

A Focus On **Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling**



An annual survey of American consumers to understand perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding food and food-purchasing decisions. 2025 marks the 20th consecutive year that the International Food Information Council (IFIC) has commissioned the *IFIC Food & Health Survey*.

METHODOLOGY



FOOD & HEALTH
SURVEY

2025

METHODOLOGY

This report from the International Food Information Council (IFIC) contains results from two separate consumer surveys—the 2025 *IFIC Food & Health Survey* and the August 2025 *IFIC Spotlight Survey*. Each survey’s methodology is briefly described below:

2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey

IFIC commissions this survey annually among U.S. consumers (n=3000 since 2024, n=1000 in prior years), with 2025 marking the 20th consecutive year of the *IFIC Food & Health Survey*. Results were weighted to ensure that they are reflective of the American population ages 18 to 80 years, as seen in the [2024 Current Population Survey](#). Specifically, results were weighted by age, education, gender, race/ethnicity, and region. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding. The 2025 *IFIC Food & Health Survey* was fielded from March 13-27, 2025.

SUGGESTED CITATION: International Food Information Council. 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey: A Focus On Dietary Guidance & Labeling. August 2025.
<https://ific.org/research/food-and-health-focus-on-dietary-guidance/>

August 2025 IFIC Spotlight Survey

IFIC commissioned this online survey among U.S. consumers (n=1000) to measure knowledge, attitudes, and beliefs about dietary guidance and food labeling. One thousand adults aged 18 years and older completed the online survey from April 7-11, 2025, and were weighted to ensure proportional results. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

SUGGESTED CITATION: International Food Information Council (IFIC). IFIC Spotlight Survey: Americans' Perceptions of Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling. August 2025.
<https://ific.org/research/food-and-health-focus-on-dietary-guidance/>

IFIC FOOD & HEALTH SURVEY METHODOLOGY

- An online survey of 3,000 Americans ages 18 to 80 years.
- The survey was fielded from March 13-27, 2025.
- On average, the survey took ~20 minutes to complete.
- The survey was conducted via Dynata's consumer panel.

SUGGESTED CITATION:

International Food Information Council. 2025 IFIC Food & Health Survey: A Focus On Dietary Guidance & Labeling. August 2025. <https://ific.org/research/2025-food-health-survey>

➤ The results were weighted to ensure that they are reflective of the American population ages 18 to 80 years, as seen in the [2024 Current Population Survey](#). Specifically, results were weighted by age, education, gender, race/ethnicity, and region. Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

➤ IFIC commissions Greenwald Research to conduct the annual *IFIC Food & Health Survey*.



This year's *Food & Health Survey* marks the 20th consecutive year that the International Food Information Council (IFIC) has surveyed American consumers to understand perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding food and food-purchasing decisions. In addition to exploring new perspectives, the 2025 *IFIC Food & Health Survey* takes a retrospective look at how perceptions have evolved over the last two decades.

Key findings from this year's online survey of **3,000 Americans** focus on:

- Food and beverage purchase-drivers
- Criteria used to define “healthy” food
- Familiarity with U.S. Dietary Guidelines and MyPlate
- Stress and mental and emotional well-being
- Trust in food information sources, including exposure and impact of social media
- Views on food colors and food safety, including the safety of imported foods and those produced in the U.S.
- Body weight, weight-loss medications, and perceptions of calorie sources that contribute to weight gain
- Current eating patterns, personal diet grades, and reflections on how they have changed from 20 years ago
- Beliefs about food production and food technologies, including impressions of GMOs and sustainability
- Approaches to sugar consumption and opinions of low- and no-calorie sweeteners
- “Ultraprocessed foods,” including familiarity with the term and criteria used to identify them.

Findings are presented for all survey respondents. Additional insights are available based on how findings vary by different types of demographic groups, such as by age, race, gender, and household income.

Note: Significant changes in trend vs. 2024 (and/or in some cases, prior years) are indicated using up-and-down arrows and/or call-out boxes.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: A Focus On Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling



FOOD & HEALTH
SURVEY



2025

KEY FINDINGS ON DIETARY GUIDANCE & FOOD LABELING

More than 4 in 10 Americans say they know at least a fair amount about the Dietary Guidelines.

The *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has tracked familiarity with and knowledge of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA) since 2009. In that year, 23% of Americans said they knew a lot (3%) or a fair amount (20%) about the DGA. In 2011, following the release of the 2010 DGA, 32% said they knew at least a fair amount about them. A decade later, after the release of the 2020 DGA, 46% said they knew at least a fair amount about them.

In 2025, 44% say they know a lot (7%) or a fair amount (37%) about the DGA, nearly twice as many that reported the same knowledge level in 2009. Similarly, more than twice as many said they had never heard of the DGA in 2009 (28%) compared to 2025 (11%).

More than half of Americans know at least a fair amount about MyPlate.

Since 2013, the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has tracked familiarity with and knowledge of MyPlate, which replaced the Food Guide Pyramid in June 2011 as the visual symbol of U.S. dietary guidance. In 2025, more than half (53%) of Americans report knowing a lot (17%) or a fair amount (36%) about MyPlate. Between 2013 and 2023, an average of four in ten Americans reported this level of knowledge. In 2025, 17% of Americans say they know a lot about MyPlate, more than doubling from 8% in 2013. More Americans now also say they know a fair amount about MyPlate (36% in 2025 vs. 32% in 2013).

Familiarity with MyPlate reaches a new high in 2025.

The *IFIC Food & Health Survey* first assessed familiarity with the MyPlate graphic in 2013, when 61% of Americans said they had seen it. From 2013 to 2023, about six in ten Americans each year said they had seen the MyPlate graphic. In 2025, more than three in four Americans (77%) say they have seen the MyPlate graphic, similar to 76% in 2024.

Conversely, fewer Americans say that they have never seen the MyPlate graphic. In 2013, 36% said they had never seen it compared to 21% in 2025.

KEY FINDINGS ON DIETARY GUIDANCE & FOOD LABELING

Nearly 6 in 10 Americans report following a specific diet in the past year, a rising trend since 2018.

Since 2018, the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has asked about the diets that Americans have tried. In 2025, 57% of Americans say they have followed a specific eating pattern or diet in the past year, a rising trend since 2018 when just 36% of Americans had tried a specific eating pattern or diet. In 2025, the top diet that Americans report following are high protein (23%) and mindful eating (19%), marking three straight years now that a high protein diet is the most common diet that Americans are following.

Since 2021, protein is the nutrient that most Americans report trying to consume, and sodium is the nutrient most try to limit or avoid.

Among twelve nutrients described in the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*, as dietary components of public health concern for under- and overconsumption, protein is the nutrient that most Americans (70%) say they try to consume, marking the fifth straight year of protein prominence. Conversely, most Americans (52%) say they try to limit or avoid sodium.

Compared to 2021, more Americans now try to consume protein (70% vs. 62%), fiber (64% vs. 56%), and vitamin D (63% vs. 56%), and more aim to limit or avoid sodium (52% vs. 47%).

Half of Americans are concerned with the amount of sodium in their diet, the same level of concern as reported in 2011.

In the 2011 *IFIC Food & Health Survey*, 53% of Americans were extremely (18%) or somewhat (35%) concerned with their sodium intake. In 2025, overall concern remains the same at 52%. However, fewer Americans say they are extremely concerned with the amount of sodium in their diet (11% vs. 18% in 2011).

More than 6 in 10 Americans are concerned with the amount of sugar they consume. More than half are concerned with the type of sugar.

The *IFIC Food & Health Survey* has measured Americans' concern about the amount and type of sugar they consume three times over the past 20 years. In 2006, 62% were extremely (24%) or somewhat (39%) concerned about the amount of sugar they consumed. Concern rose to 71% in 2015, with 33% extremely and 38% somewhat concerned. In 2025, 63% are concerned—20% extremely and 43% somewhat.

Concern about the type of sugar followed a similar trend. In 2006, 52% were extremely (21%) or somewhat (32%) concerned. This rose to 64% in 2015, with 29% extremely and 35% somewhat concerned. In 2025, 56% are concerned—19% extremely and 38% somewhat.

KEY FINDINGS ON DIETARY GUIDANCE & FOOD LABELING

Americans grade their personal diet as healthier than the diet of the average American, although by a smaller margin than in 2013.

In 2025, 64% of Americans grade their own diet as a B– or better, while only 24% give the same grade to the average American’s diet. In 2013, 67% graded their own diet a B– or better, but just 13% gave that grade to the average American’s diet. Compared to 2013, Americans grade their personal diets similarly but now give higher marks to the average American’s diet.

Americans rate their diets as healthier in 2025 than in 2020.

