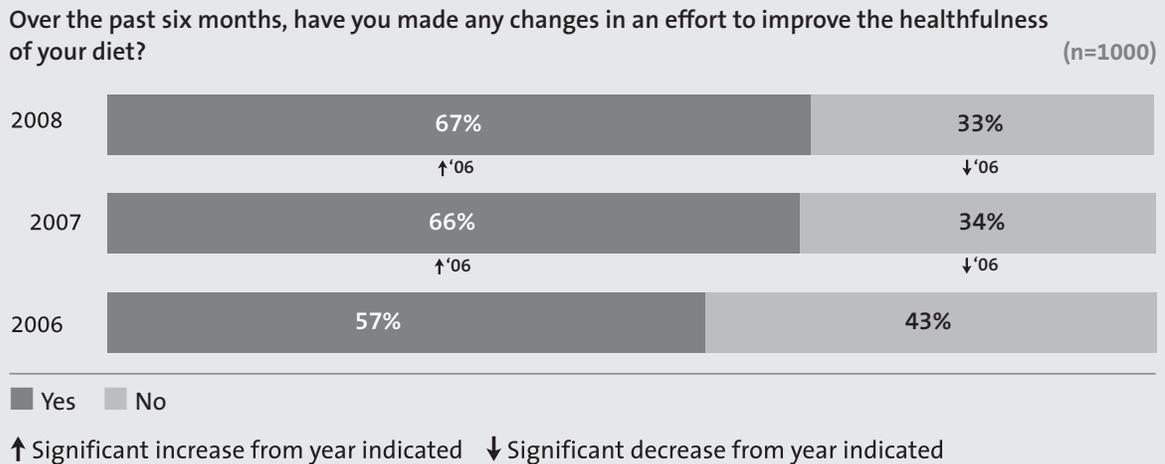
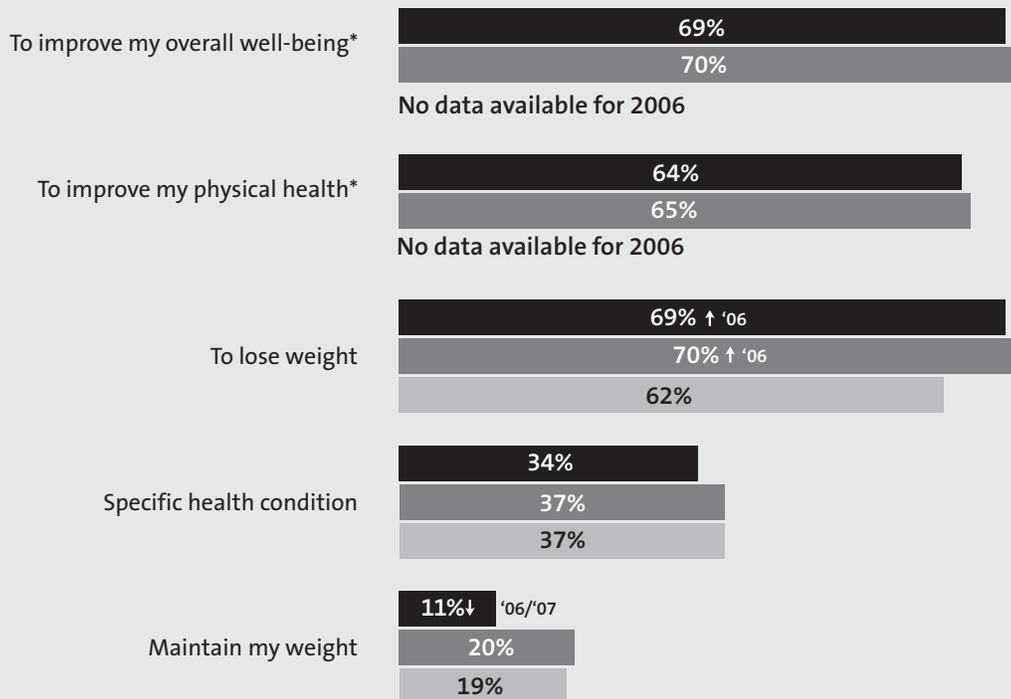


FIGURE 6: Drivers of Dietary Changes

For which of the following reasons, if any, are you trying to improve the healthfulness of your diet?



■ 2008 (n=669) ■ 2007 (n=660) ■ 2006 (n=574)

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* MODIFICATION FROM 2006: "To improve my overall health" (69%) was changed to two items, including "To improve my overall well-being" and "To improve my physical health."

Specific Changes Made in an Effort to Improve the Healthfulness of the Diet

Americans trying to improve the healthfulness of their diets are making changes in how much they consume of specific foods and beverages.

When aided (choosing among a predetermined list of possible actions), Americans who made a change to their diet report that they employ a wide variety of actions to improve its healthfulness. “Consuming less of a specific food or beverage” was still the most reported action (71 percent in 2008 vs. 65 percent in 2007) while “changing meal/snack patterns” (61 percent in 2008 vs. 59 percent in 2007), “reducing amounts of food and beverages consumed” (55 percent in 2008 vs. 58 percent in 2007), and “eating fewer calories” (43 percent in 2008 vs. 48 percent in 2007) were the next most frequently cited actions.

In both 2007 and 2008, 12 percent or fewer Americans said they were “following a specific diet plan.” (See Figure 7)

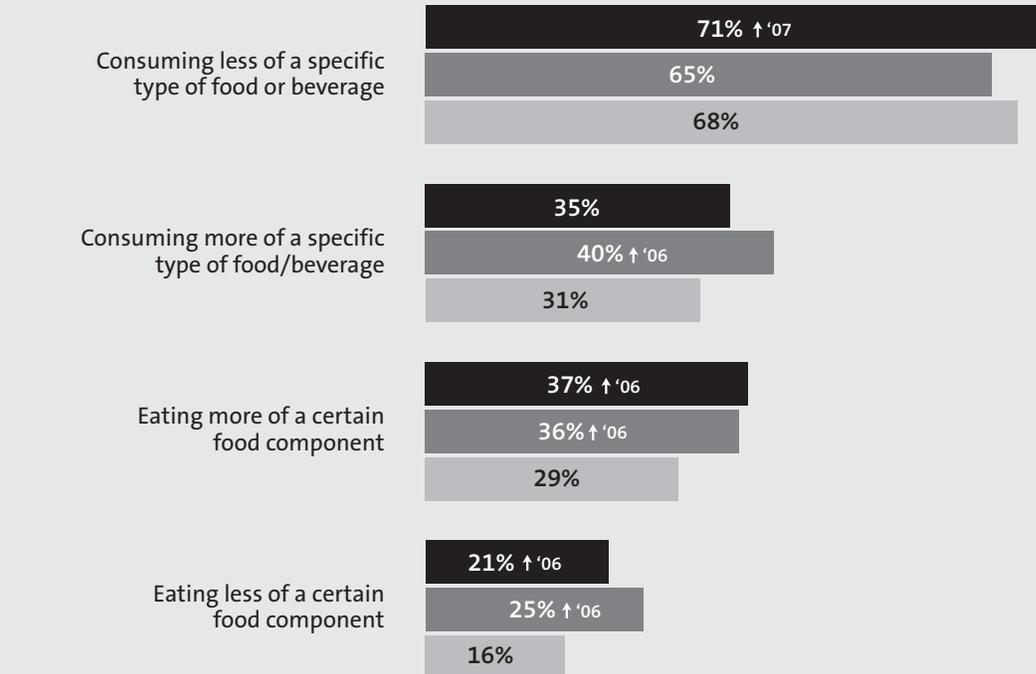
Calories

When asked to estimate the number of calories they should be consuming in an average day, a higher proportion of Americans provided an estimate in 2008 (71 percent) than in 2007 (69 percent). In addition, the number of Americans who were able to provide an *accurate* estimate increased since 2007 (15 percent in 2008 vs. 11 percent in 2007).

Among those *unable* to accurately estimate the correct amount of calories in 2008, 34 percent said that they “didn’t know,” 50 percent underestimated, and 17 percent overestimated the correct calorie amount per day. (See Figure 8, page 10)

FIGURE 7: Changes Made to Improve Healthfulness of Diet

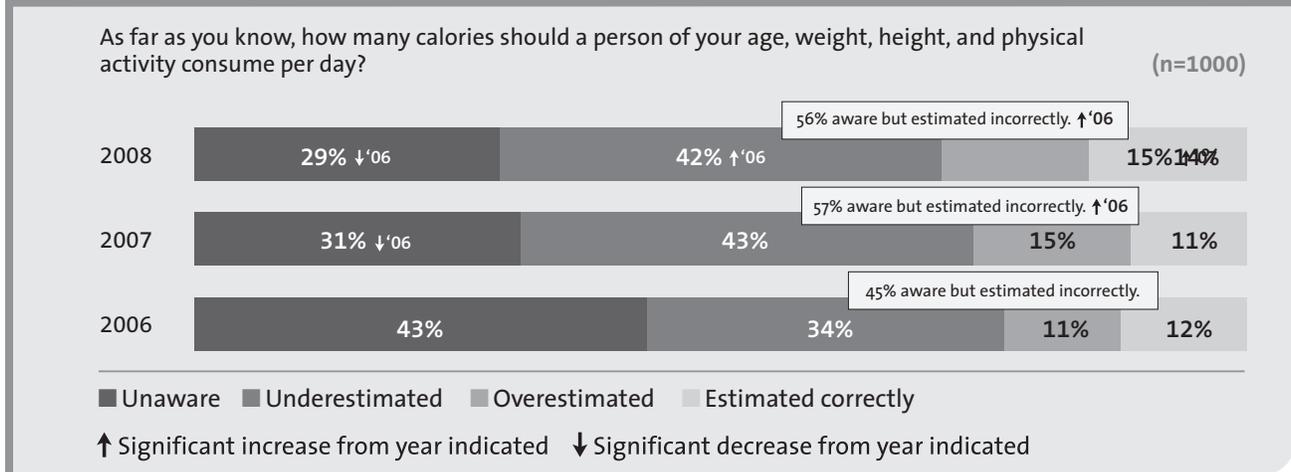
Which of the following changes, if any, have you made in the past six months to improve the healthfulness of your diet?



■ 2008 (n=669) ■ 2007 (n=660) ■ 2006 (n=574)

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

FIGURE 8: Knowledge of Calories per Day



Calories and Weight Gain

When asked about the relationship between the source of calories and weight gain, about one-third of Americans (31 percent) correctly identified that “calories in general are most likely to cause weight gain.” A similar number of individuals believe calories from fats (33 percent in 2008 vs. 29 percent in 2007) are most likely to cause weight gain, while fewer believe that calories from carbohydrates (18 percent) or calories from protein (one percent) are most likely to cause weight gain. Just under one-fifth of individuals (18 percent) say they are unsure of the relationship between calories and weight gain. This information is consistent with data from 2007 unless noted. (See Figure 9, page 11)

When compared to the other variables, the following differences are seen:

Americans who are more likely to agree that fats cause weight gain are:

- Those who are 18-24 (vs. 45-54 and 65 and older)
- Those who did not attend college

Americans who are more likely to agree that calories in general cause weight gain are:

- Those who are 45 and older
- Those with an income of \$50,000 to 100,000
- Those with a college degree or higher
- White vs. Hispanic and “other”
- Those with no children
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet

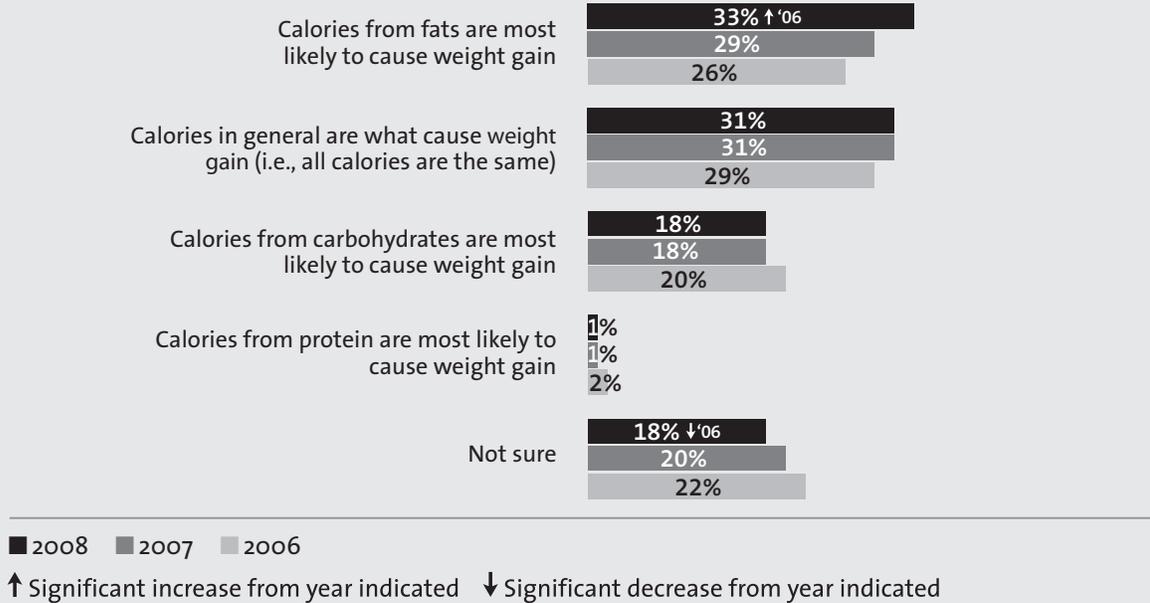
Americans who are more likely to be unsure are:

- Those who are 25-44 years of age
- Those with an income of less than \$50,000
- Those without a college degree (some college or less)
- Those who have made no changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are not concerned with their weight
- Those who are doing nothing with regard to their weight
- Those who are not physically active

FIGURE 9: Calorie Sources and Weight Gain

Which of the following statements do you agree with regarding the relationship between calories and weight gain?

(n=1000)



Weight

Perceptions of Weight Status

A quarter of Americans in 2008 describe their weight status as being “ideal” (25 percent), which has been a steady decrease from 31 percent in 2006 and 28 percent in 2007. More than half of Americans perceive themselves as “overweight” (59 percent), and more than one in ten describe themselves as “obese” (11 percent). Only four percent perceive themselves as “underweight” in 2008, consistent with 2007 and 2006 findings.

Body Mass Index (BMI)

As a separate measure of weight status, respondents were asked to provide their height and weight, which were used to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI) scores. According to these 2008 BMI scores, 41 percent of respondents are in the obese range, 31 percent are in the overweight range, and 26 percent are in the normal range. The overweight and normal ranges have decreased slightly from 2006 and 2007 figures. The obese range has increased in 2008, and is significantly higher than the 2006 figure.



Americans most likely to be in normal range are:

- Those who are 18-24 and 65 or older (vs. middle aged groups)
- Those with a college degree
- Those who perceive their health as “very good” or “excellent”
- Those who are satisfied with their health

Overall Health

- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are not concerned with their weight
- Those who are maintaining or doing nothing with regard to their weight
- Those who are physically active

Americans most likely to be in overweight range are:

- Those who are 35-44 years old (vs. 18-24 years old) and those who are 65 years or older (vs. most younger age groups)
- Those who perceive their health as “very good” or “excellent”
- Those who are satisfied with their health
- Those who are physically active

Americans most likely to be in obese range are:

- Those who are 25-64 years old (vs. 65 or older)
- Those with an income of less than \$35,000 (vs. \$50,000 or more)
- Those who have not attended college (vs. college graduates)

- African American
- Those who perceive their health as “fair” or “poor”
- Those who are dissatisfied with their health
- Those who consider themselves to have an unhealthful diet
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are concerned about their weight
- Those who are trying to lose weight or who are doing nothing with regard to their weight
- Those who describe themselves as sedentary
- Those who get less than three days a week of physical activity

The disparity observed in 2006 and 2007 between Americans’ perceptions of their weight status and their calculated BMI continued in 2008. Close to a quarter of Americans (20 percent) who are in the overweight range describe themselves as being at an “ideal weight,” and 71 percent of those with a BMI in the obese range describe themselves as being only “overweight.” (See Figure 10)

FIGURE 10: Perceived and Calculated Weight Status

2008 (n=989)	Calculated Weight (BMI)*			
	Underweight <18.5 (n=20)	Normal 18.5-24.9 (n=255)	Overweight 25-29.9 (n=309)	Obese 30.0+ (n=405)
Underweight	79%	9%	1%	1%
Ideal weight	16%	69%	20% ↓'06	2%
Overweight	5%	22%	79% ↑'06	71%
Extremely overweight	—	—	2%	26%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* BMI was calculated from self-reported weight and height and was categorized according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) standards.

Concern with Current Weight

Americans' concern about their current weight status has remained stable over the past year (75 percent in 2008 vs 74 percent in 2007); however, this is a significant increase from 66 percent in 2006. Specifically, the number of Americans who say they are "somewhat" concerned is becoming stable (53 percent in 2008 vs. 52 percent in 2007 vs. 44 percent in 2006). (See Figure 11)

Individuals who are more apt to report being concerned about their weight include:

- Women
- Those who are 35-64 years old (vs. 18-24 years old)
- Those who perceive their health to be fair or poor
- Those who are dissatisfied with their health status
- Those with a BMI in the overweight or obese range
- Those who have made a change to their diet
- Those who are trying to lose weight
- Those who perceive their physical activity level to be "sedentary" or "moderate"

Nearly all Americans whose calculated BMI is in the obese range are concerned with their weight status (90 percent). Fewer of those who are in the overweight range for BMI say they are concerned, although it is still



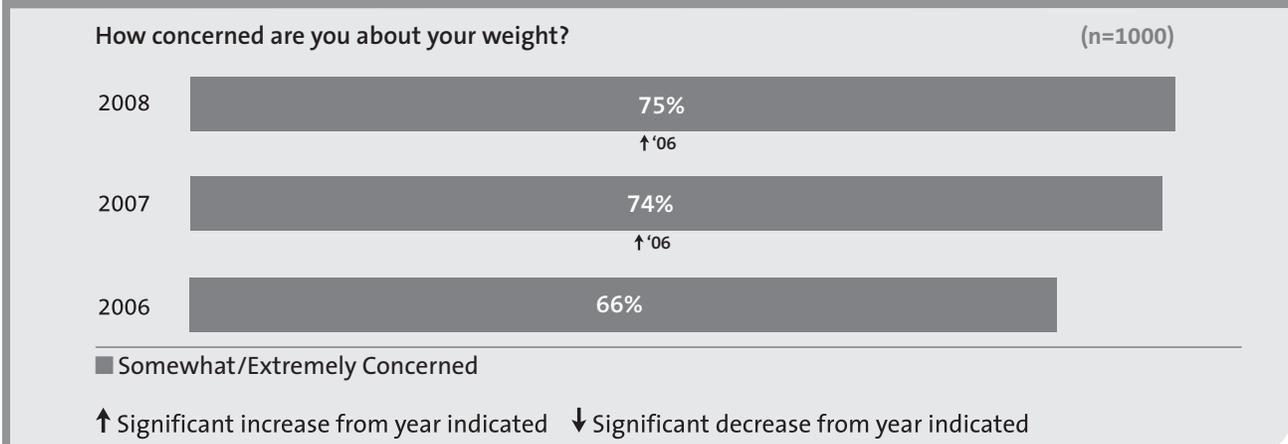
the vast majority at 77 percent. Just over half of those in the ideal BMI range are also concerned (53 percent).

The proportion of Americans who say they are "extremely" concerned does not vary across those in the underweight, normal, or overweight BMI ranges in 2006, 2007, or 2008. (See Figure 12, page 14)

Weight Management

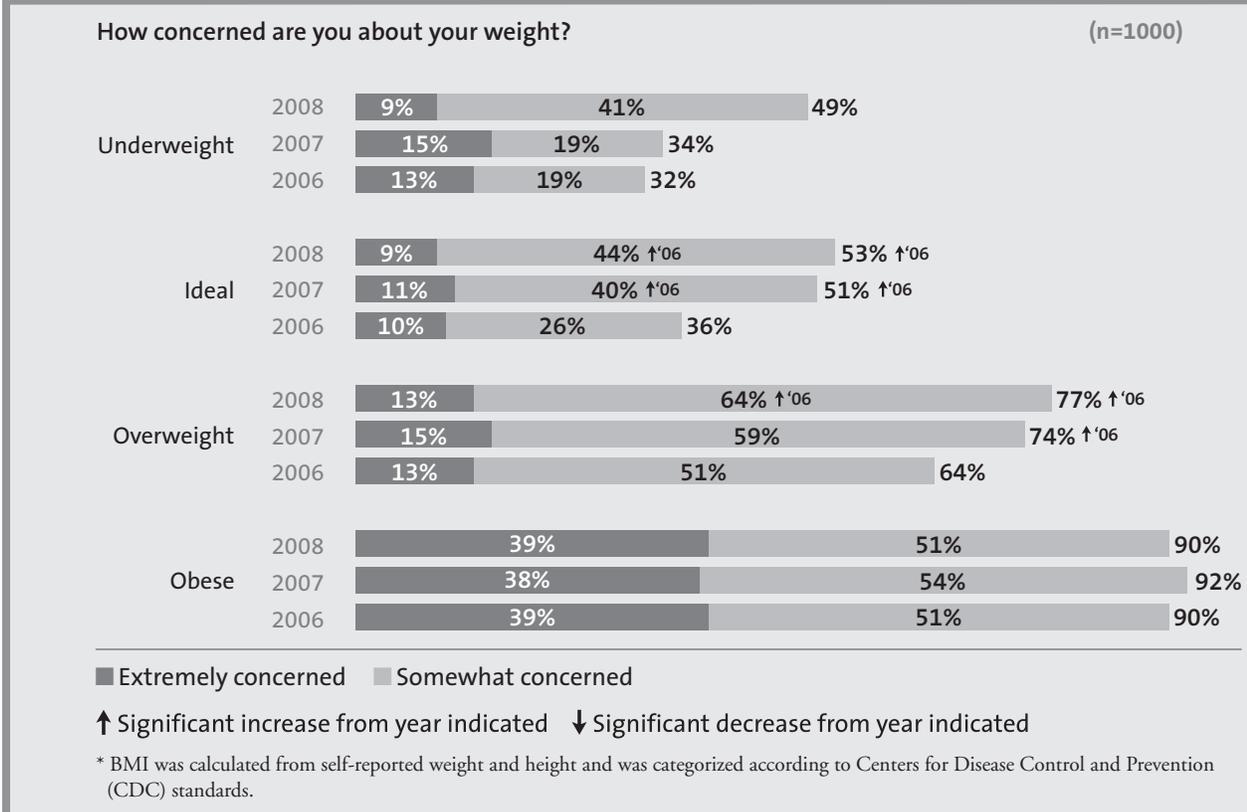
When aided, Americans report that they have discussed their physical activity level (37 percent), overall diet (36 percent), and their weight (40 percent) with their healthcare provider over the past year. Thirteen percent of Americans reported that they had not been to a

FIGURE 11: Concern with Perceived Weight Status



Overall Health

FIGURE 12: Concern with Weight by BMI Status*



healthcare provider in the past year.

Subgroups of the population more likely to have discussed their weight with their healthcare provider in the past year include:

- Those who describe their health status as “fair” or “poor”
- Those who are dissatisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have an unhealthful diet
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those whose BMI is in the overweight or obese range or who perceive themselves to be outside of the ideal range (underweight, overweight or obese)
- Those who are concerned about their weight
- Those who are trying to lose weight
- Those who are not physically active



FIGURE 13: Estimated Calories Expended Daily

How many calories do you think your body uses or expends per day, including the calories you may burn during any physical activity (please also consider your age, weight, and height in your response)?

	2008 (n=1000)
0-500	27%
501-999	6%
1000-1499	24%
1500-1999	19%
2000-2499	16%
2500-2999	4%
3000+	3%
Mean	1222.28



Slightly more than half of Americans (57 percent) say they are trying to “lose weight,” while 22 percent report trying to “maintain their weight.” Seventeen percent say they are “doing nothing about their weight,” and four percent say they are trying to “gain weight.” (See Figure 14)

When asked what they were doing to try to “maintain” or “lose” weight, the top response was “increasing or beginning to engage in physical activity” (73 percent of those trying to lose weight and 63 percent of those trying to maintain weight). More than half say they are “changing the portion sizes of their meals and snacks” (65 percent of those trying to lose weight and 48 percent of those trying to maintain weight). Very few of those trying to “maintain” or “lose” weight say they saw a health professional, including a nutritionist or dietitian. (See Figure 15, page 16)

FIGURE 14: Current Weight Strategy

Which of the following best describes what you are currently doing regarding your weight?

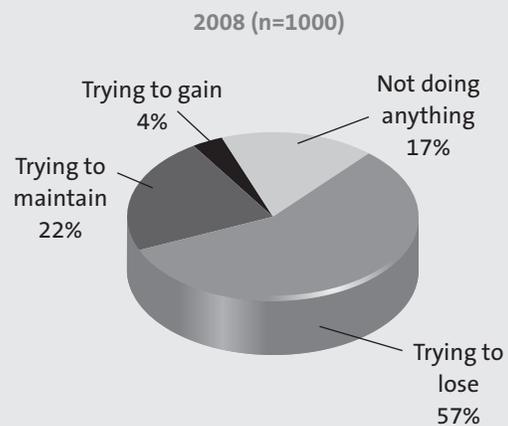
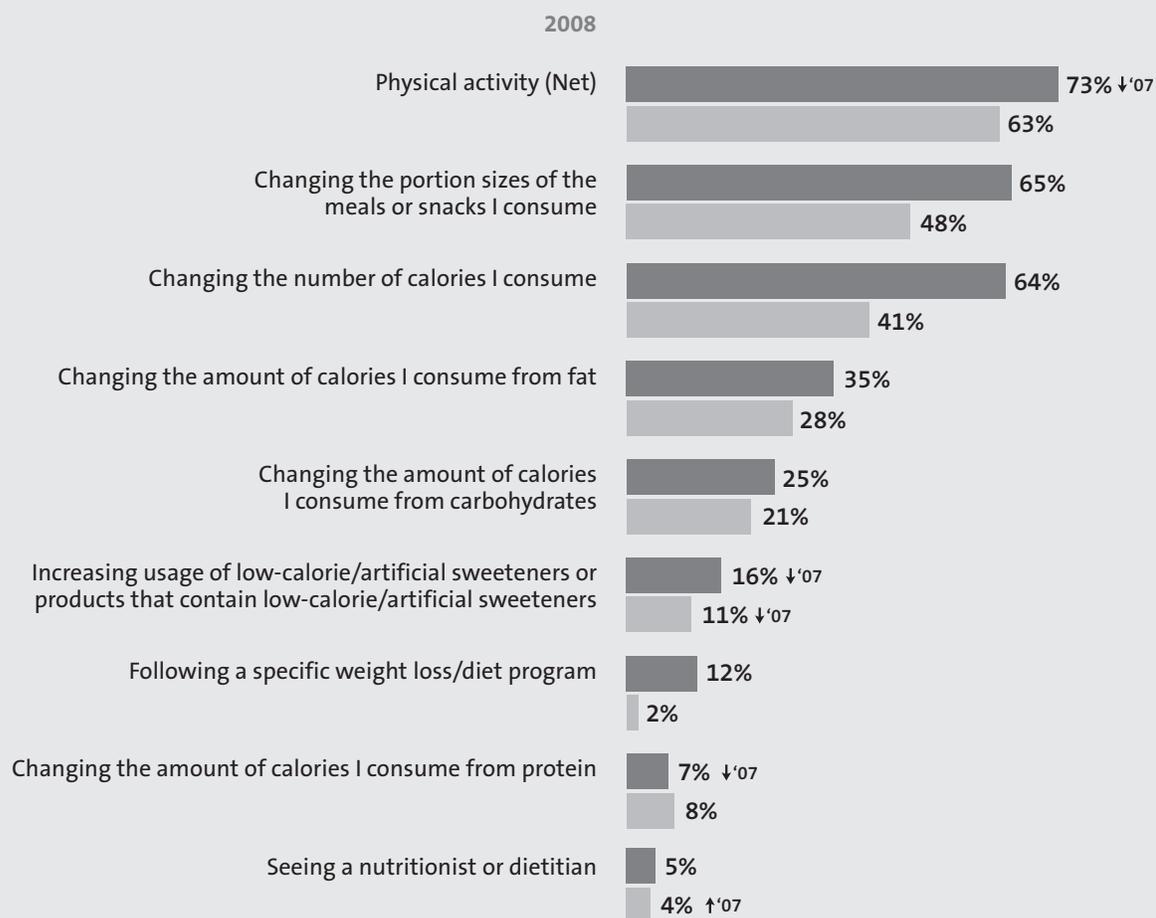


FIGURE 15: Changes Made to Lose or Maintain Weight

Which of the following things are you doing in an effort to lose or maintain your weight?



■ Lose (n=573) ■ Maintain (n=217)

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

Physical Activity

Physical Activity Frequency

Compared to 2006, the number of Americans reporting they are physically active continues to increase (88 percent in 2008 vs. 84 percent in 2007 vs. 64 percent in 2006). While the total number of people who are physically active has increased, the proportion of those who say they engage in physical activity one to two days, three to five days, and six to seven days has remained unchanged.