In the 2020 *IFIC Food & Health Survey*, Americans gave their own diet an average score of 59.0 out of 100. This score was similar to the [Healthy Eating Index \(HEI\) 2020 score](#) of 58 for Americans ages 2+ years, 57 for ages 19-59, and 61 for ages 60+ years.

In 2025, Americans now give their diet an average score of 63.3 out of 100, 4.3 points higher than in 2020.

Eight in ten Americans report consuming less than the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

According to the [Scientific Report of the 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee](#), only 20% of Americans aged 1 year and older meet the recommended daily intake for fruit, and just 22% meet the recommendation for vegetables.

Similarly, the August 2025 *IFIC Spotlight Survey: Americans’ Perceptions of Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling* found that eight in ten Americans consume fewer than the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables. Only 19% report eating the recommended five or more servings per day, while more than half (52%) consume two servings or fewer each day.

Americans are more interested in hearing about what to eat and how to eat, rather than hearing about what not to eat.

Six in ten Americans are more interested in hearing what to eat (61%), rather than what not to eat (10%). Half are more interested in hearing about HOW to eat (51%), rather than what not to eat (16%). By comparison, Americans express higher interest in hearing about what to eat than how to eat (51% vs. 35%). Approximately one in three Americans are indifferent to hearing about this information.

KEY FINDINGS ON DIETARY GUIDANCE & FOOD LABELING

In 2025, more than 4 in 10 Americans are familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food,” a 12-point jump from 2024.

In the 2024 *IFIC Food & Health Survey*, 32% of Americans said they were familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food,” 52% were unfamiliar, and 16% were unsure. In 2025, familiarity increased to 44%, a 12-point rise from the previous year. Meanwhile, the share of those unfamiliar dropped to 40%, also a 12-point decrease. The percentage who were unsure remained unchanged at 16%.

Eight in ten Americans consider whether food has been processed before purchasing it, similar to 2023 and 2024.

For three consecutive years, nearly eight in ten Americans have reported considering whether a food is processed before purchasing it. In 2023, 76% said they considered it; this rose to 79% in 2024, and 80% report doing so in 2025.

In 2025, four in ten Americans (39%) say they either do not avoid processed foods (21%) or do not consider whether a food is processed when buying it (18%). Additionally, 2% are unsure what qualifies as processed food.

Among those who are familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food,” half would look at the ingredients list and/or the Nutrition Facts label to decide whether a food is “ultraprocessed.”

Survey participants familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food” were asked how they would determine if a food fits that description. Most said they would rely on existing food packaging information, with half saying they would look at the ingredients list (53%) and/or the Nutrition Facts label (49%). Fewer say they would use AI assistance (19%), search for an official definition (19%), consider the food’s location in a store (12%), or consult a food app (11%). Additionally, 11% say they just know what an “ultraprocessed food” is when they see it.

KEY FINDINGS ON DIETARY GUIDANCE & FOOD LABELING

Six in ten Americans say the amount of information currently provided on food and beverage packaging is just right.

In the August 2025 *IFIC Spotlight Survey: Americans' Perceptions of Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling*, participants were asked their views on the amount of food and nutrition information currently provided on packaging. Most Americans (59%) said the amount is just right, while 21% felt there is not enough information, and 10% said there is too much. Another 10% reported that they do not use food and nutrition information on packaging.

Among those who use food and nutrition information on packaging, more than half say they focus equally on what they want to consume less of and what they want to consume more of.

In the August 2025 *IFIC Spotlight Survey: Americans' Perceptions of Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling*, 90% of participants said they use information on food and beverage packaging. Of those, 20% focus mainly on what they want to consume more of, 19% focus on what they want to consume less of, and 55% use the information equally for both. Fewer than one in ten (7%) do not use on-package nutrition information for any of these purposes.

The expiration date, Nutrition facts panel, and ingredients list are used most often when deciding to purchase a food or beverage.

From 2006 to 2015, the first decade of the *IFIC Food & Health Survey*, all participants were asked to select the information that they look for on food or beverage packaging when deciding to make a purchase. Each year, the expiration date and the Nutrition Facts label were the two most commonly viewed pieces of information.

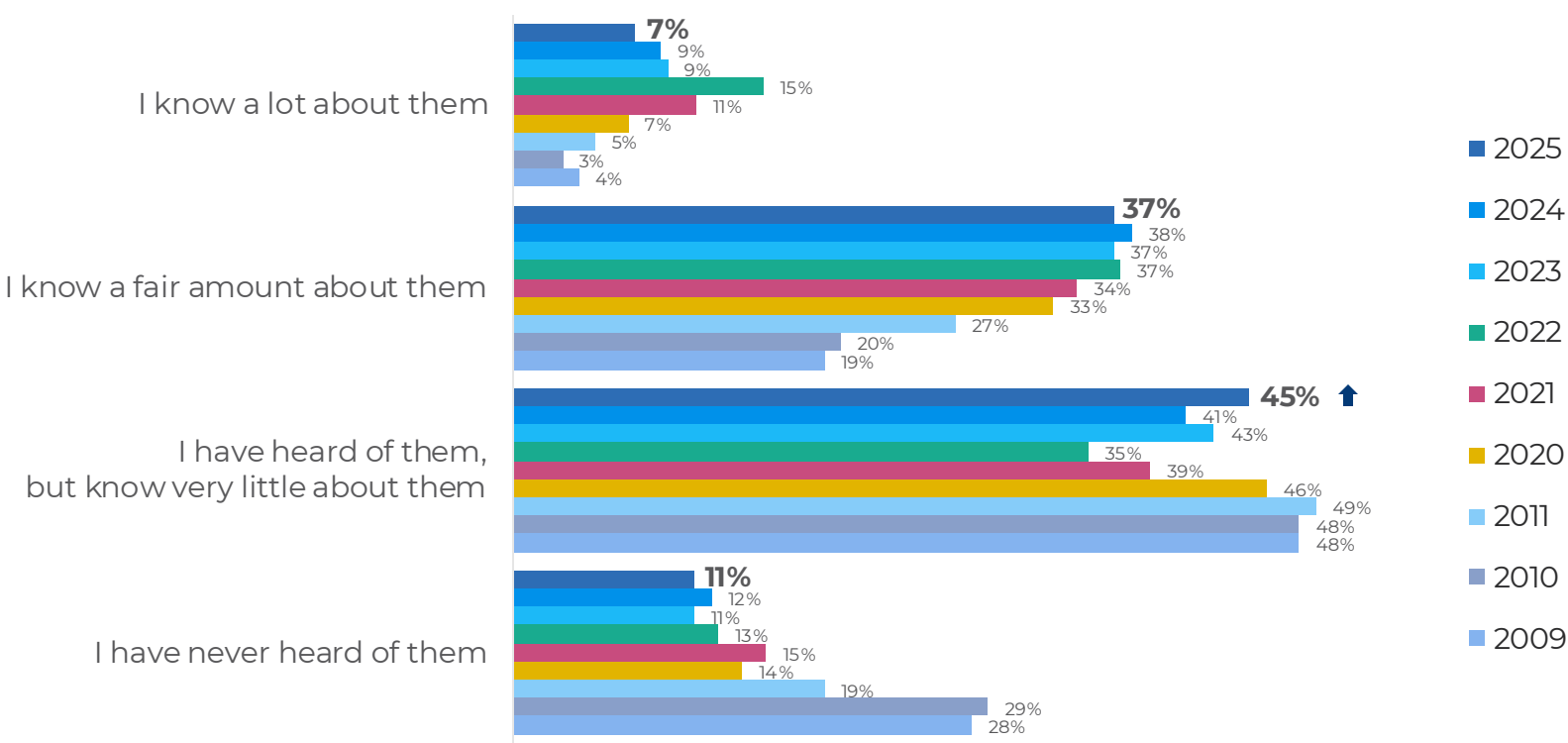
In 2025, this remains true: 58% of Americans say they check the expiration date, and 51% look at the Nutrition Facts label. The third most viewed item this year is the ingredients list, cited by 48% of survey participants.

While the top three remain unchanged since 2015, more Americans in 2025 report checking several pieces of information on packaging. Compared to 2015, more now check the expiration date (58% vs. 51%), ingredients list (48% vs. 40%), calorie and other nutrition information on the front of the package via icon or graphic (38% vs. 29%), cooking instructions/preparation time (35% vs. 25%), brand name (32% vs. 27%), nutrition benefit statements (30% vs. 23%), health benefit statements (21% vs. 15%), and front-of-package statements about the absence of certain ingredients (19% vs. 13%).

More than 4 in 10 Americans say they know at least a fair amount about the Dietary Guidelines.