Individuals who are more likely to be physically active are:

- Those with incomes more than \$100,000
- Those with a college degree or higher
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet, are satisfied with their health, and perceive their health status to be “very good” or “excellent”
- Those with a BMI in the normal or overweight range
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight

Segments of the consumer population that are more apt to be physically active for a specific number of days are detailed below:

Those who are physically active one or two days per week are more likely to include:

- Those who are 25-44 years old (vs. 18-24 and 55 or older)
- Those who perceive their health status to be “fair” or “poor”
- Those who are white (vs. black)
- Those who have a college degree
- Those who are dissatisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have an unhealthy diet
- Those who have made no changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those with a BMI in the obese range and who perceive themselves to be out of ideal range (underweight, overweight, or obese)

- Those who are doing nothing with regard to their weight

- Those who describes themselves as sedentary

Those that are physically active three to five days per week are more likely to include:

- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Women
- Those who are 65 years or older (vs. 25-34)
- Those who are satisfied with their health
- Those with a BMI in the normal or overweight range (vs. obese)
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain weight

Those who are physically active six to seven days per week are more likely to include:

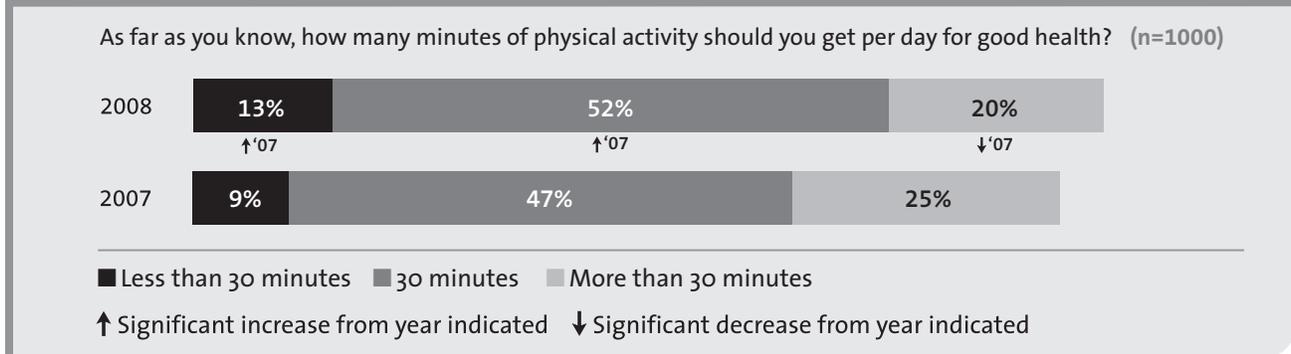
- Men
- Those who perceive their health status to be “very good” or “excellent”
- Those who are 18-24 or 65 or older (vs. 35-44 years old)
- Those who have a college degree
- Those who are white (vs. black)
- Those who are satisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet

NOTE:

The survey instrument explained physical activity to respondents as follows:

Physical activity can include a range of activities from running and basketball to gardening, playing golf, and dancing.

FIGURE 16: Knowledge of Recommended Activity Level



- Those with a BMI in the normal or overweight range (vs. obese) and who perceive themselves to be underweight, normal, or overweight
- Those who are not concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to maintain their weight

When Americans were asked to estimate how many minutes of physical activity they should get per day for good health, the vast majority estimated thirty minutes or more (52 percent reported 30 minutes; 20 percent reported more than 30 minutes). More than one in 10 (13 percent) stated less than 30 minutes per day, and 14 percent said they did not know. (See Figure 16)



Close to 90 percent of Americans (88 percent) report being active at least one day per week. Among those who report being active and who provided an estimate of recommended physical activity per day, almost three-quarters (74 percent) say they are active for at least as many minutes per day as they believed necessary for good health. Over one-quarter (26 percent) of those who are active and provided an estimate say they are active for fewer minutes per day than they believed necessary.

When asked about their approach to diet and physical activity for weight maintenance, 44 percent of Americans who report being active say they “do not balance diet and physical activity.” In 2008, 39 percent of Americans report that they “make different food choices or eat less when they are not physically active,” 18 percent say they “engage in physical activity so that they can eat more of the foods that they enjoy,” and 17 percent say they “increase their physical activity when they eat more than usual.” (See Figure 17, page 19)

Perceptions of Physical Activity

Americans’ perceptions of their level of physical activity remained stable from 2006. The majority of Americans describe themselves as being “active” (12 percent “active” and 58 percent “moderately active”), while just under a third of Americans (29 percent) say they are “sedentary.”

Individuals who are more apt to describe themselves as “active” include:

- Those with a college degree or higher
- Those who are 18-24 and 65 or older (vs. 35-44)
- Those who perceive their health as “very good” or “excellent”

- Those who are satisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those with a BMI in the normal to overweight range (vs. obese)
- Those who are not concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to maintain their weight

Individuals who describe themselves as “sedentary” fit a contrasting profile; they are more likely to view their health status and overall diet as “poor,” to be dissatisfied

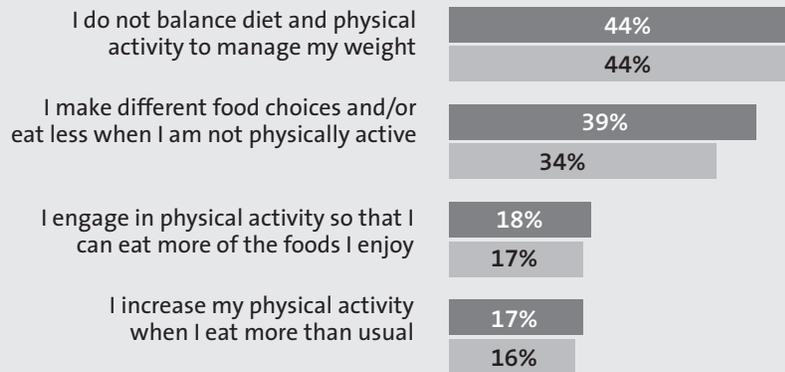
with their health, to have a BMI in the obese range, and say they are “not doing anything” with regard to their weight.

Ninety-seven percent of Americans who describe themselves as “active” say they engage in physical activity between three to seven days per week. Of those Americans who describe themselves as “moderately active,” almost three-quarters (73 percent) report engaging in physical activity one to five days a week. Twenty-six percent of Americans who describe themselves as being “sedentary” report being physically active zero days per week.

NOTE: The survey question changed from 2007 to 2008 asking, “as far as you know, how many minutes of physical activity should a person of your age, weight, and height get per day for good health?”

FIGURE 17: Current Approach to Diet and Activity

[If Active] Which of the following statements best describes your current approach to diet and physical activity for weight maintenance?



■ 2008 (n=877) ■ 2007 (n=842)

Meal Importance and Frequency

The vast majority of Americans continue to perceive all three meals of the day as being important to an overall healthful diet. Americans ranked breakfast as the most important meal occasion with 92 percent in agreement (77 percent “extremely” and 16 percent “somewhat”), followed by dinner at 89 percent (47 percent “extremely” and 42 percent “somewhat”), and lunch at 83 percent (37 percent “extremely” and 46 percent “somewhat”). About half of all Americans (54 percent) perceive snacks to be an important part of an overall healthful diet. (See Figure 18)

Subsets of the population that are more likely to think that breakfast is an important meal in an overall healthy diet are:

- Women
- Those who earn \$50,000-100,000 (vs. \$35,000 to less than 50,000)
- Those with a college degree or higher
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those who made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those who are physically active

Although breakfast is the meal the greatest number of Americans views as important to a healthful diet, less than half of all Americans (46 percent) eat breakfast seven days a week. More than three-quarters of all Americans (82 percent) eat dinner seven days a week, and about half (54 percent) eat lunch every day. Nearly all Americans eat at least one snack per day (94 percent) with the mean number being 2.61 snacks per day. (See Figure 19, page 22)



FIGURE 18: Perception of Importance of Meal Occasions

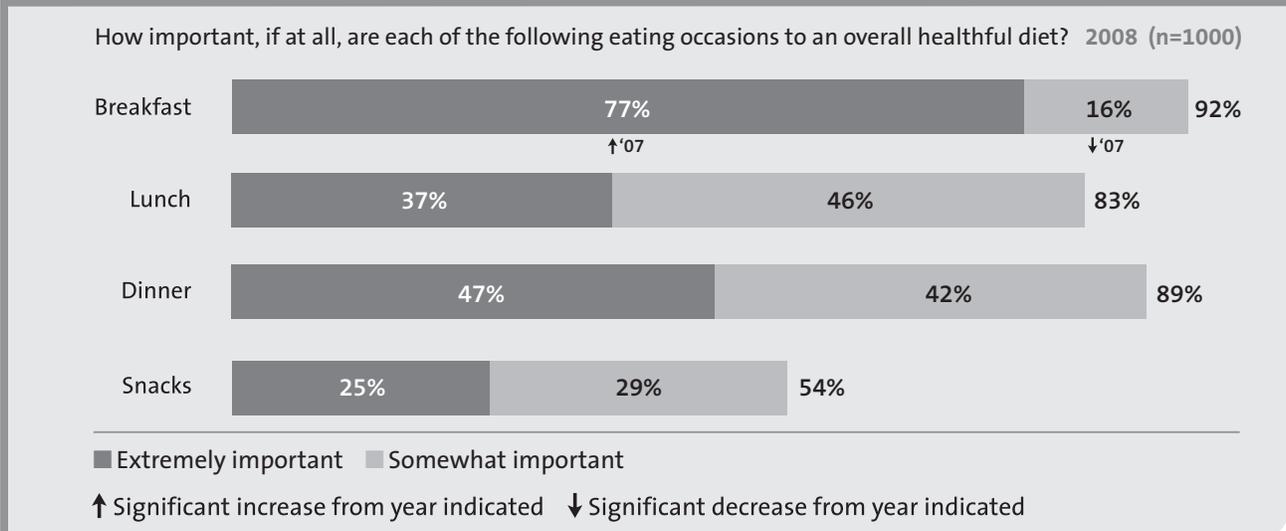
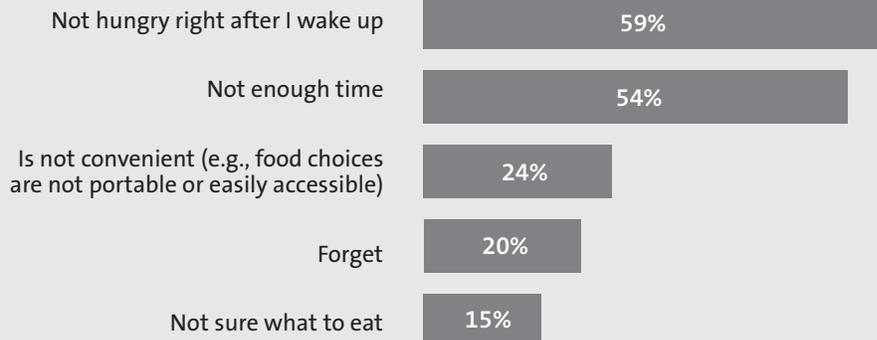


FIGURE 20: Reasons for Skipping Breakfast

[Breakfast is important but do not eat everyday] What prevents you from eating breakfast everyday?

2008 (n=477)



■ Breakfast Somewhat/Extremely Important but don't eat it everyday

FIGURE 21: Motivators Likely to Increase Breakfast Eating

[Don't eat breakfast everyday] Rank the top three benefits that would be most likely to motivate you to eat breakfast more often.

	2008 (n=541)
Eating breakfast can help increase physical energy	74%
Eating breakfast can help increase mental focus	59%
Eating breakfast can help maintain a healthy body weight	54%
Eating breakfast can help maintain good health (i.e., keep the heart healthy, bones strong)	43%
Eating breakfast can help improve the healthfulness of your overall diet	38%
Eating breakfast can help you get through your morning without feeling hungry	24%
Eating breakfast can help bring families together	8%

Perceptions of and Interest in Food and Beverage Benefits

Consumer attitudes remain highly positive in 2008 with regard to foods and beverages with added health and wellness benefits. When asked whether they agree or disagree that foods and beverages can provide a wide array of specific health benefits (for example, heart health), 60 percent or more of Americans either somewhat or strongly believed in the stated benefit. Of the benefits mentioned, improving heart health (78 percent), improving physical energy or stamina (77 percent), maintaining overall health and wellness (76 percent), and improving digestive health (76 percent) were the benefits Americans are most likely to believe could be provided by foods and beverages. (See Figure 22, page 26)

As in 2007, this year more than 80 percent of all Americans say they are currently consuming or would be interested in consuming foods or beverages for benefits. Very few Americans indicated that they are not interested in consuming foods or beverages for all of the stated benefits. Of the benefits explored in the survey, Americans are most apt to be currently consuming foods or beverages for an “overall health and wellness” benefit or for a “heart health” benefit. They are least likely to be consuming foods or beverages for a “improved overall appearance” benefit. (See Figure 23, page 27)

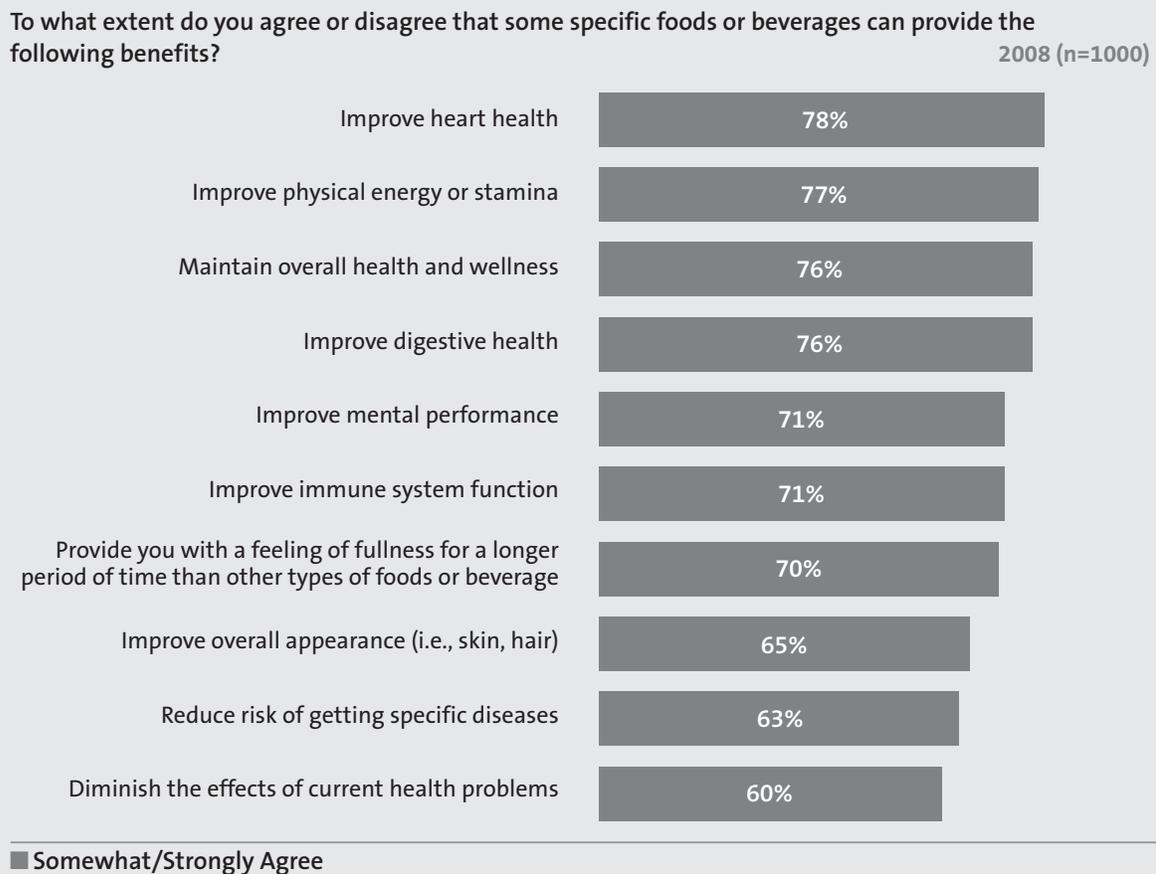
Subgroups of the population that are currently consuming specific foods or beverages for benefits are most likely to be:

- Those who are 55-64 years of age compared to those who are younger
- Those with a college degree or higher
- Those who perceive their health status to be “very good” or “excellent”
- Those who are satisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those who are physically active
- Those who are “eating more of a certain food component” in an effort to improve the healthfulness of their diet
- Those who consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- Those who eat breakfast four days a week or more



Foods and Beverages with Added Health and Wellness Benefits

FIGURE 22: Perception of Benefits from Foods and Beverages



Subgroups of the population that are not currently consuming specific foods or beverages for benefits but would be interested in doing so are most likely to be:

- Those who perceive their health status to be “fair” or “poor”
- Those who are dissatisfied with their health status
- Those who consider themselves to have an unhealthful diet
- Those who describe themselves as “sedentary” and are active three days a week or less
- Those who consume at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day
- Those who eat breakfast 3 days a week or less

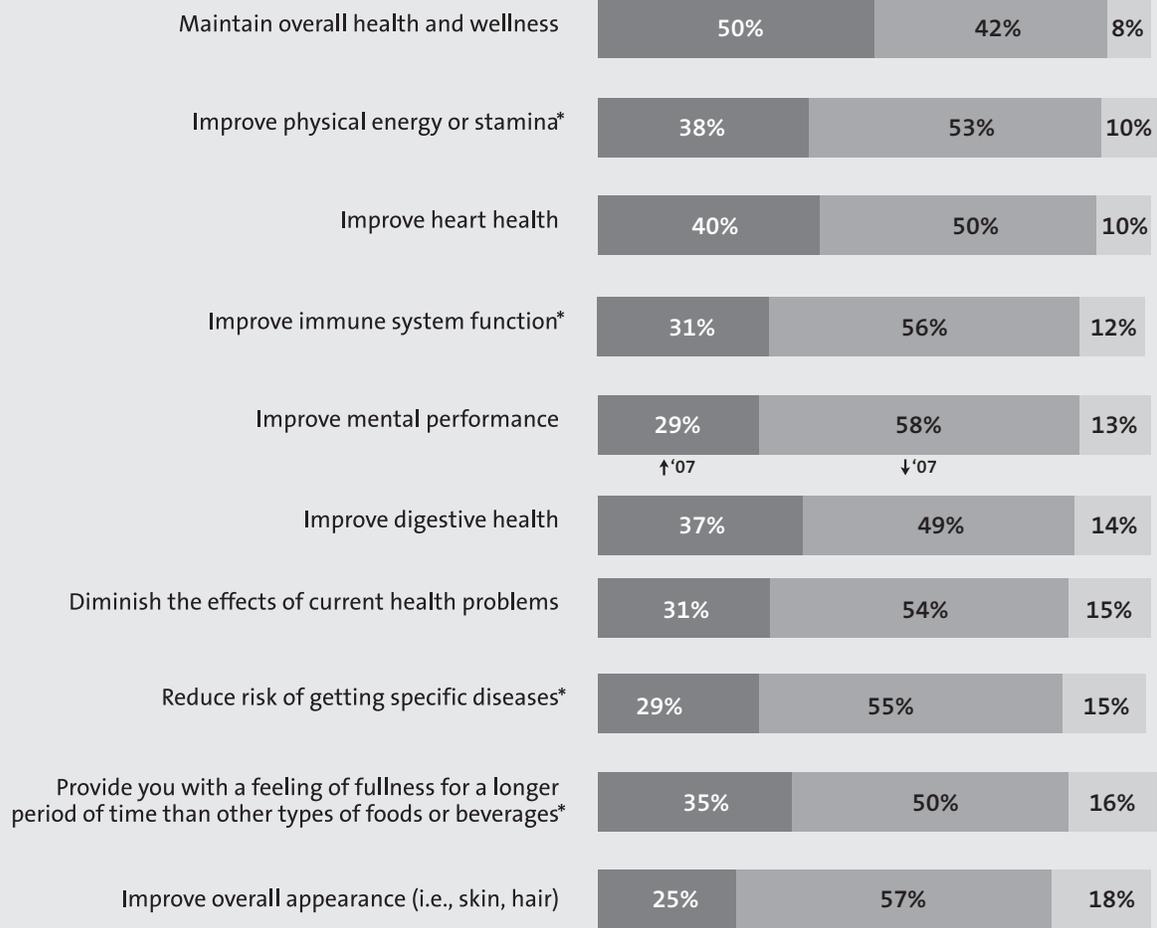
The small segment of the American public that is more likely to say they are not interested in consuming specific foods or beverages for specific benefits include:

- Men
- Those who have not made a change to their diet in the last six months
- Those who are not concerned with their weight and state that they are doing “nothing” regarding their weight
- Those who eat breakfast three days a week or less

Foods and Beverages with Added Health and Wellness Benefits

FIGURE 23: Consumption of and Interest in Foods and Beverages for Benefits

Please indicate your current or future interest in foods and beverages that provide each of the following benefits: 2008 (n=1000)



Currently consume
 Do not currently consume, but interested
 Do not currently consume and not interested

↑ Significant increase from year indicated

↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* Total does not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Dietary Fats

Concern about Dietary Fats

The number of Americans who report being concerned with both the type and amount of fat in their diets today is consistent with the numbers found in 2007. Currently, 70 percent say they are concerned with the *amount* of fat (compared to 71 percent in 2007 and 66 percent in 2006) and 68 percent say they are concerned with the *type* of fat (compared to 72 percent in 2007 and 66 percent in 2006). (See Figure 24)

Those more likely to be concerned with both the amount and type of fat include:

- Women
- Those who are 55 and older
- Those without children
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet and perceive their health status to be “very good” or “excellent”
- Those with incomes of \$100,000+ (vs. less than \$35,000)
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months



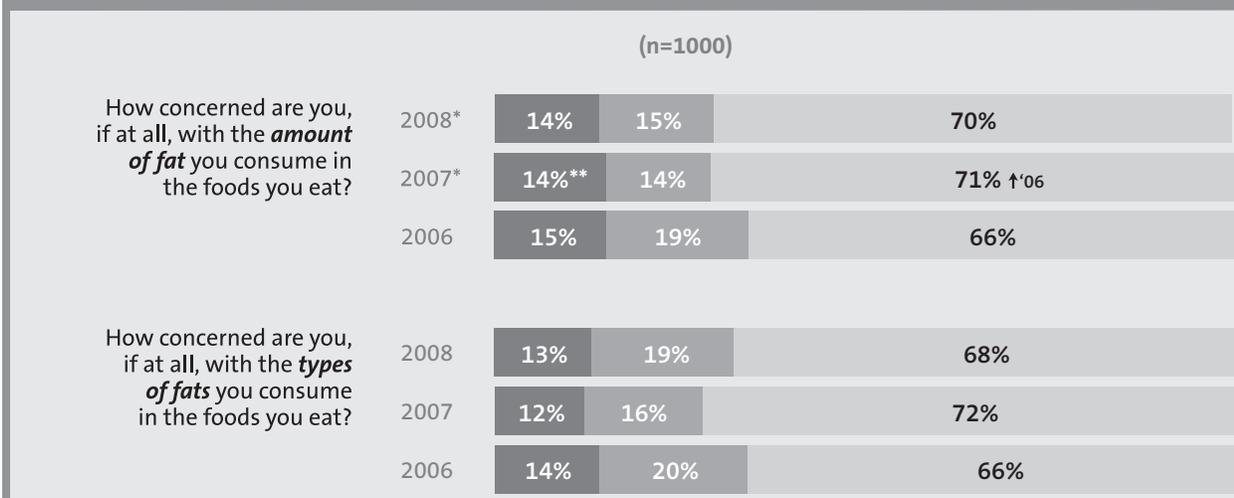
- Those concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those whose perceive themselves to be overweight or obese
- Those who are physically active 4+ days/week

Awareness of Dietary Fats

In 2008, when provided with a list, the majority of Americans report they have heard of many types of fats and fatty acids, with *trans* fats (91 percent), saturated fats (90 percent), and vegetable oils (85 percent) being the most highly recognized types of fats.

Awareness levels of *trans* fats (91 percent in 2008 vs. 87 percent in 2007 vs. 81 percent in 2006) has significantly increased since both 2006 and 2007. Awareness of

FIGURE 24: Concern with Dietary Fats



■ Not concerned ■ Neither ■ Concerned

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* Total does not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

** One percent difference from previously published reports due to more rigorous rounding criteria.

FIGURE 25: Awareness of Dietary Fat

Percent Heard of	2008 (n=1000)	2007 (n=1000)	2006 (n=1000)
<i>Trans</i> fat	91%↑'07/'06	87%↑'06	81%
Saturated Fats	90%	88%	91%
Vegetable Oils	85%	87%	86%
Unsaturated fats*	78%	n/a	n/a
Animal Fats	76%↓'06	79%	83%
Fish Oils	74%	74%	76%
Omega 3 Fatty Acids	72%↑'06	71%↑'06	63%
Polyunsaturated Fats	71%↓'06	71%↓'06	79%
Hydrogenated Oils	65%	63%↓'06	69%
Monounsaturated Fats	63%↓'06	64%↓'06	70%
Cocoa butter*	63%	n/a	n/a
Partially Hydrogenated Oils	61%	60%	59%
Tropical Oils	54%	54%	58%
Omega 6 Fatty Acids	39%↓'07	47%↑'06	36%
Naturally Occurring <i>Trans</i> Fats	26%	23%	n/a
Stearic Acid	18%	16%↓'06	21%

↑ Significant increase from year indicated
 ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* Added in 2008

omega 3 fatty acids (72 percent in 2008 vs. 71 percent in 2007) increased significantly from 2006 (63 percent). In 2008, consumers also were asked about their awareness of unsaturated fats in general. Seventy-eight percent said they had heard about these types of fats, yet awareness of poly- and mono- unsaturated fats has significantly decreased from 2006 (71 percent in 2008 and 2007 vs. 79 percent in 2006 and 63 percent in 2008 vs. 64 percent in 2007 vs. 70 percent in 2006 respectively). Awareness of saturated fats, vegetable oils, animal fats, fish oils, partially hydrogenated oils, tropical oils, and alpha-linolenic acid (ALA) continues to remain stable from 2007. (See Figure 25)

Perceptions of Fats

These questions, which were asked in the 2006 benchmark survey, were again asked in the 2008 survey. Knowledge and awareness of the perceived healthfulness of fats is such that consumers may not have the information to follow the recommendations made in the *2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

As in 2006, close to four in ten consumers aware of monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats say they think they are “unhealthful” despite dietary guidance recommendations to consume more of these fats (38 and 43 percents respectively). But more consumers said that monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats were either “somewhat healthful” or “extremely healthful” (28 and 23 percent respectively, up from 16 and 15 percent in 2006). One-third (34 percent each in 2008) say these fats are “neither healthful nor unhealthful,” which is significantly lower than in 2006 (48 percent and 47 percent respectively.) Perception of unsaturated fats in general was similar, with 24 percent saying they are “unhealthful,” 37 percent saying they are “healthful,” and 39 percent saying they were “neither healthful nor unhealthful.” (See Figure 26, page 31)

There is relative consensus around the level of healthfulness of some fats. Specifically, fish oils, omega-3 fatty acids, and omega-6 fatty acids are more likely to be rated as healthful. However, 82 percent of consumers who had heard of various types of unsaturated fats did not name a food or type of food that contains unsaturated fatty acids. Partially hydrogenated oils, hydrogenated oils, saturated fats, and *trans* fats continue to be rated as “unhealthful.”

Segments of the American public that have a positive perception of unsaturated fats include:

- Those who are 35-44 years old and over 55 (vs. 18-24 years old)
- Those with a college degree
- Those who are trying to maintain their weight

Perception of Oils

In 2008, the majority of Americans rated olive (75 percent), soybean (60 percent), canola (59 percent), and sunflower (58 percent) oils as being “healthful” vegetable oils. The proportion of Americans who perceive corn oil as “healthful” increased over the past year (37 percent vs. 31 percent in 2007), becoming consistent with levels in 2006 (38 percent). In contrast, the proportion of Americans who perceive olive oil as “extremely healthful” remained steady over the past year (45 percent vs. 46 percent in 2007), but remained higher than in 2006 (36 percent). (See Figure 27, page 32)

Consistent with the 2007 data, significantly more Americans in 2008 say they perceive that food products



FIGURE 26: Perceived Healthfulness of Types of Dietary Fats

How would you rate the healthfulness of each of the following types of fat?

Fat Type	Year (n)	Healthful	Neither	Not Healthful
Unsaturated fats	2008 (n=778)	37%	39%	24%
	2006	No data available for 2006		
Saturated fats	2008 (n=900)	4%	16% ↓'06	80% ↑'06
	2006* (n=471)	4%**	30%	67%
Trans fats	2008 (n=906)	7%	14% ↓'06	79% ↑'06
	2006 (n=413)	6%	30%	64%
Polyunsaturated fats	2008 (n=714)	23% ↑'06	34% ↓'06	43%
	2006* (n=407)	15%	47%	37%**
Monounsaturated fats	2008 (n=630)	28% ↑'06	34% ↓'06	38%
	2006 (n=356)	16%	48%	36%**

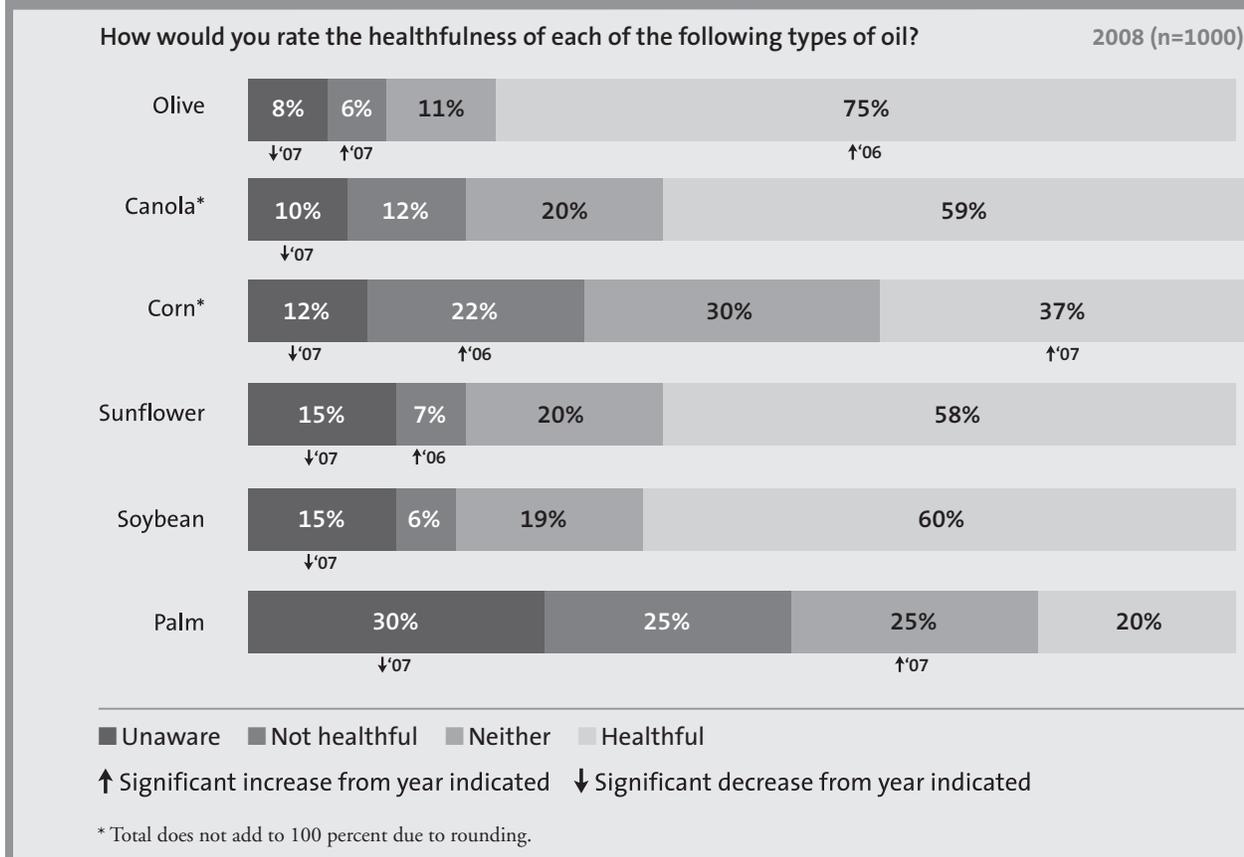
■ Healthful ■ Neither ■ Not Healthful

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* Total does not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

** One percent difference from previously published reports due to more rigorous rounding criteria.

FIGURE 27: Perceived Healthfulness of Vegetable Oils



have been using “more healthful oils over the past year” than in 2006 (63 percent in 2008 and 2007 vs. 45 percent in 2006).