In 2009, 23% of Americans said they knew a lot (4%) or a fair amount (19%) about the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In 2025, nearly twice as many (44%) report the same knowledge level. In 2009, 28% of Americans had never heard of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans—more than twice the 11% reported in 2025.

Familiarity with and Knowledge of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans



17-Year Trend
2025 vs. 2009

7% ↑

Know a lot
vs. 4% in 2009

37% ↑

Know a fair amount
vs. 19% in 2009

45%

Know very little
vs. 48% in 2009

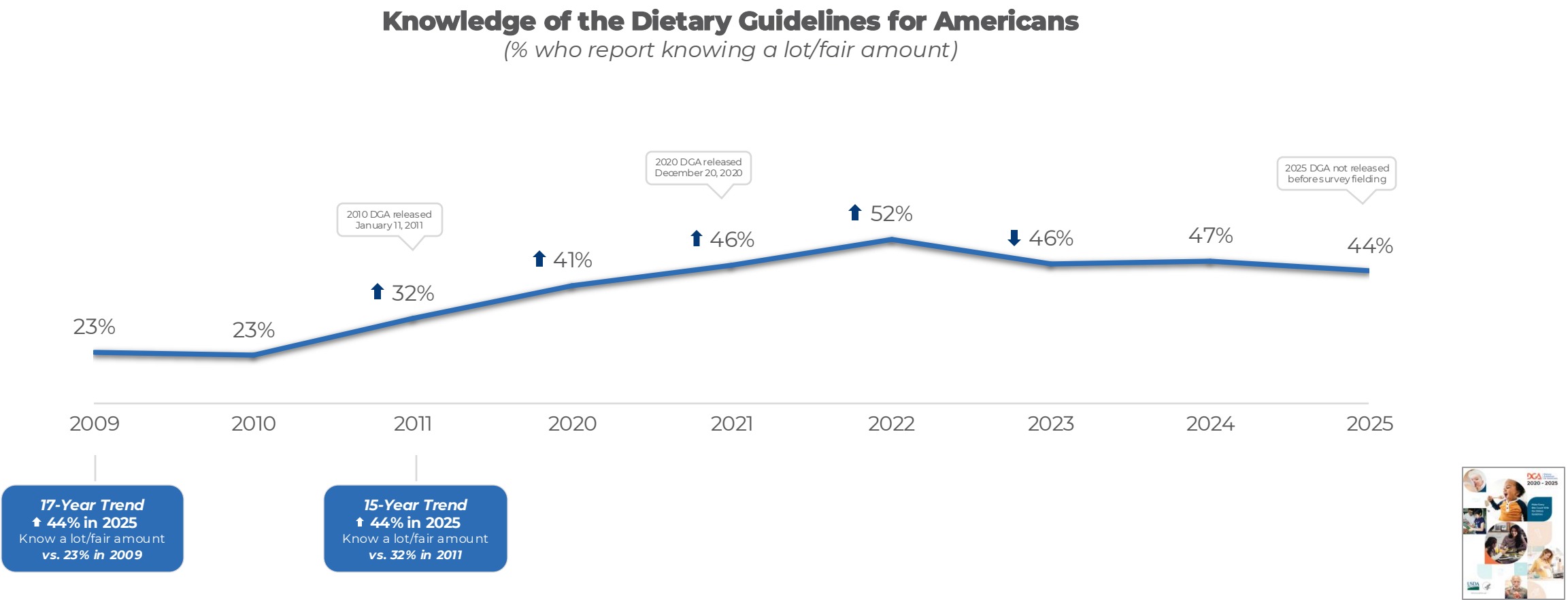
11% ↓

Never heard of
vs. 28% in 2009



More than 4 in 10 Americans say they know at least a fair amount about the Dietary Guidelines.

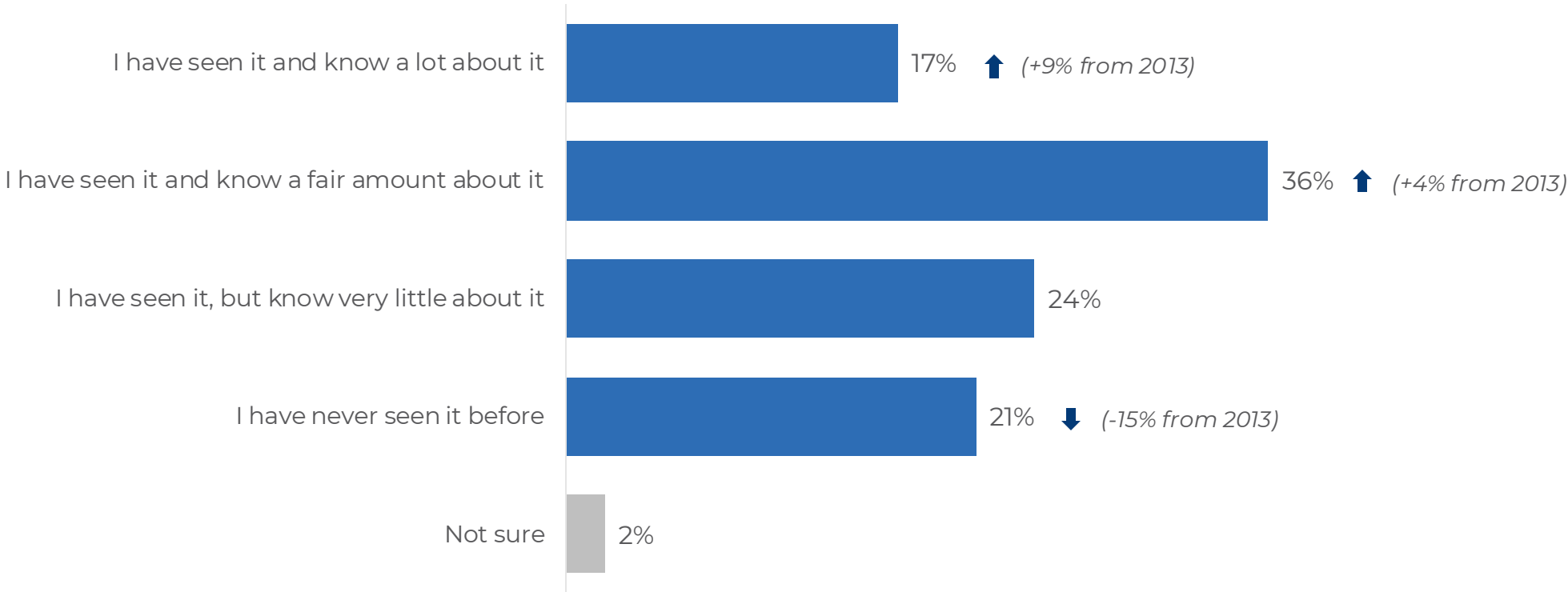
In 2009, 23% of Americans said they knew a lot (4%) or a fair amount (19%) about the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. In 2025, nearly twice as many (44%) report the same knowledge level (7% know a lot, 37% know a fair amount).



More than half of Americans know at least a fair amount about MyPlate.

In 2025, 17% of Americans say they know a lot about MyPlate, more than doubling from 8% in 2013. More Americans now also say they know a fair amount about MyPlate (36% vs. 32% in 2013), and fewer say they have never seen it (21% vs. 36% in 2013).