Americans most apt to perceive a shift to more healthful oils include:

- Women
- Those who are in the 18-24 (vs. 25-34) and 55-64 (vs. 25-54 and 65+) age groups
- Those who perceive their health status to be “very good” or “excellent”
- Those who consider themselves to have a healthful diet
- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those who are physically active more than three days per week

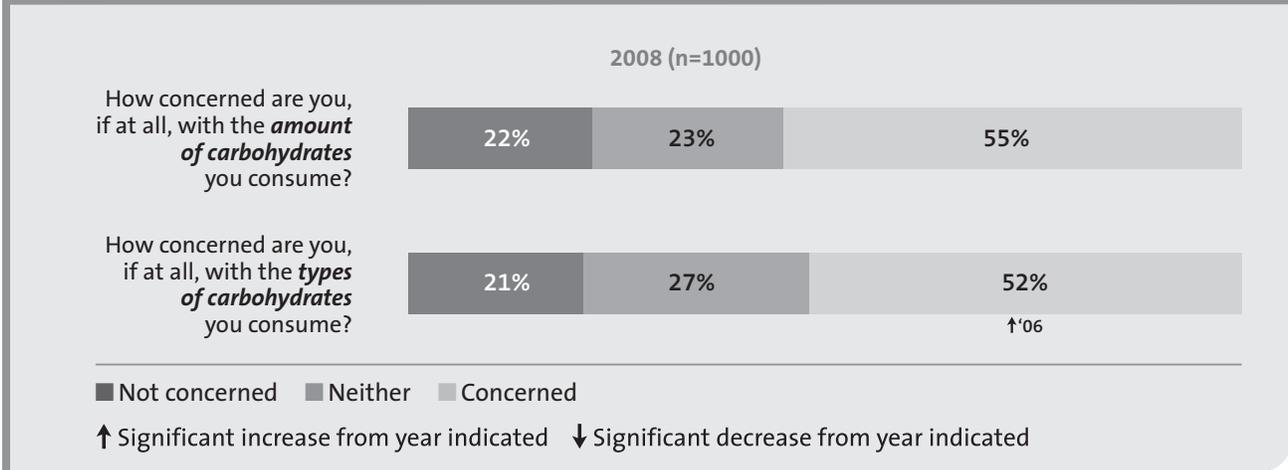
Carbohydrates and Sugars

Concern with Carbohydrates

More than half of Americans (55 percent) in 2008 say they are concerned with the *amount* of carbohydrates they consume, which is consistent with data collected in both 2007 (55 percent) and 2006 (52 percent); and, the number who are “somewhat” concerned remains consistent with the 2007 figures over 2006 (40 percent in 2008 vs. 42 percent in 2007 vs. 36 percent in 2006). In addition, Americans remain concerned with the *types* of carbohydrates they consume (52 percent vs. 52 percent vs. 46 percent). (See Figure 28, page 33)

Among Americans with diabetes, or who have a history of diabetes in their immediate family, overall concern regarding the type and amount of carbohydrates consumed remained consistent from 2006 to 2008. However, the degree of concern shifted in 2007, with fewer diabetics saying they are “extremely concerned” with both the amount and type of carbohydrate intake in 2007 than in 2006.

FIGURE 28: Concern with Carbohydrates



Concern with Sugar

Consistent with the findings from 2007, Americans continue to be concerned with both the *amount* and *type* of sugar they consume compared to 2006. In 2008, 69 percent of Americans report being somewhat or extremely concerned with the *amount* of sugar that they consume compared to 70 percent in 2007 and 62 percent in 2006. With respect to type of sugars consumed, 61 percent of Americans this year report being “somewhat” or “extremely concerned,” compared to 58 percent in 2007 and 52 percent in 2006. (See Figure 29)

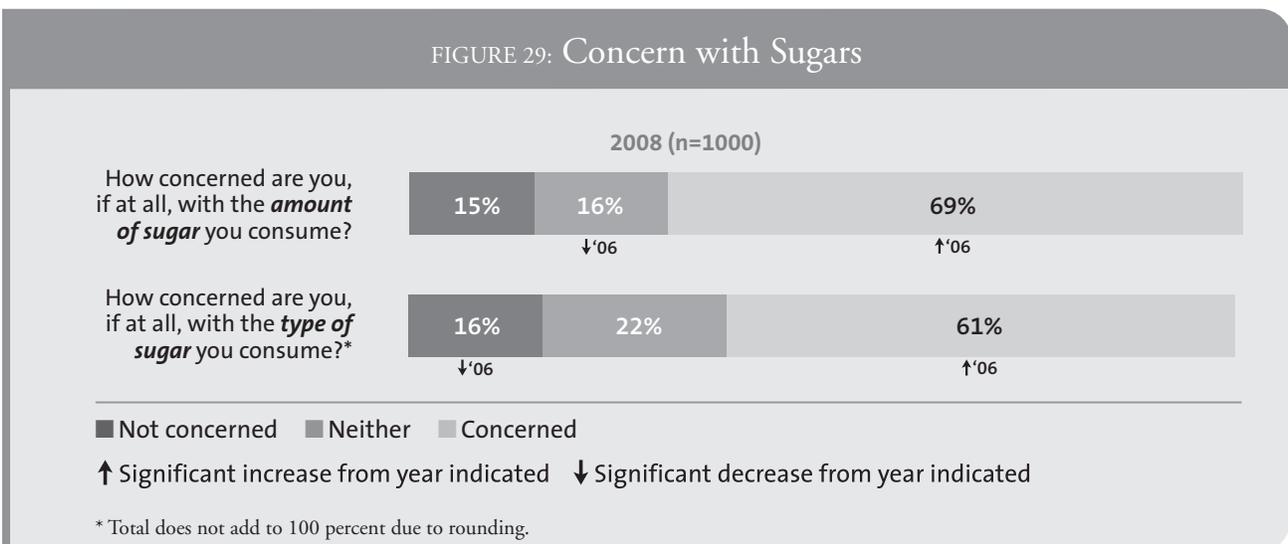
Among Americans with diabetes, or who have a history of diabetes in their immediate family, the percent who report being “concerned” with the *amount* of sugar they consume

decreased slightly from 2007, but increased from 2006. Among this group, overall concern with the *type* of sugar was stable from 2006 to 2008; however, the degree of concern shifted over the past two years as the percentage of those “extremely concerned” decreased and the percentage of those “somewhat concerned” increased in both 2008 and 2007.

Awareness of Carbohydrates and Sugars

Carbohydrates. Awareness of various carbohydrates remained stable among all three survey years (2008, 2007, and 2006), with the exception of fiber, which increased to 92 percent, and whole grains, which increased to 87 percent. (See Figure 30, page 33)

FIGURE 29: Concern with Sugars



Food Components

Sugars. Consistent with last two years, two-thirds or more of Americans in 2008 have heard of the various types of sugars. (See Figure 30)

Glycemic Index. Americans were also asked about their awareness of the terms “glycemic index” and “glycemic load.” Awareness of both terms decreased over the past year; 37 percent of individuals are aware of glycemic index (compared to 46 percent in 2007) and 16 percent are aware of glycemic load (compared to 20 percent in 2007). (See Figure 31, page 35)



FIGURE 30: Awareness of Sugars and Carbohydrates

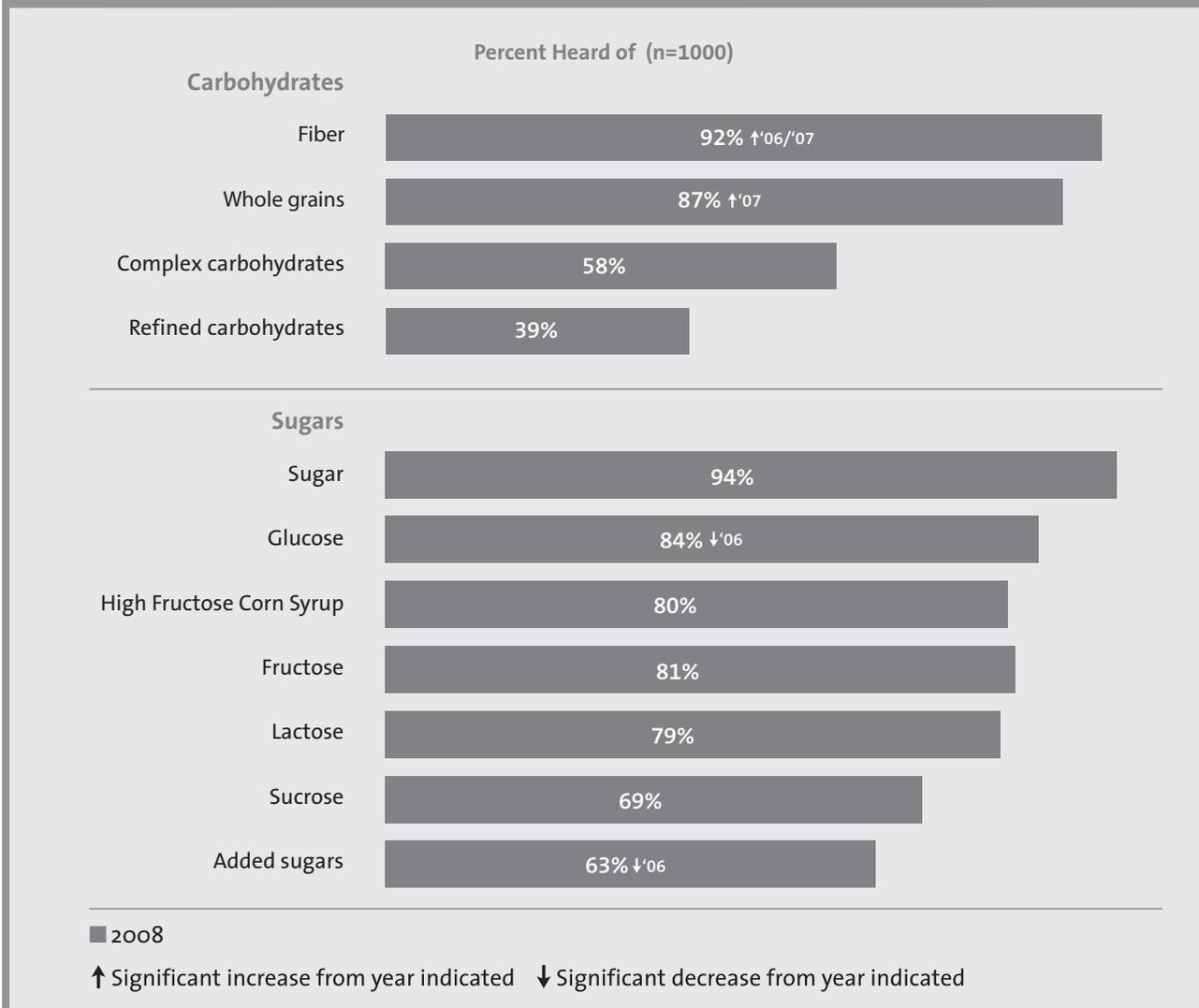
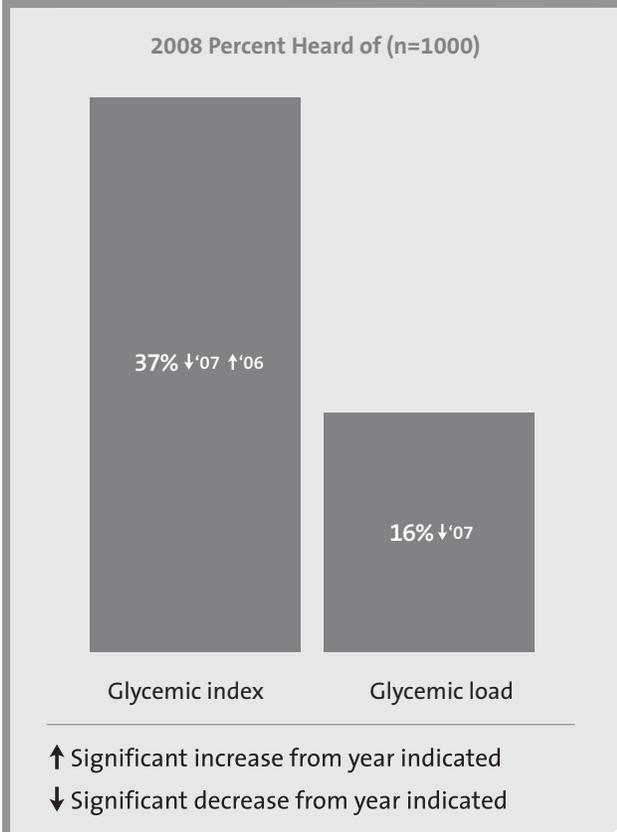


FIGURE 31:
Awareness of Glycemic Index or Load



Consumption Trends for Carbohydrates and Sugars

Consumption trends changed somewhat for carbohydrates and sugars. Americans who are aware of whole grains continue to say they are trying to *increase* their consumption of whole grains (78 percent). In contrast, Americans aware of sugars and high fructose corn syrup are most likely to say they are trying to *decrease* their consumption of added sugars (77 percent) and high-fructose corn syrup (67 percent). (See Figure 32) (See Figure 33, page 36)