Familiarity with and Knowledge of MyPlate



13-Year Trend
2025 vs. 2013

17% ↑
Know a lot
vs. 8% in 2013

36% ↑
Know a fair amount
vs. 32% in 2013

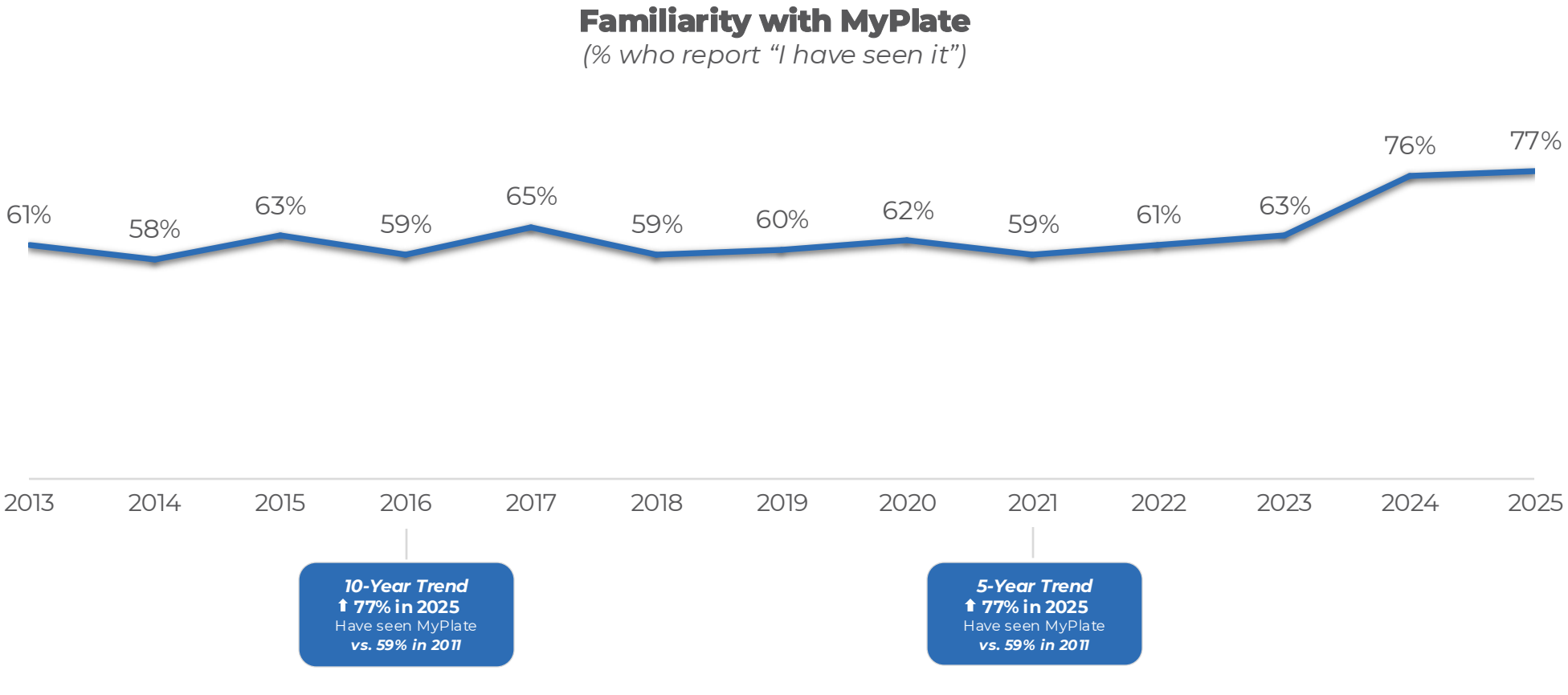
24%
Know very little
vs. 21% in 2013

21% ↓
Never seen
vs. 36% in 2013



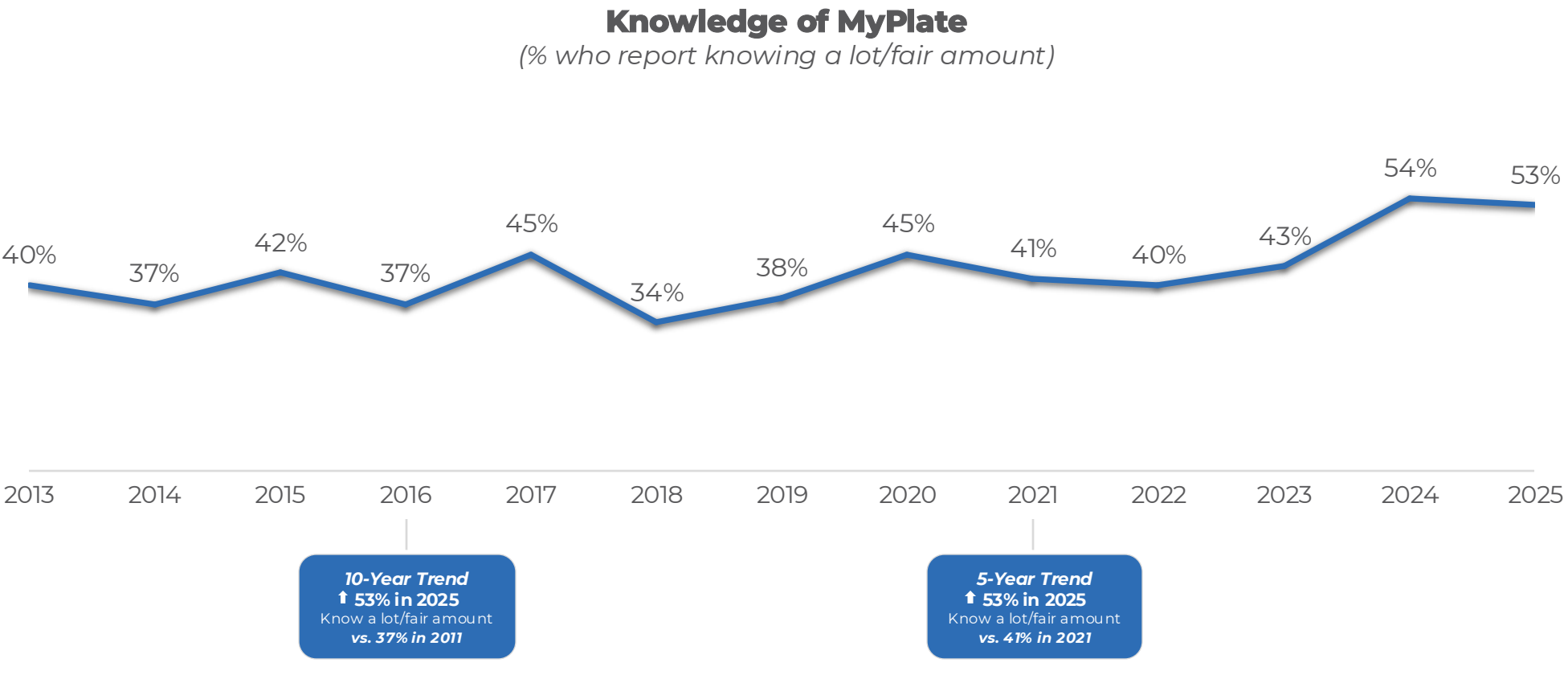
Familiarity with MyPlate reaches a new high in 2025.

From 2013 to 2023, about six in ten Americans each year said they had seen the MyPlate graphic. In 2025, more than three in four (77%) say they have seen it.



Knowledge of MyPlate remains higher in 2025 compared to 2013-2023.

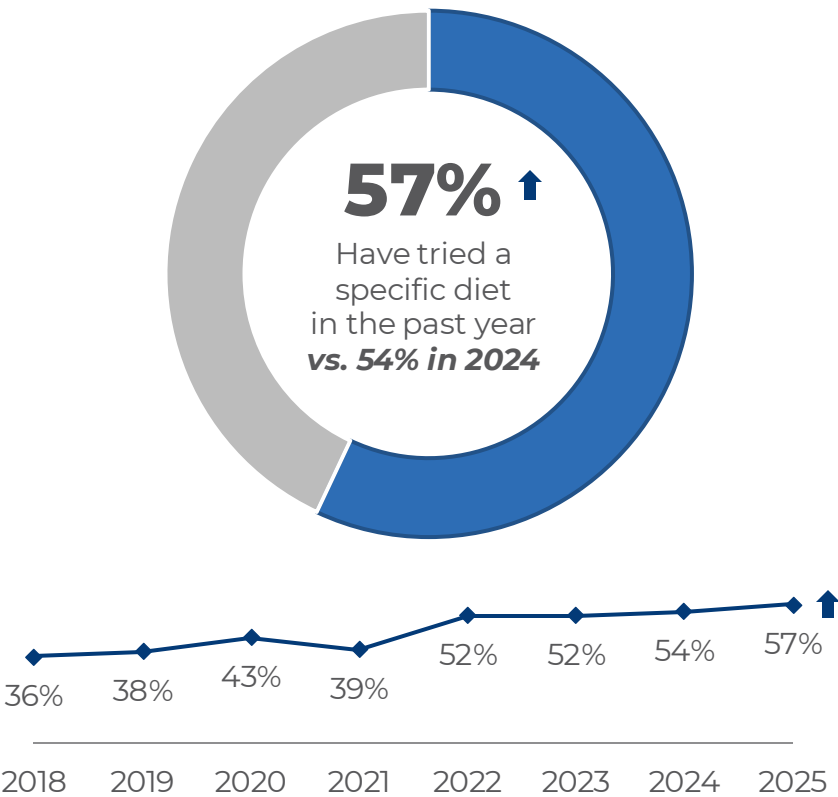
In 2025, more than half (53%) of Americans report knowing a lot or a fair amount about MyPlate. Between 2013 and 2023, an average of four in ten Americans reported this level of knowledge.