Sugar as Part of an Overall Diet

For the first time, consumers were given a selection of statements about sugar and asked if they thought they were true. Nearly three-quarters (71 percent) of consumers believe that moderate amounts of sugar can be part of an overall healthful diet. Forty-eight percent said they thought it was not necessary to eliminate sugar from one's diet in order to lose weight and 44 percent agreed with the statement that "People with diabetes can include some foods with sugar as part of their total diet." Only 13 percent of consumers did not think any of these statements were true. (See Figure 34, page 36)

FIGURE 32: Carbohydrate Consumption Trends

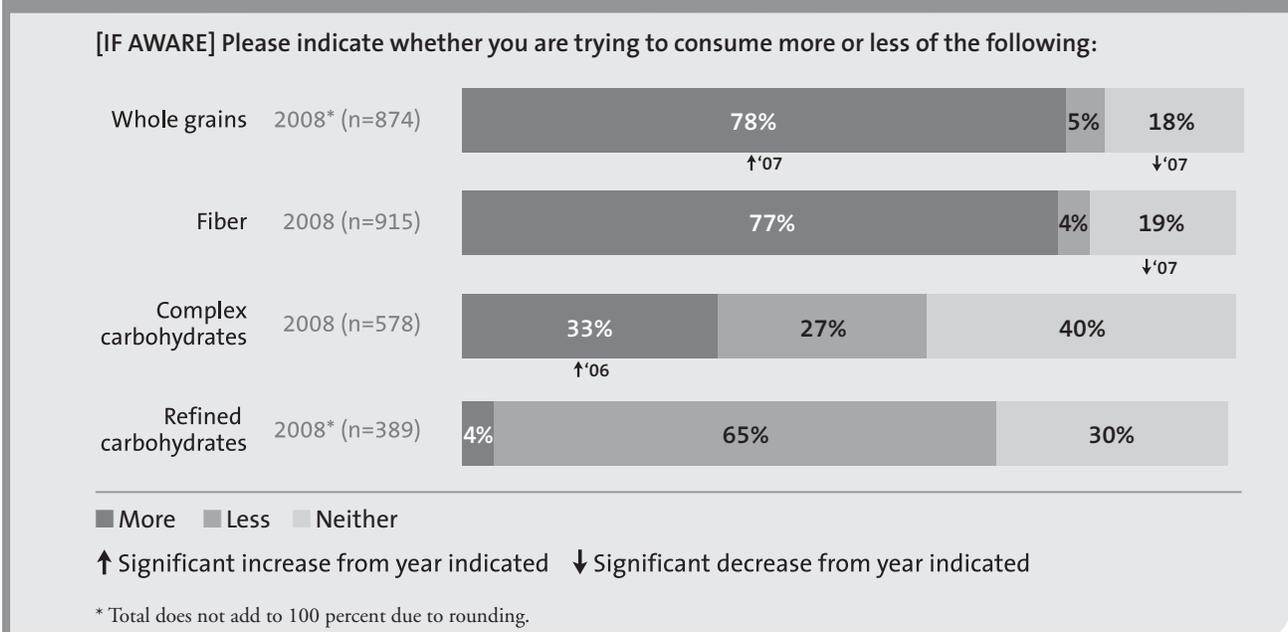
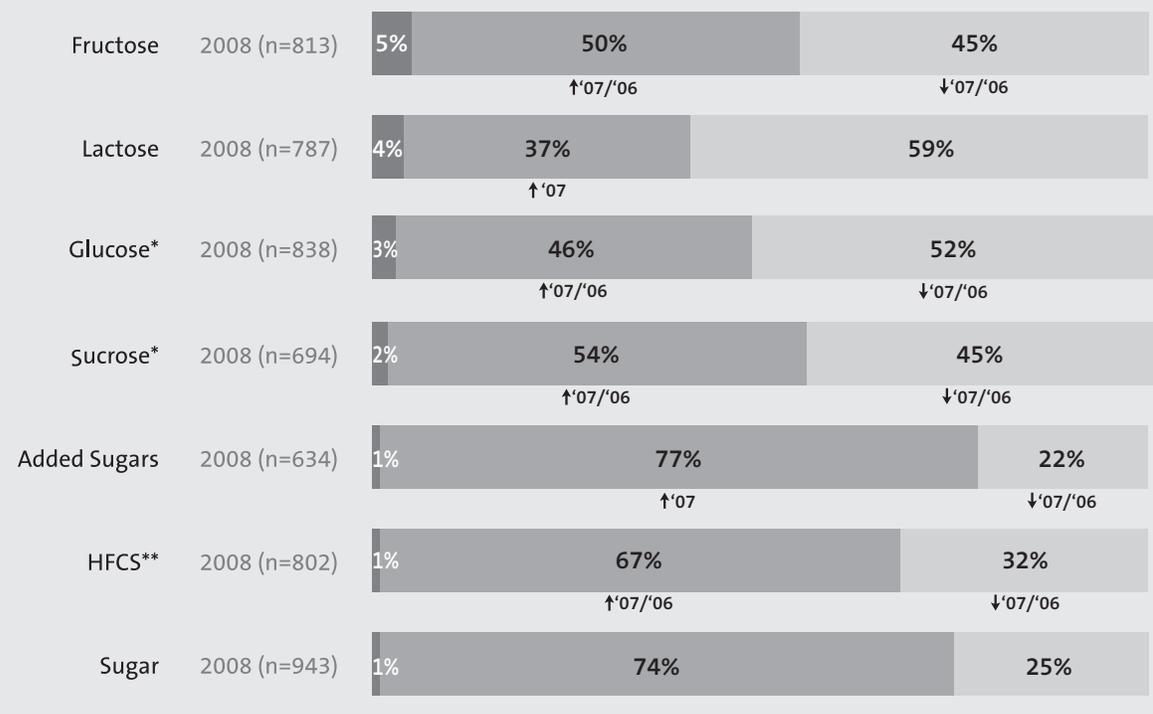


FIGURE 33: Sugar Consumption Trends

[IF AWARE] Please indicate whether you are trying to consume more or less of the following:



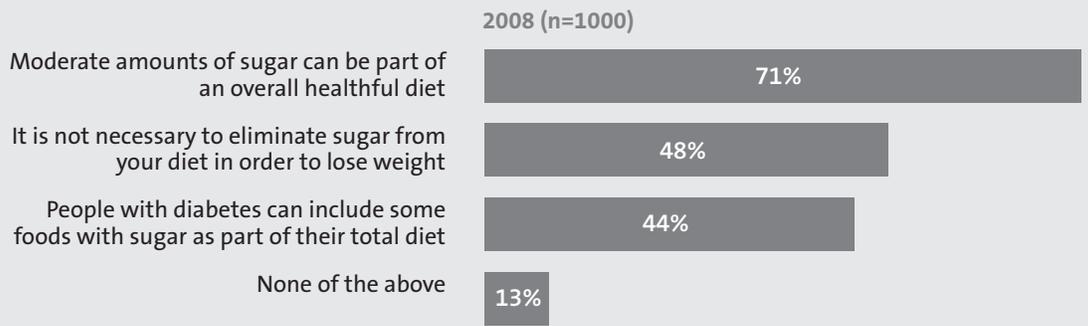
■ More ■ Less ■ Neither

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* Total does not add to 100 percent due to rounding.
 **HFCS= High Fructose Corn Syrup.

FIGURE 34: Perceptions of Statements About Sugar

As far as you know, which of the following statements, if any, are true? Check all that apply.



Low-Calorie Sweeteners

Awareness and Consumption of Low-Calorie Sweeteners

With respect to low-calorie sweeteners, significantly fewer Americans have heard of saccharin as compared to 2006 (72 percent in 2008 and 76 percent in 2007 vs. eight percent in 2006). Saccharin awareness has been in an apparent downward trend since 2006. Awareness of aspartame (63 percent), sucralose (33 percent), acesulfame potassium, or Ace-K, (seven percent), and stevia

(18 percent) remained consistent from 2007 to 2008. (See Figure 35)

There was a change this year in Americans' approach to the consumption of certain low-calorie sweeteners compared to 2007. More Americans who are aware of the following low-calorie sweeteners report they are trying to consume less aspartame (43 percent), saccharin (45 percent), and sucralose (44 percent). However, there is no significant difference in reported consumption trends when comparing this year's responses to those from 2006. (See Figure 36)

FIGURE 35: Awareness of Low-Calorie Sweeteners

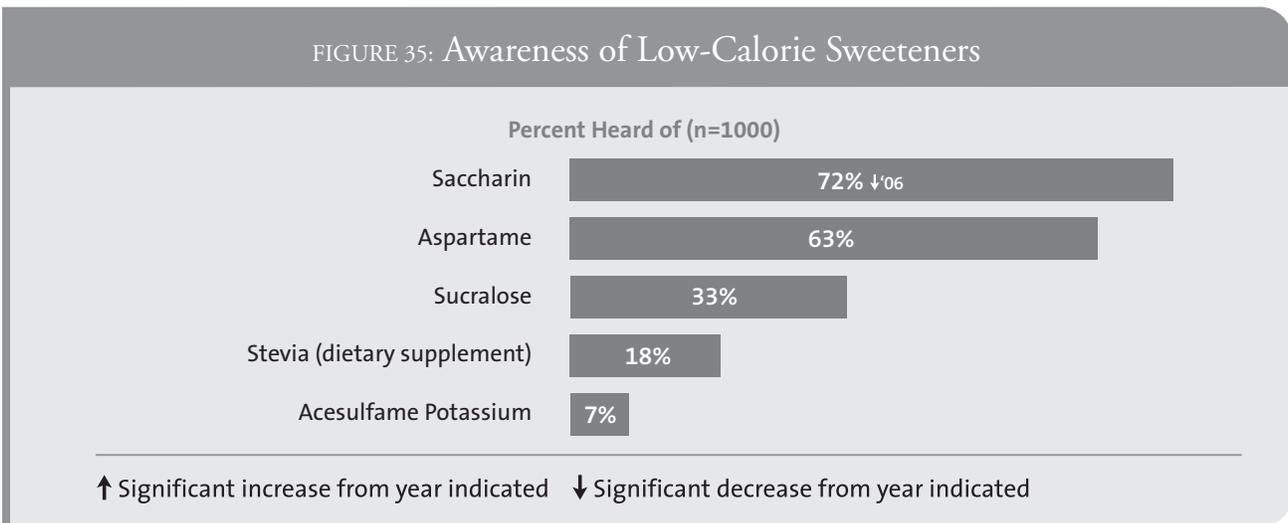
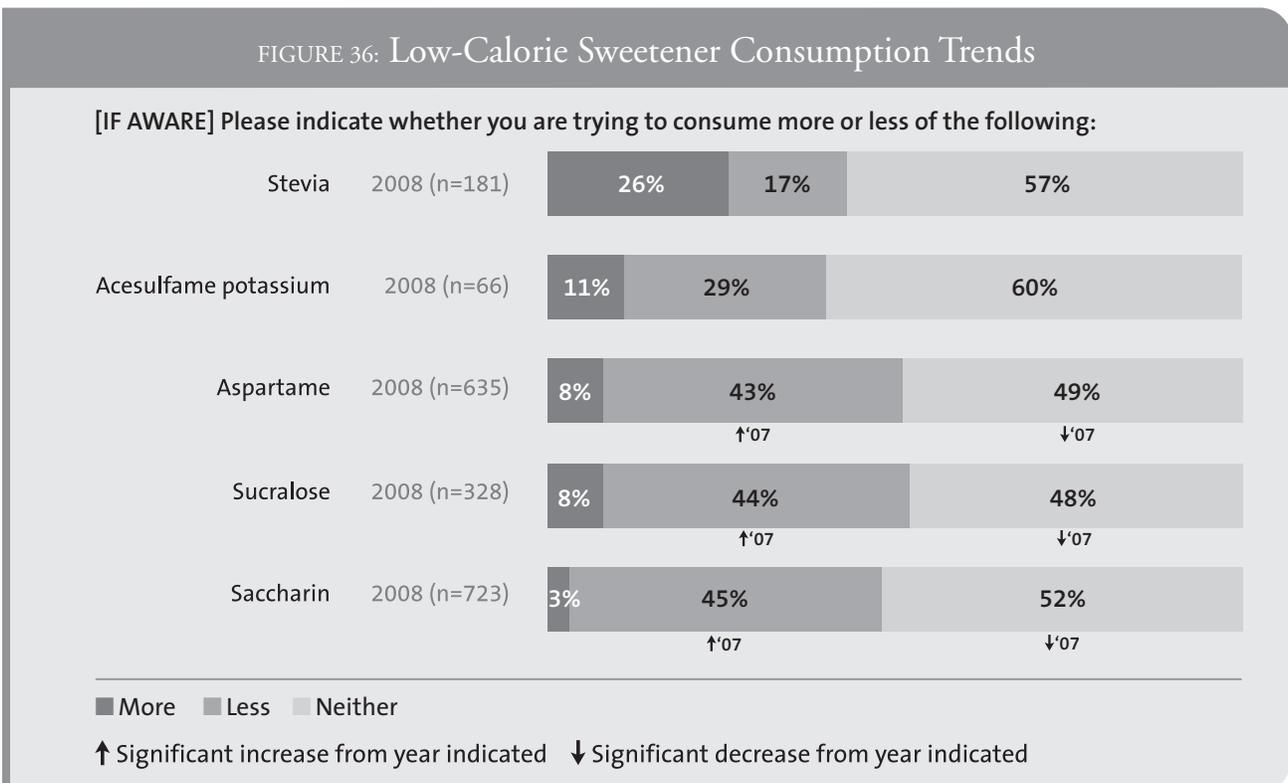


FIGURE 36: Low-Calorie Sweetener Consumption Trends



Perception of Potential Low-Calorie Sweetener Benefits

When asked whether they thought specific statements about low-calorie sweeteners and health were true, 45 percent of Americans said that low-calorie sweeteners are an option for people with diabetes. Additionally, 44 percent of Americans agree that low-calorie sweeteners can play a role in weight loss or weight management. However, only 37 percent believe that low-calorie sweeteners can reduce the calorie content of food. Finally, just over one-third (36 percent) of Americans believe low-calorie sweeteners can be used in baking, and that low-calorie sweeteners can be part of an overall healthful diet.

Caffeine

Perception of Caffeine Consumption

When asked to describe their level of caffeine consumption, 64 percent of Americans said they “consume caffeine in moderation.” Twenty-two percent described themselves as consuming “more caffeine than the average person,” and 14 percent said they have “eliminated caffeine” from their diets. (See Figure 37)

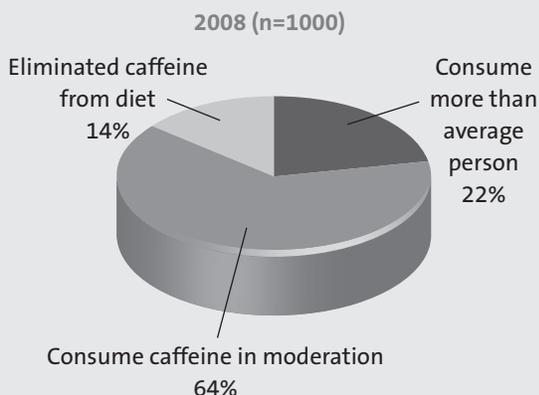
Americans were next asked whether they agreed with specific statements about caffeine and health. According to their responses, Americans are more likely to agree



that caffeine can help you to wake up/stay awake (68 percent) and increase energy (45 percent). Also, nearly half (49 percent) believe it is true that “slowly decreasing caffeine consumption over time can help prevent symptoms (e.g. headaches, fatigue, and/or drowsiness) that can be experienced when consumption abruptly stops.” Fewer Americans believe caffeine can help relieve headaches (36 percent) or improve performance on mental tasks (31 percent), and even fewer agreed that caffeine can help with weight loss (15 percent) or improve performance on athletic activities (13 percent). Only 13 percent believe that caffeine-containing beverages can help contribute to hydration (daily water intake). (See Figure 38, page 39)

FIGURE 37:
Current Approach to
Caffeine Consumption

Which of the following statements best describes your level of caffeine consumption?

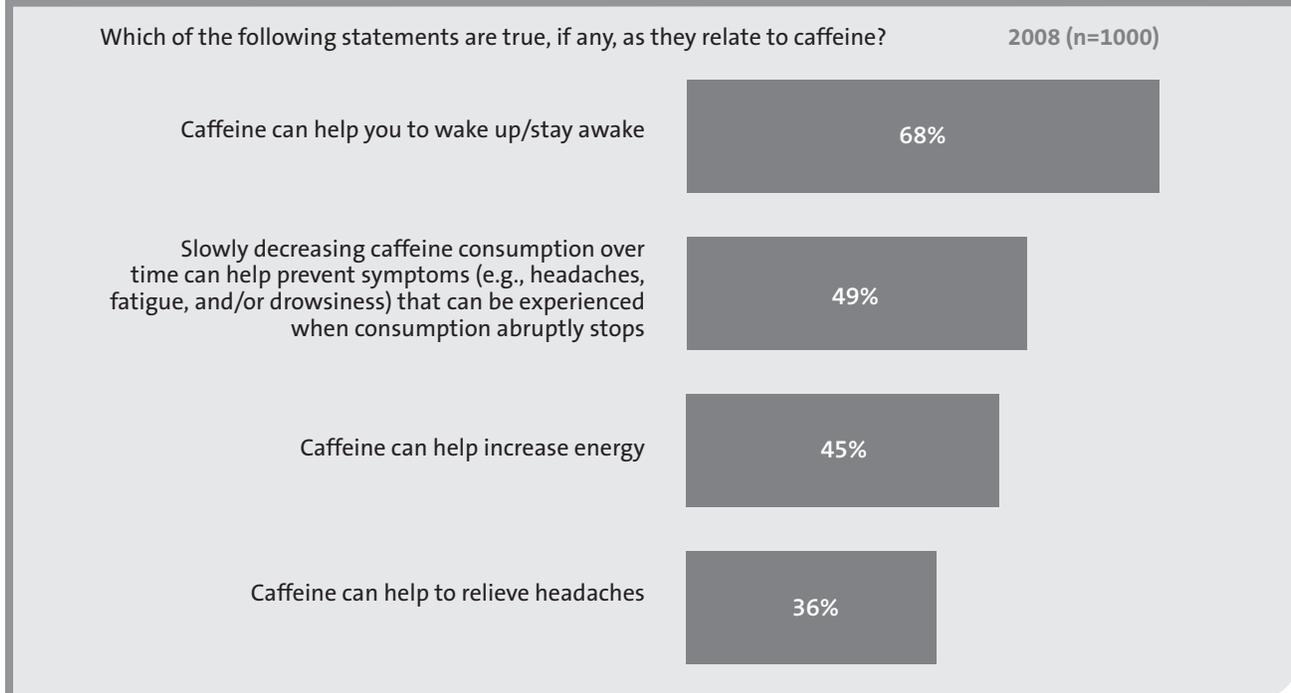


Consumption of Various Caffeinated Beverages

In a new line of questioning this year, participants were asked to provide the number of caffeinated beverages – including caffeinated soda, coffee, tea, and energy drinks—they consume each day. More than half (52 percent) of Americans said they consume soda every day, either in the form of a 12-ounce can or a 20-ounce bottle. Those who said they drink 12-ounce cans of soda (41 percent) consume an average of 2.28 cans per day, and those who drink 20-ounce bottles of soda (23 percent) each consume 2.06 of these bottles, on average, each day.

In addition, roughly half of Americans (49 percent) say they consume caffeinated coffee (hot or iced) on a daily basis, averaging 2.79 eight-ounce cups each. One in three Americans (30 percent) drinks caffeinated tea (hot or iced) every day, with an average daily consumption of 2.26 eight-ounce cups; and only six percent of Americans consume energy drinks, with an average

FIGURE 38: Perceptions of Potential Caffeine Benefits



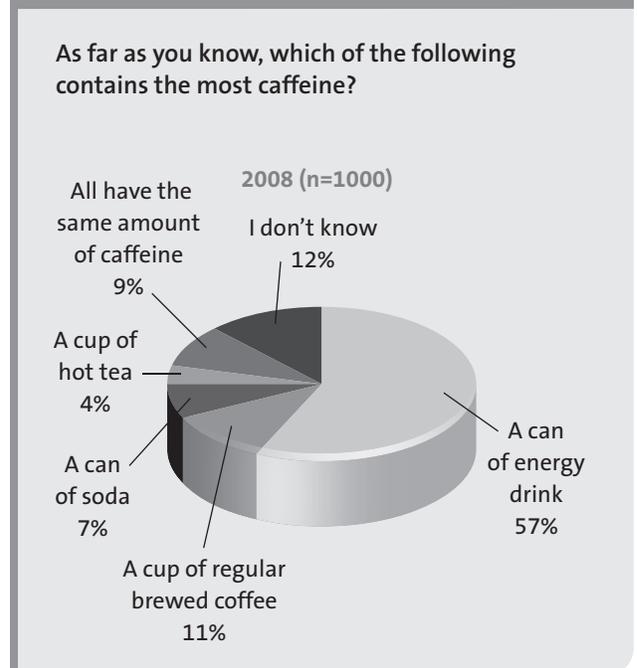
intake by each of these consumers of 1.51 ten-ounce energy drinks per day.

Those who are more likely to consume energy drinks are:

- Men
- Those who are less than 45 years of age
- Those with incomes in the \$35,000 to 50,000 range (vs. \$50,000 to less than 100,000)
- Those who consider themselves to have an “unhealthful” diet
- Those who perceive themselves to be underweight or normal (vs. obese)

Survey participants were next asked to select, the caffeinated beverages they believed contains the most caffeine. More than half (57 percent) of Americans selected a can of energy drink as having the highest caffeine content, followed by a cup of regular brewed coffee (11 percent), a can of soda (seven percent), and a cup of hot tea (four percent). Nine percent believed they all contain the same amount of caffeine. (See Figure 39)

FIGURE 39:
Perceived Caffeine Content
of Certain Beverages



Food Additives/Colors

Consumers were asked to answer a new question this year about their beliefs pertaining to the accuracy of several statements about food additives/colors. Eighty-two percent of Americans believe food additives can provide at least one of the following benefits: they can extend the freshness of certain foods/act as a preservative (68 percent); add color to food products (65 percent); help keep or improve the flavor of food products (61 percent); and reduce the presence of harmful bacteria in food products (36 percent). Regarding regulation of food additives, only 53 percent of Americans believe that all food additives must be reviewed and approved by the U.S. government before being added to food products.



NOTE:

Due to the increased prominence of food safety issues in the news media over the past few years, new questions concerning Americans' perceptions about food safety in the U.S. and safe food preparation were included in this year's survey. This is the first year of data we have on these subject areas; therefore, no trending or comparison analysis with previous surveys is available.

Food Safety Confidence

Forty-five percent of Americans rate themselves as confident in the safety of the U.S. food supply, while 26 percent say they are not confident, and 29 percent are neither confident nor unconfident.⁴ However, their confidence goes up when it comes to safely preparing foods for themselves and their families. Those who are confident in their ability to safely prepare foods (82 percent) far outweigh those who are neither confident nor unconfident, (12 percent) or not confident (seven percent).

Safe Food Preparation

Almost all Americans (96 percent) say they are regularly taking at least one food safety precaution when cooking, preparing, and consuming food products. Almost all wash their hands (92 percent); 84 percent wash cutting boards with soap and water or bleach; and nearly eight in ten Americans (79 percent) properly store leftovers within two hours of serving. Roughly three-quarters (76 percent) say they cook food products to the required temperature (such as 165° F for poultry); however, only 29 percent use a food thermometer to measure the internal temperature of meat and poultry items. Seven in ten consumers (70 percent) separate raw meat, poultry, and seafood from ready-to-eat food products; and roughly half (48 percent) of Americans use different cutting boards for each product (such as raw meat or poultry or produce). (See Figure 40, page 42)

Microwave Cooking Safety

A majority of Americans (79 percent) are confident in their ability to understand and follow microwave meal cooking instructions. Sixteen percent are neither confident nor unconfident, and five percent are not confident they understand microwave cooking instructions.

Again, almost all Americans (93 percent) do at least one thing that commonly appears on microwave instructions

for frozen or pre-packaged meals. Nearly eight in ten (79 percent) follow all of the cooking instructions, and 72 percent flip, rotate, or stir during the microwave cooking process. Fewer Americans increase or decrease cooking times based on their microwave (59 percent) or let food stand for the appropriate amount of time (58 percent). Far fewer Americans check their microwave wattage (15 percent) or use a food thermometer to make sure the food reaches the required temperature (seven percent). (See Figure 41, page 42)



⁴During the data collection period for this year's Survey, a large food product recall occurred in the U.S., which may have impacted these responses. Other data from IFIC's 2007 Survey "Food Biotechnology: A Study of U.S. Consumer Attitudinal Trends" indicate a higher percentage of Americans (69 percent) are somewhat or very confident in the safety of the U.S. food supply.

FIGURE 40: General Food Safety Practices

Which of the following actions do you perform regularly when cooking, preparing, and consuming food products?

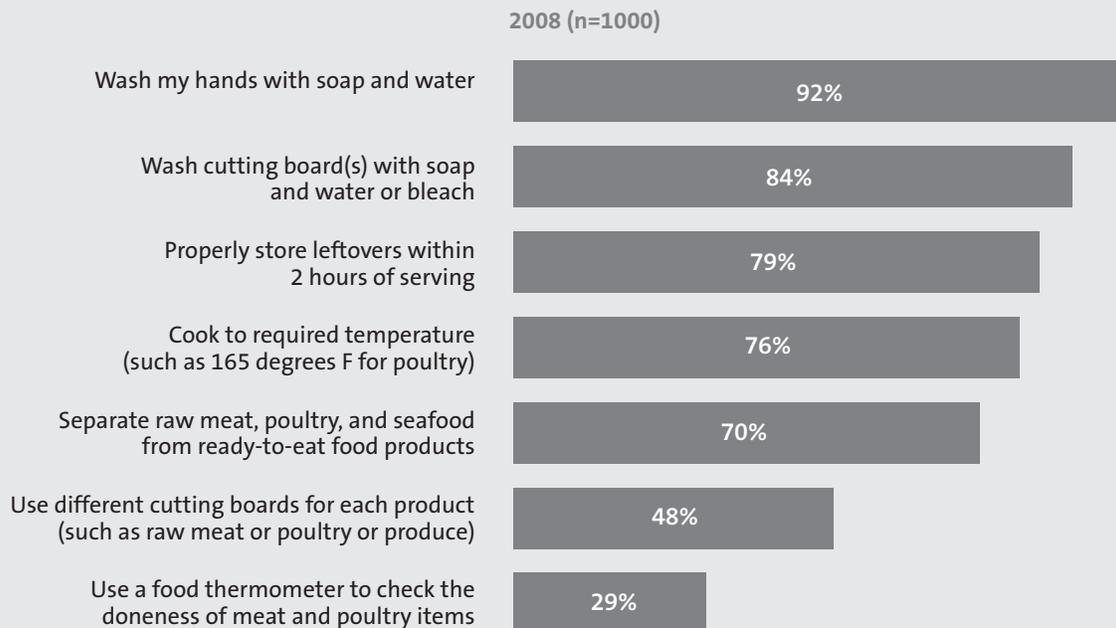
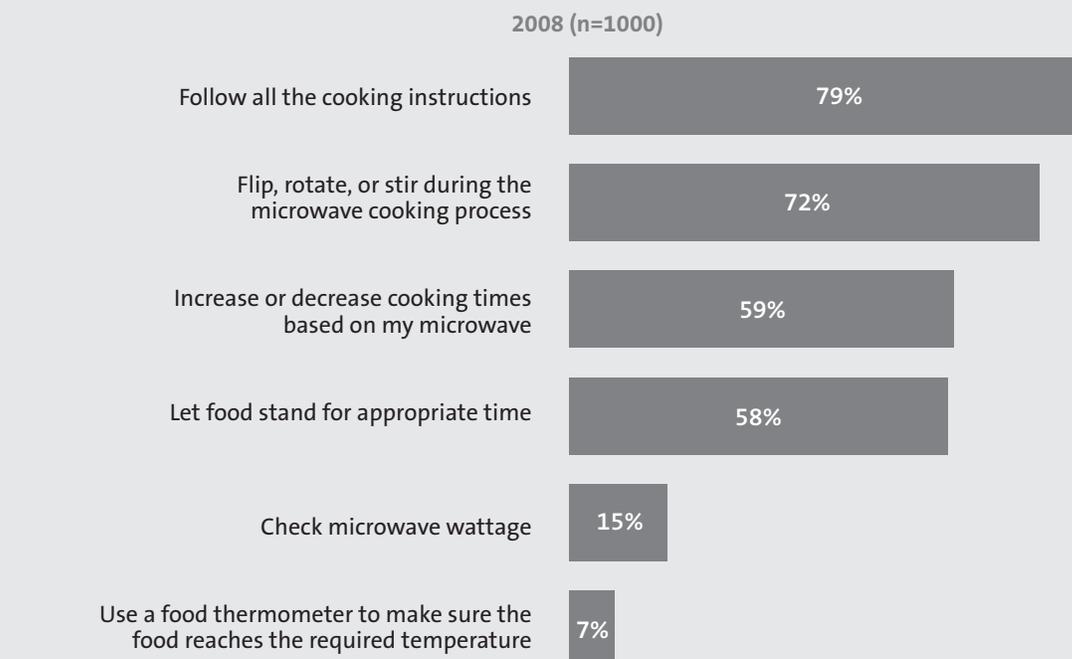


FIGURE 41: Microwave Cooking Practices

Which of the following actions do you perform regularly when preparing microwavable meals (e.g., frozen meals, pre-packaged meals that contain cooking instructions) at home?