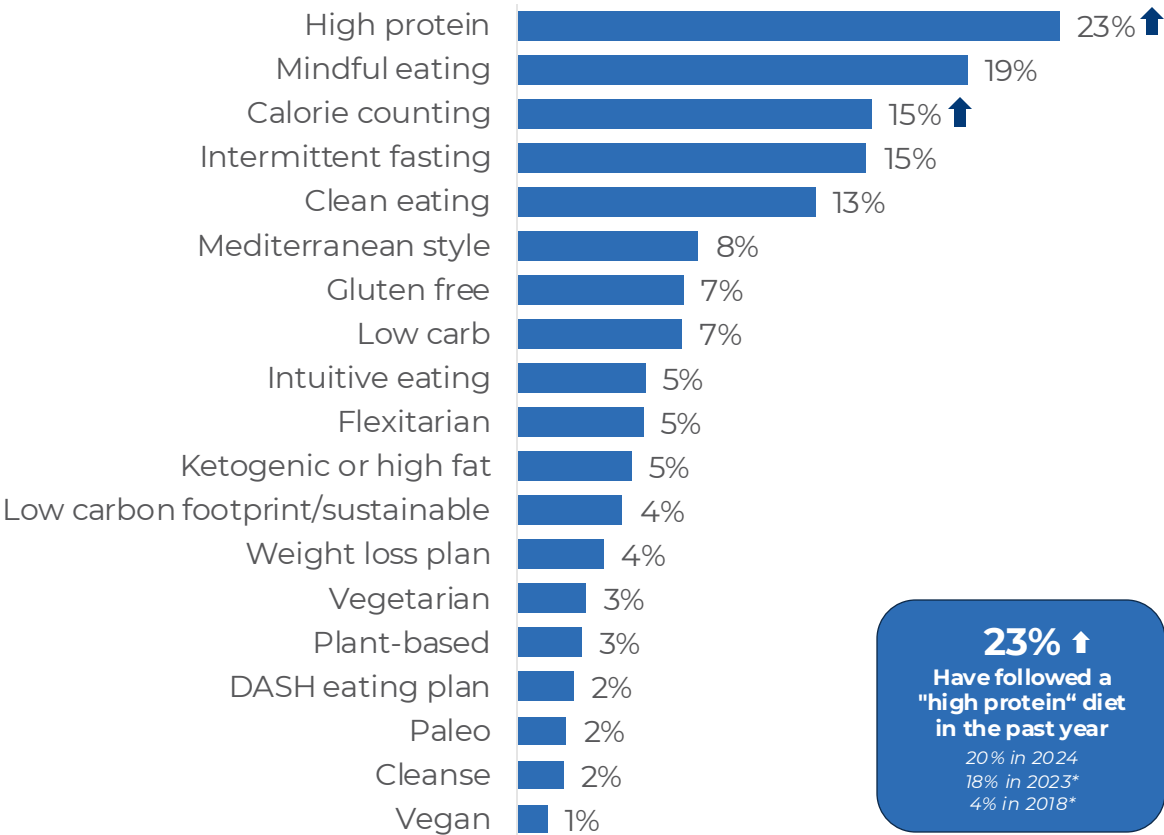
Nearly 6 in 10 Americans report following a specific eating pattern or diet in the past year, a rising trend since 2018.

More Americans report following “High protein” (23%) and “Calorie counting” (15%) diets in 2025. For the third straight year, “High protein” is the most common diet that Americans are following.

Followed Eating Pattern/Diet in Past Year



Followed Eating Pattern/Diet in Past Year

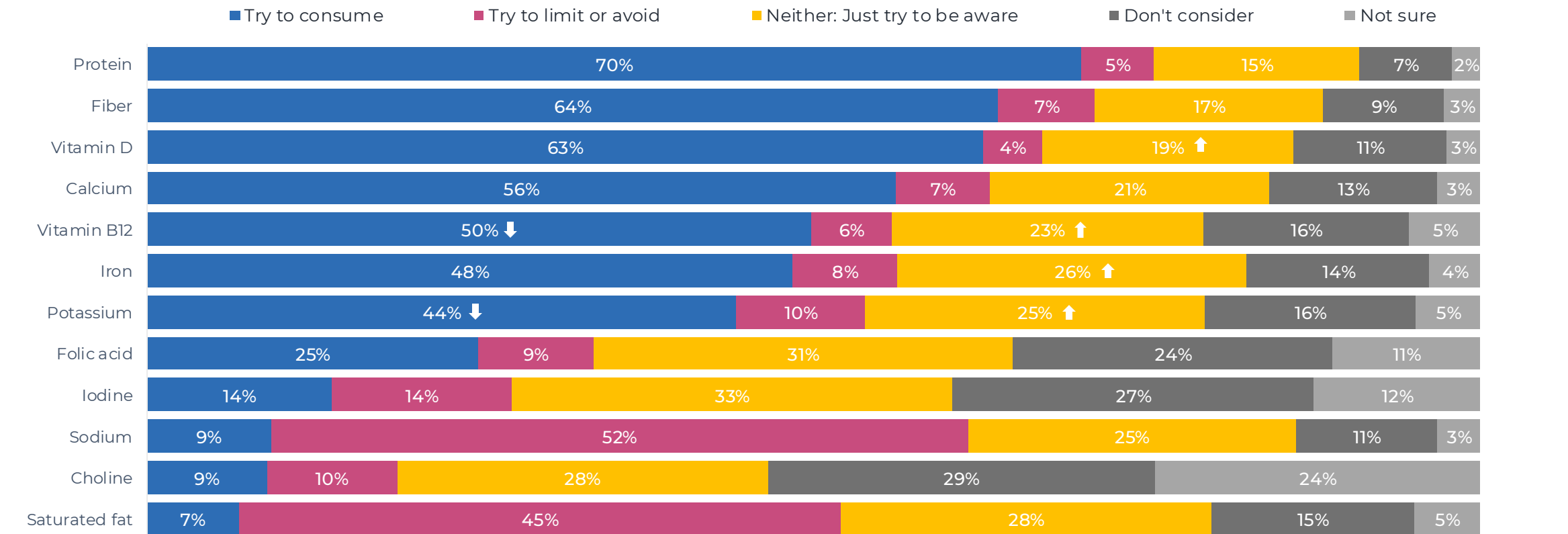


23% ↑
Have followed a "high protein" diet in the past year
20% in 2024
18% in 2023*
4% in 2018*

Since 2021, protein is the nutrient that most Americans report trying to consume, and sodium is the nutrient most try to limit or avoid.

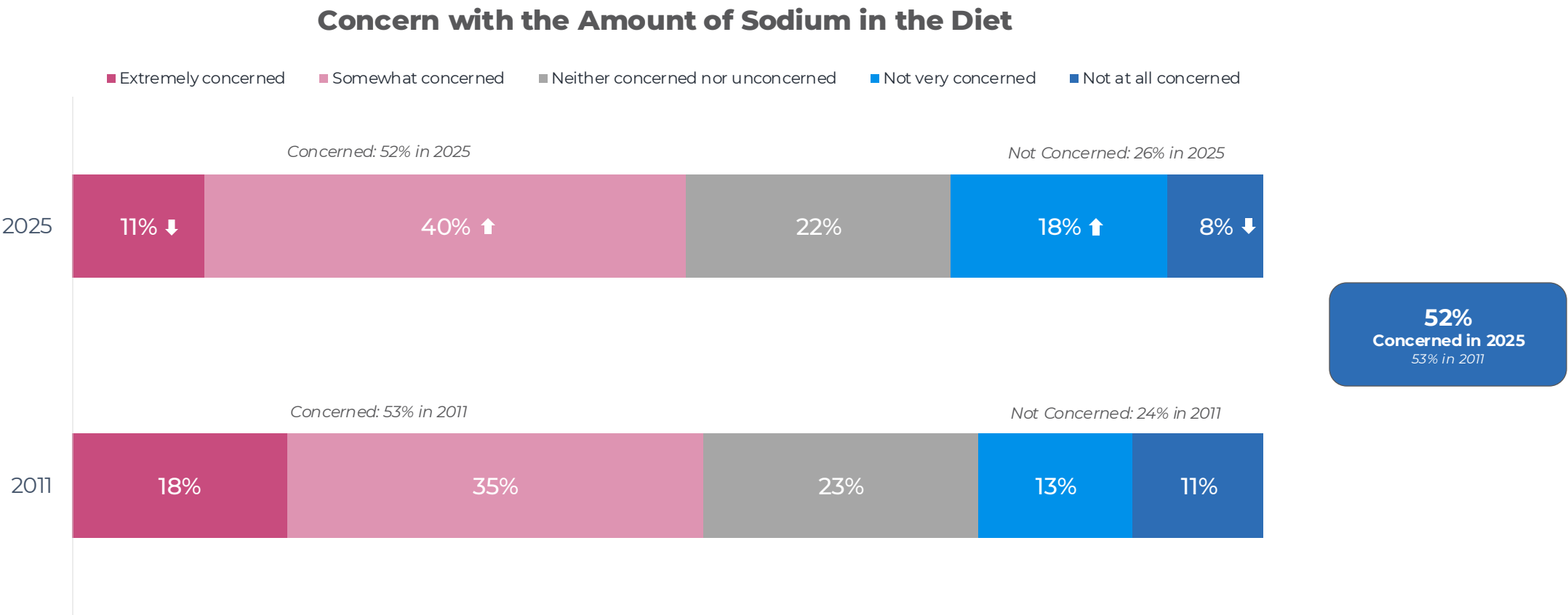
Compared to 2021, more Americans now try to consume protein (70% vs. 62%), fiber (64% vs. 56%), and vitamin D (63% vs. 56%), and more aim to limit or avoid sodium (52% vs. 47%).