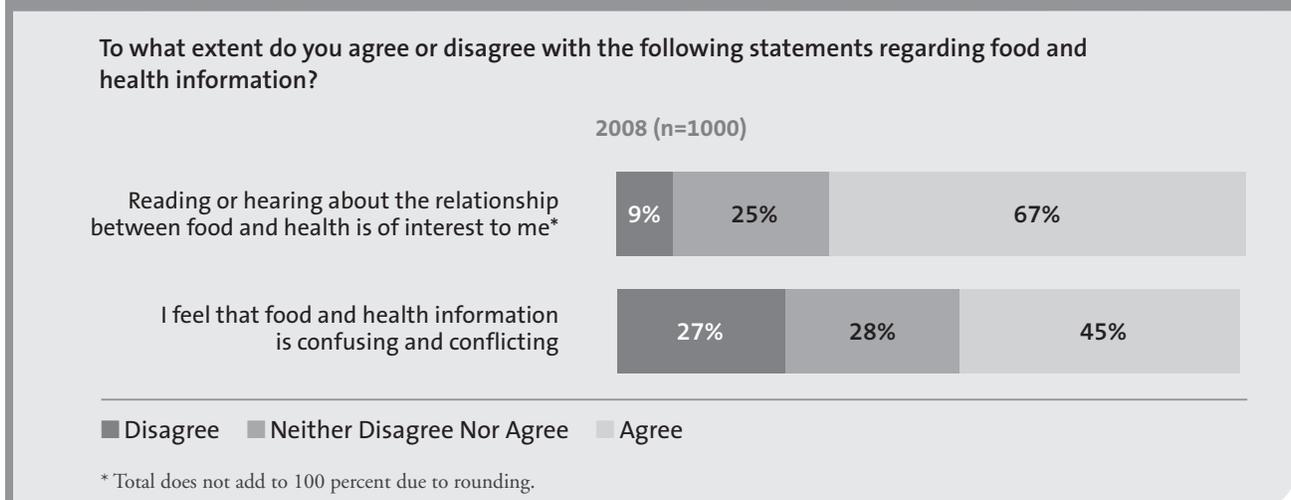


Interest in and Perception of Food and Health Information

A couple of new questions in 2008 gauged consumer perception about the importance of the relationship between food and health and possible conflicting news regarding food and health information.

More than two-thirds of Americans (67 percent) agree that reading or hearing about the relationship between food and health is of interest to them. However, 45 percent of consumers agree that food and health information is confusing and conflicting. (See Figure 42)

FIGURE 42: Interest in and Perception of Food and Health Information



MyPyramid

Similar to 2006 and 2007, 87 percent of Americans say they are aware of *MyPyramid*. Twenty-six percent of individuals report having used *MyPyramid* in some way: visiting the *MyPyramid* Web site and/or using the *MyPyramid* Web site tools (14 percent), making changes in their diet (food choices) based on the recommendations from *MyPyramid* (11 percent), and/or making changes in their diet to lose weight (nine percent). Thirteen percent of Americans continue to say they have not heard of *MyPyramid*. (See Figure 43, page 44)

Segments of the American population that are more likely to say they have taken action with regard to *MyPyramid* include:

- Those who consider themselves to have a “healthful” diet
- Women

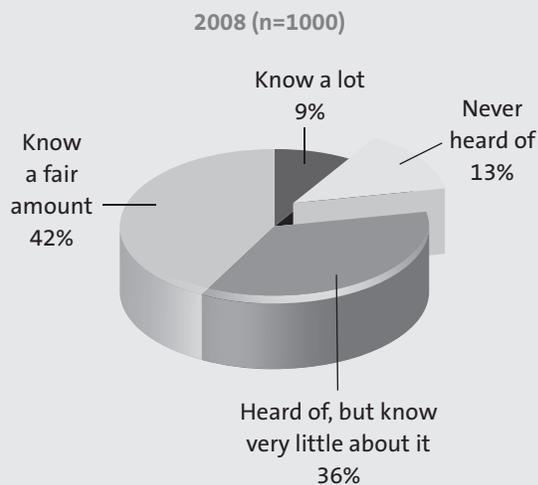
- Those who are 18-24 years old (vs. 25-34 years old)
- Those who have made a change to their diet in the last 6 months
- Those who are concerned with their weight
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those who are physically active

When shown the *MyPyramid* graphic, the top places where consumers have seen it are on TV, in a newspaper or magazine story (37 percent), at a doctor’s office or health clinic (36 percent), and on a food or beverage package (24 percent). (See Figure 44, page 44)



FIGURE 43:
Familiarity with *MyPyramid*

Which of the following best describes your familiarity with the government's Food Pyramid, called *MyPyramid*?



Factors Influencing Food and Beverage Purchase Decisions

When Americans were asked about the impact convenience, healthfulness, price, and taste had on their decision to buy foods and beverages, taste remained stable and in the highest position (84 percent in 2008 vs. 88 percent in 2007 vs. 85 percent in 2006). Price has continued to increase in importance since 2006 (70 percent vs. 72 percent vs. 64 percent). Convenience (55 percent vs. 55 percent vs. 48 percent) and healthfulness (62 percent vs. 65 percent vs. 58 percent) remained stable after increasing in 2007. (See Figure 45, page 45)

Segments of the American public in 2008 that are more apt to identify "healthfulness" as influential in purchasing decisions are:

- Women
- Those who are 55 or older
- Those with incomes more than \$100,000
- Those with a college degree or higher
- Those who consider themselves to have a "healthful" diet

FIGURE 44: Sources of Contact with *MyPyramid*

Where, if at all, have you seen *MyPyramid* information?

2008 (n=1000)

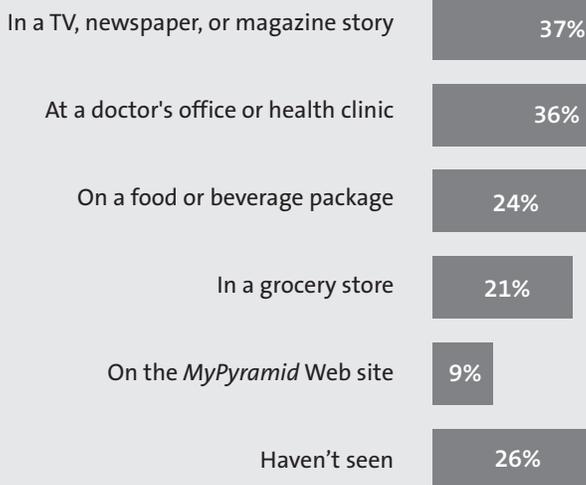
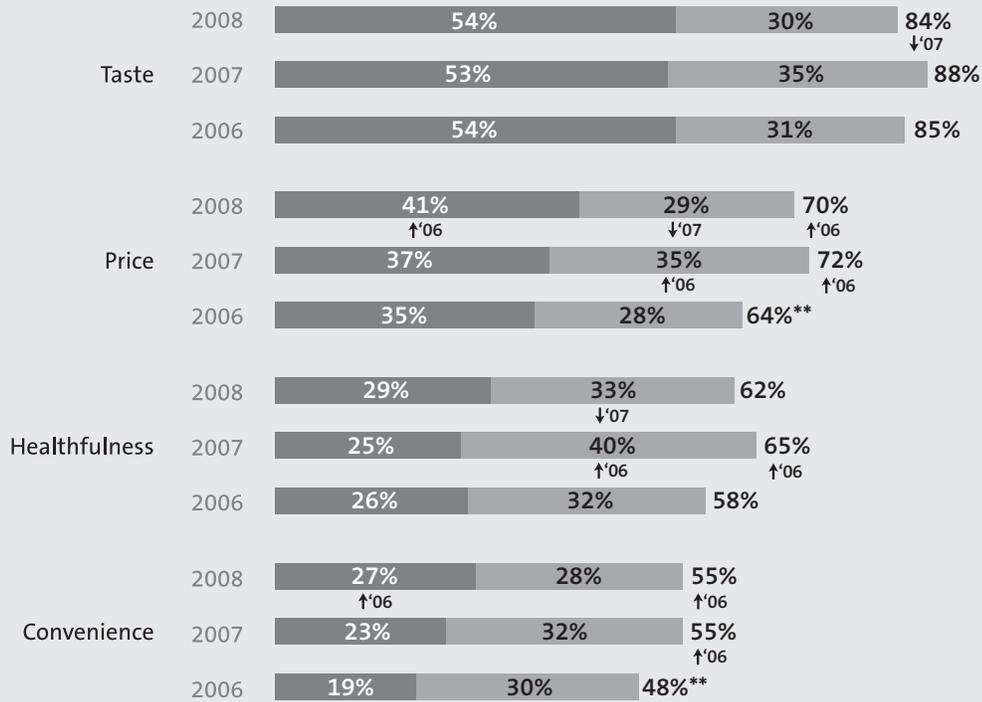


FIGURE 45: Factors Influencing Purchasing Decisions

How much of an impact do the following have on your decision to buy foods and beverages?

(n=1000)



■ Great impact ■ Some impact

↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

** One percent difference from previously published reports due to more rigorous rounding criteria.

- Those who have made changes to their diet in the past six months
- Those who perceive their health as “very good” or “excellent”
- Those who are trying to lose or maintain their weight
- Those with a BMI in the normal or overweight range (vs. obese)
- Those who are satisfied with their health status and diet
- Those who are physically active

Food Labeling

As in the past two years, Americans say they are actively using food and beverage packaging elements when deciding whether to purchase or consume food products. Expiration date (69 percent), the Nutrition Facts panel (63 percent), and the ingredients list (51 percent) continue to be the most commonly used elements. Although the number of Americans indicating they use

NOTE:

In 2007 a definition of the Nutrition Facts Panel, “that is, the printed box on a food package that includes calories and nutrient information, which is typically on the back or the side of the package,” was added to the survey to clarify the portion of the label in question.

Information Sources

the Nutrition Facts panel in 2007 (66 percent) represented an increase over 2006 (58 percent), this is most likely due to having included an expanded definition of the Nutrition Facts panel in the 2007 survey text. (See Figure 46)

Of those who said they look at the ingredients list when purchasing food and beverage products (new question in 2008), 14 percent say they are looking for “artificial ingredients,” while 10 percent are looking for “flavors and preservatives.” Another 12 percent are looking at the “fats” in the ingredients list, and four percent say they’re reading the ingredients list for the presence of “food allergens.” “Low-calorie sweeteners” are an ingredient list item of interest to ten percent of Americans. However, more than half (52 percent) of Americans listed items that are

in the Nutrition Facts panel instead of the ingredients list, including sugar (24 percent), sodium (18 percent), fat (16 percent), and calories (10 percent).

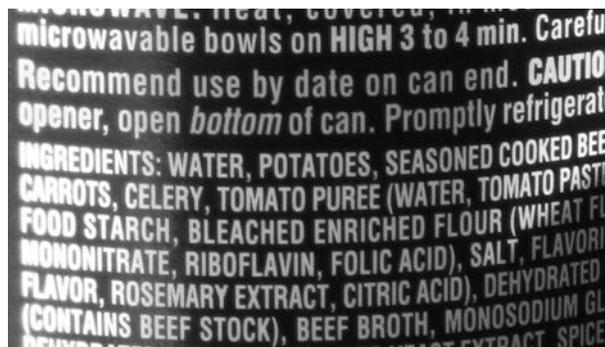
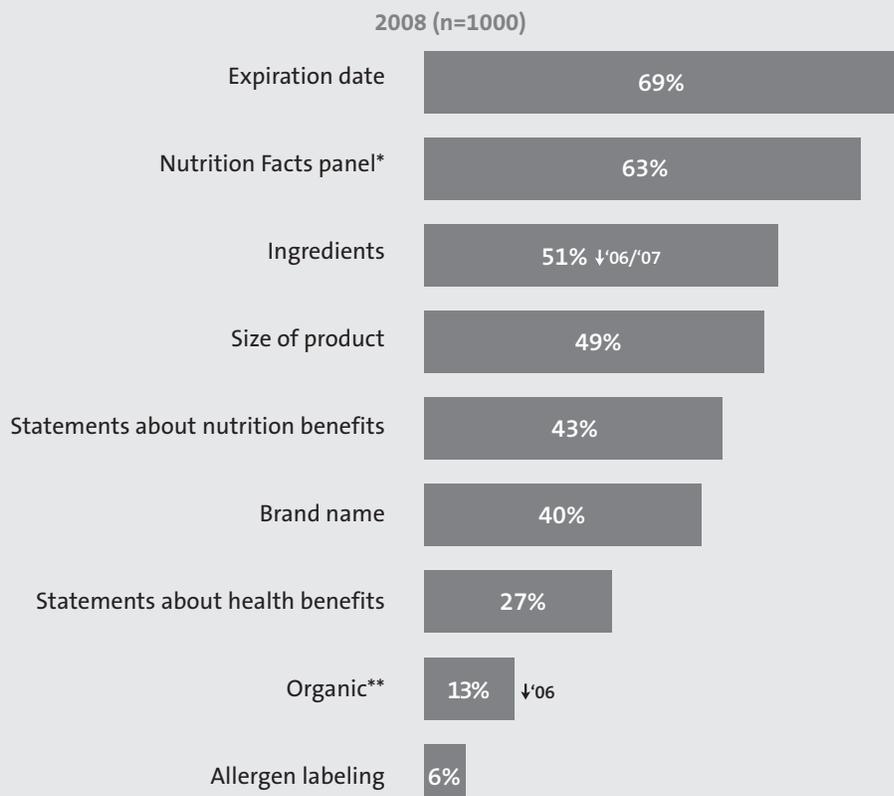


FIGURE 46: Information Used on the Food or Beverage Package

What information do you look for on the food or beverage package when deciding to purchase or eat a food or beverage? Check all that apply.



↑ Significant increase from year indicated ↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

* Modification from 2006: An explanation of the Nutrition Facts Panel was added in 2007, likely explaining the significant increase in usage.

** Modifications from 2006: The words “or natural” were dropped from this statement in 2007, likely explaining the significant decrease in usage.

The Nutrition Facts Panel

When Americans were asked which specific elements they use on the Nutrition Facts panel, calories (75 percent) and total fat (71 percent) remain on top of the list. Usage of *trans* fat increased significantly among Americans who use the Nutrition Fact Panel in 2008. Fifty-nine percent saying they use the information today compared to 49 percent in 2006. Usage of serving size (55 percent) and number of servings per package (55 percent) both increased over 2007. Fiber (52 percent) increased over both 2007 (43 percent) and 2006 (42 percent). The remaining elements show no change since 2006 or 2007. (See Figure 47)

FIGURE 47: Information Used on Nutrition Facts Panel

[If use] Which of the following information, if any, do you use on the Nutrition Facts Panel? Check all that apply.

	2008 (n=627)	2007 (n=657)	2006 (n=581)
Calories	75%	73%	78%
Total fat	71%	73%	76%
Sugars	68%	63%	67%
Sodium	60%	60%	60%
Saturated fat	58%	58%	60%
<i>Trans</i> fat	59% ↑'06	63% ↑'06	49%
Calories from fat	55%	57%	58%
Serving size	55% ↑'07/↓'06	49% ↓'06	63%
Number of servings per package	55% ↑'07	46% ↓'06	55%
Carbohydrates	47% ↓'06	47% ↓'06	62%
Cholesterol	48%	50%	50%
Fiber	52% ↑'07/↑'06	43%	42%
Protein	40% ↑'07	33% ↓'06	39%
Vitamins and minerals	35%	35%	39%
Calcium	26%	24%	28%
Potassium	18%	15% ↓'06	20%

↑ Significant increase from year indicated

↓ Significant decrease from year indicated

For More Information:

For an electronic copy of this report and the full data tables, please visit the IFIC Foundation Web site at

<http://www.ific.org/research/foodandhealthsurvey.cfm>



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