Nutrients Americans are Trying to Consume and Limit/Avoid



Half of Americans are concerned with the amount of sodium in their diet, the same level of concern as reported in 2011.

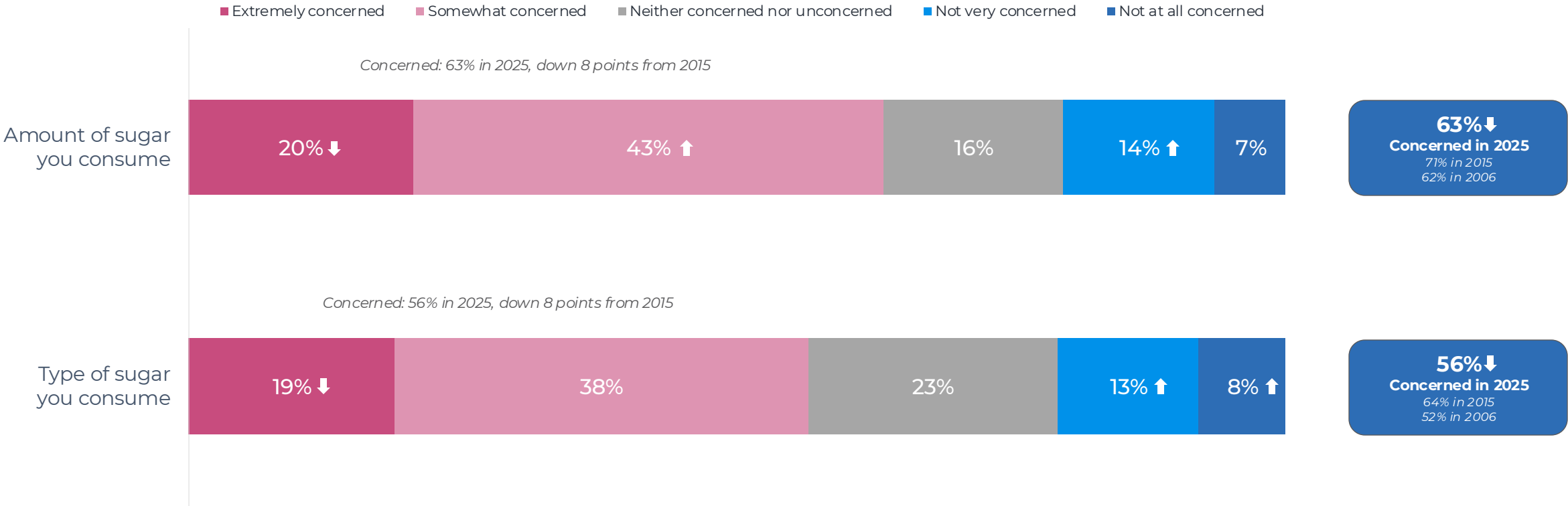
In 2025, overall concern with sodium intake is unchanged from 2011, yet fewer Americans are extremely concerned (11% vs. 18%).



More than 6 in 10 Americans are concerned with the amount of sugar they consume. More than half are concerned with the type of sugar.

In 2025, concerns about the amount and type of sugar consumed are lower than in 2015 and similar to those expressed in 2006, the first year of the *IFIC Food & Health Survey*.

Concern With the Amount and Type of Sugar Consumed

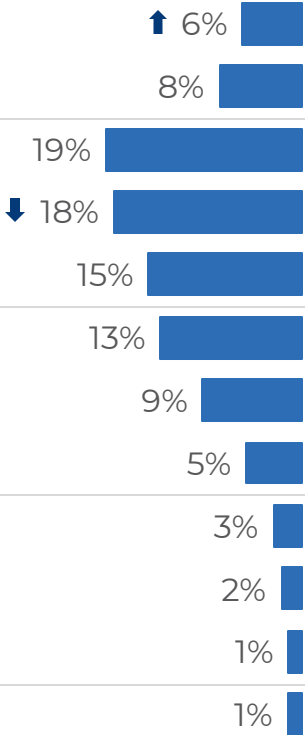
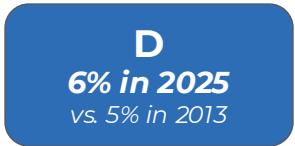
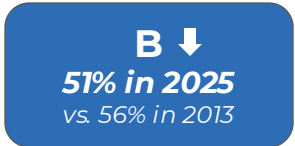
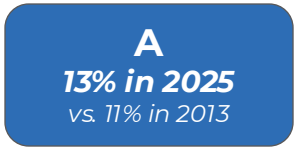


Americans grade their personal diet as healthier than the diet of the average American, although by a smaller margin than in 2013.

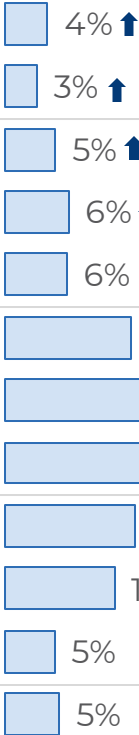
In 2025, 64% of Americans give their diet a B- or better, while 24% give the same grade to the average American's diet. In 2013, 67% of Americans gave their diet a B- or better, while just 13% gave the same grade to the average American's diet.

Healthfulness of Personal Diet

2025 vs. 2013

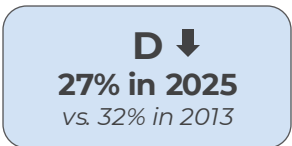
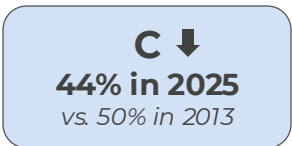
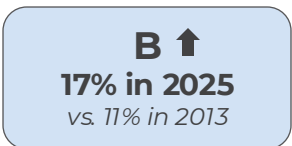
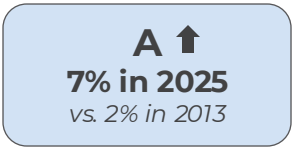


A
A-
B+
B
B-
C+
C
C-
D+
D
D-
F



Healthfulness of the Average American's Diet

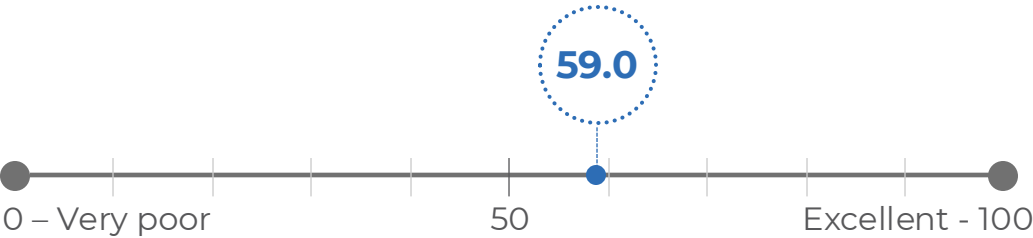
2025 vs. 2013



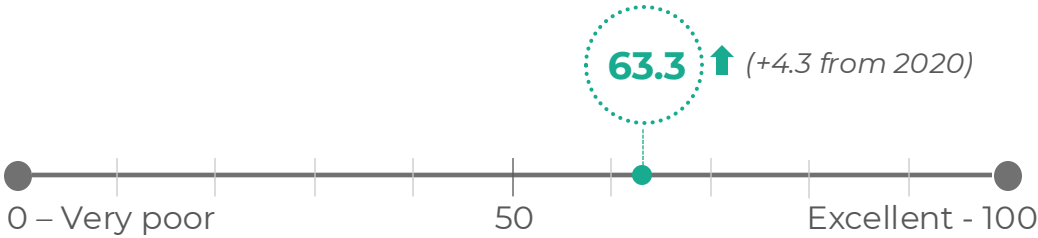
Americans rate their diets as healthier in 2025 than in 2020.

Compared to 2020, Americans now rate their diet 4.3 points higher on a 0–100 scale. Americans’ 2020 rating of 59.0 from the *IFIC Food & Health Survey* closely matches the 2020 U.S. Healthy Eating Index (HEI), which measures diet quality based on how well a set of foods aligns with key recommendations of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*.

Healthfulness of Overall Diet in 2020
(Mean rating on a scale of 0 to 100)



Healthfulness of Overall Diet in 2025
(Mean rating on a scale of 0 to 100)

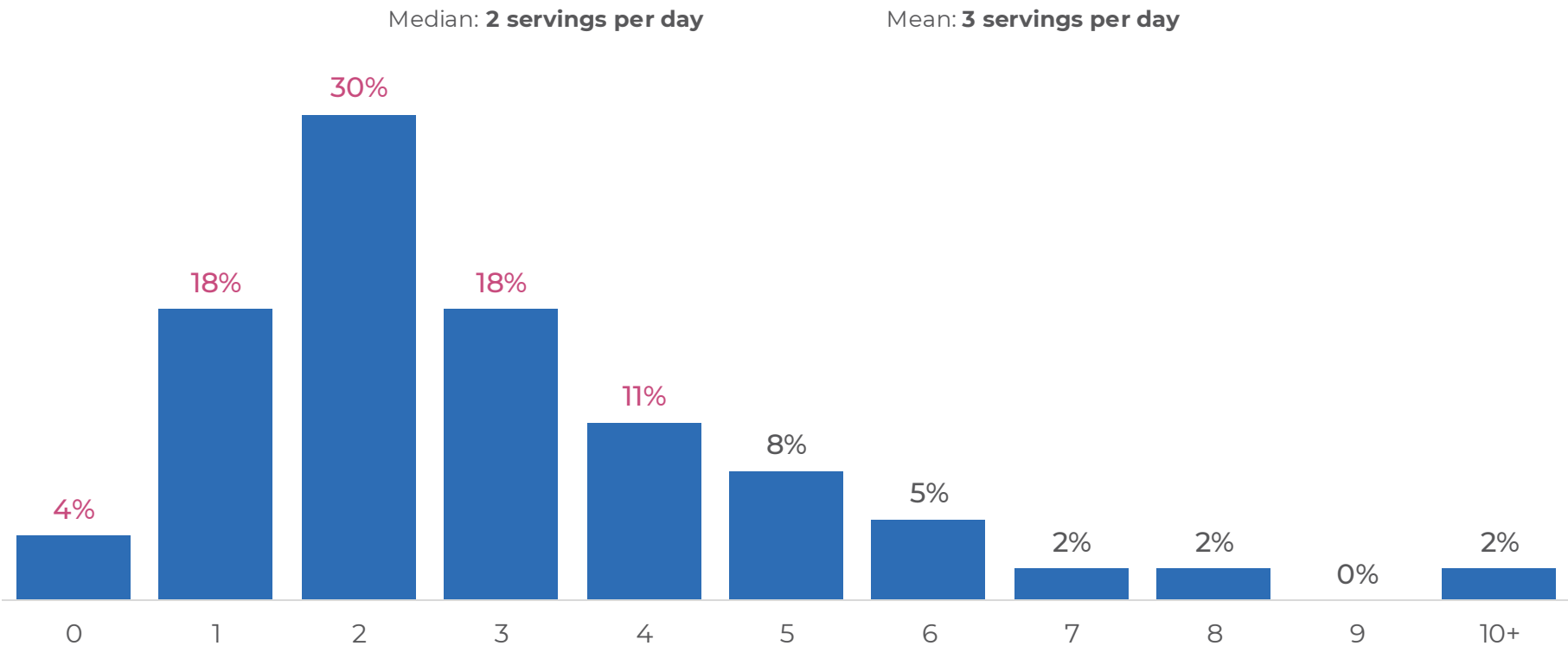


[TREND 2020/2025] D7 How would you rate the healthfulness of your overall diet on a scale of 0 to 100 (where 0 means “very poor” and 100 means “excellent”)? (n=3000)
*The [HEI-2020 score](#) assessed from *WWEIA/NHANES* (2017-2018) is 58 for Americans ages 2+ years, 57 for ages 19-59, and 61 for ages 60+ years.

Eight in ten Americans report consuming less than the recommended servings of fruits and vegetables each day.

One in five (19%) report consuming the recommended servings (five or more) of fruits and vegetables each day. More than half of Americans (52%) report consuming two servings or less of fruits and vegetables each day.

Self-Reported Servings of Fruits and Vegetables Consumed Daily

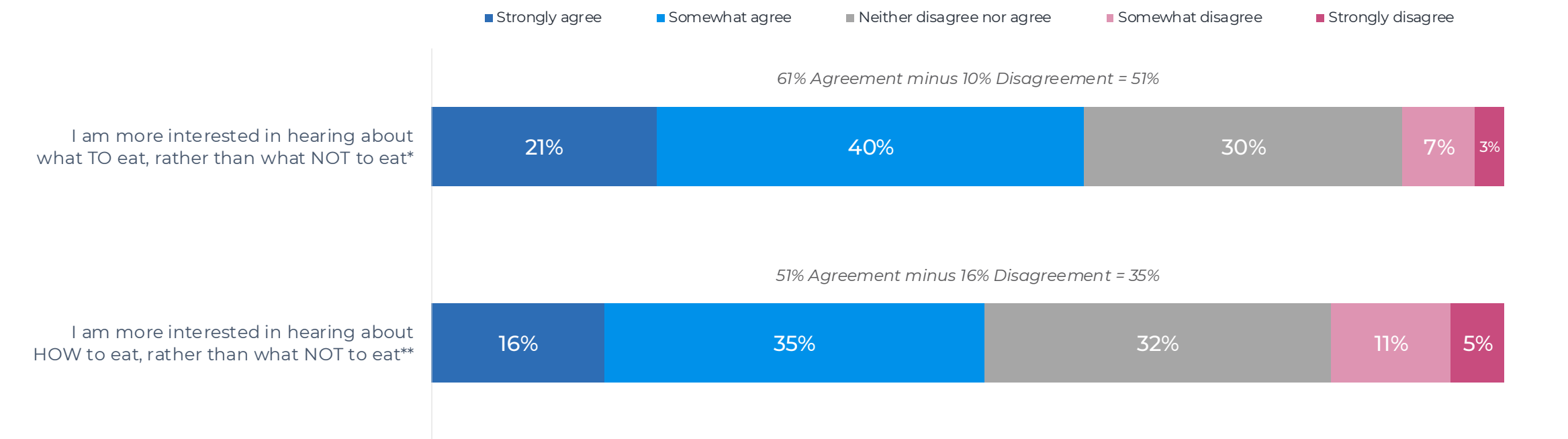


Q8. On average, how many servings of fruits and vegetables do you consume each day?
One serving of a fruit or vegetable is equal to 1 cup fresh, frozen, or canned; ½ cup dried; or 8 ounces of 100% juice. (n=1000)

Six in ten Americans are more interested in hearing what TO eat, rather than what NOT to eat. Half are more interested in hearing about HOW to eat, rather than what NOT to eat.

Americans are more interested in hearing about what to eat and how to eat, rather than hearing about what not to eat. By comparison, Americans express higher interest in hearing about what to eat than how to eat (51% vs. 35%).

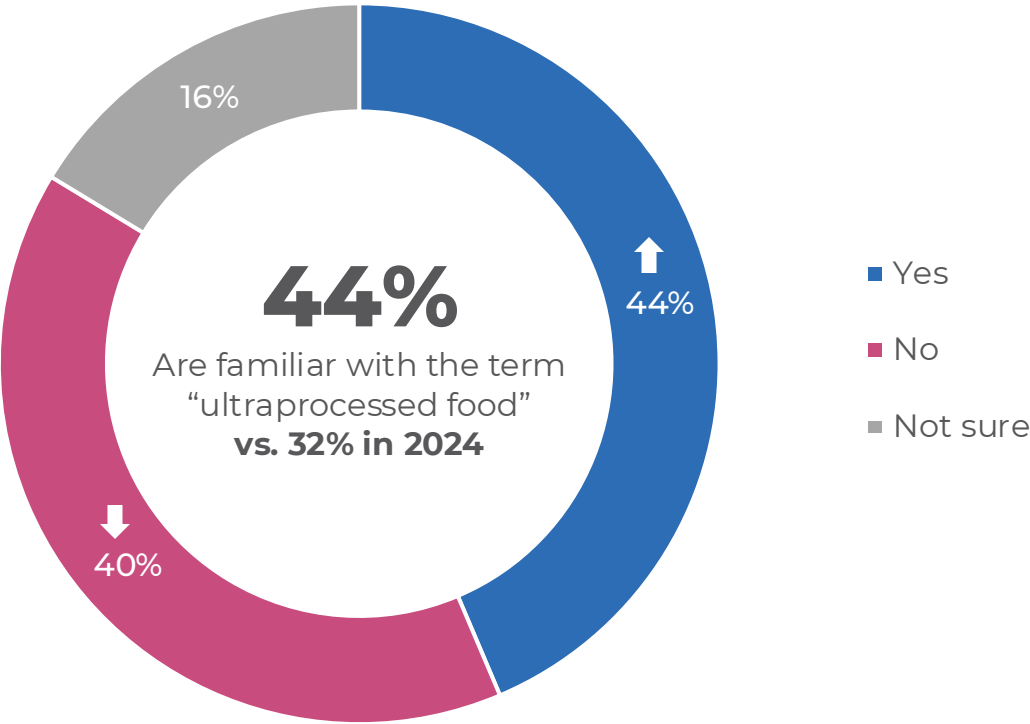
Interest in Type of Food Information



In 2025, more than 4 in 10 Americans are familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food,” a 12-point jump from 2024.

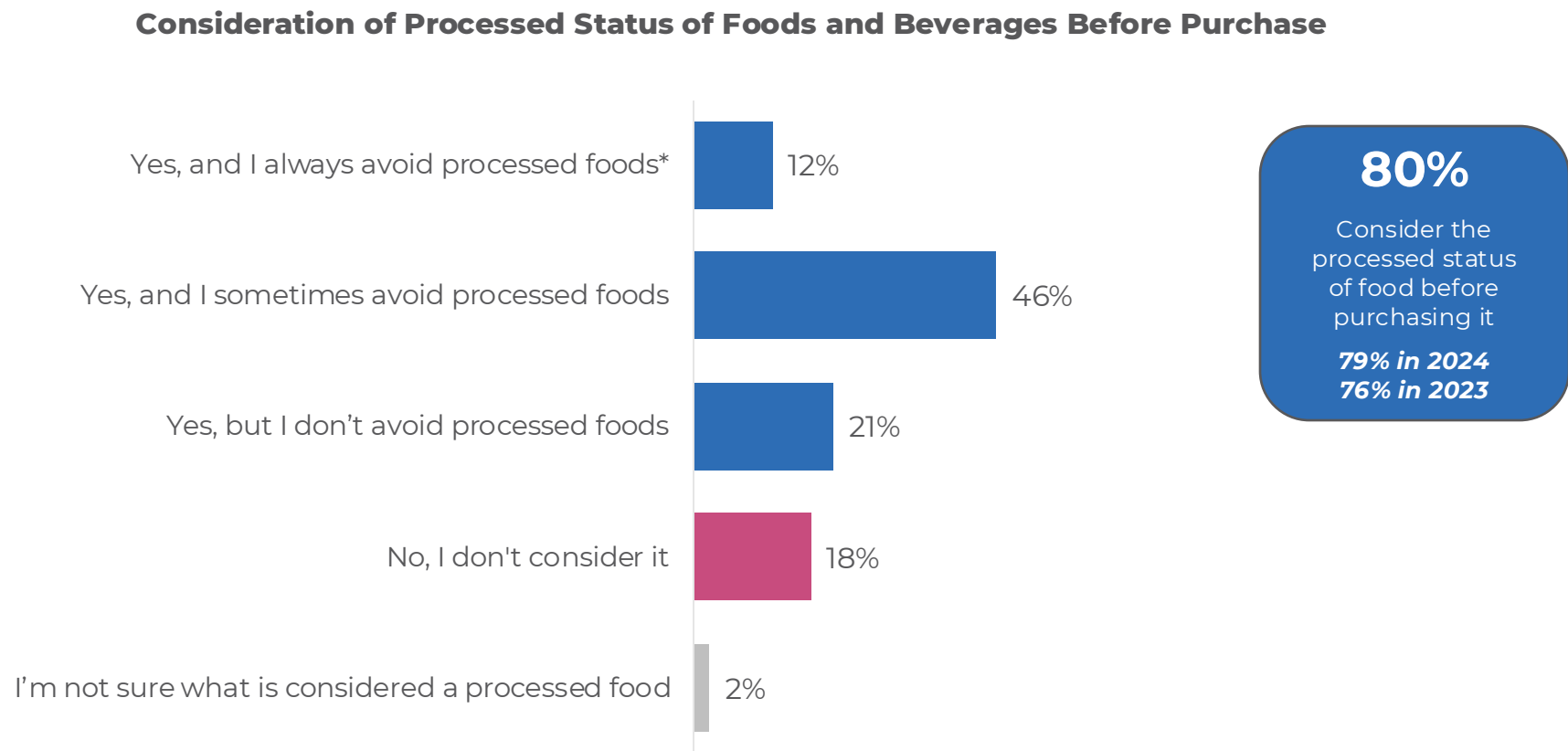
Forty percent of Americans are unfamiliar with the term “ultraprocessed foods,” down from 52% in 2024. Those who are unsure remains unchanged at 16%.

Familiarity with the Term “Ultraprocessed Food”



Eight in ten Americans consider whether food has been processed before purchasing it, similar to 2023 and 2024.

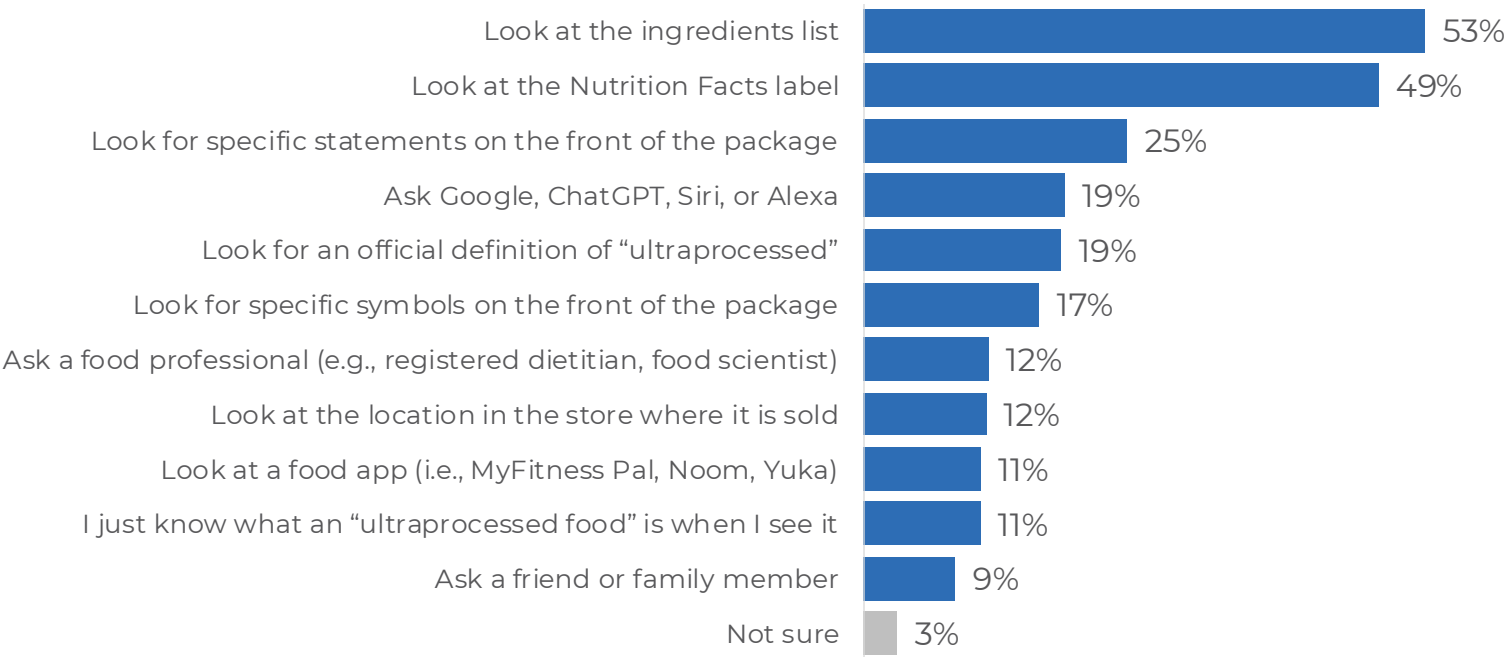
Four in ten Americans (39%) say they do not avoid processed foods (21%) or do not consider whether a food is processed (18%) before buying it. Two percent are not sure what is considered a processed food.



Among those who are familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food,” half look at the ingredients list and/or the Nutrition Facts label to decide whether a food is “ultraprocessed.”

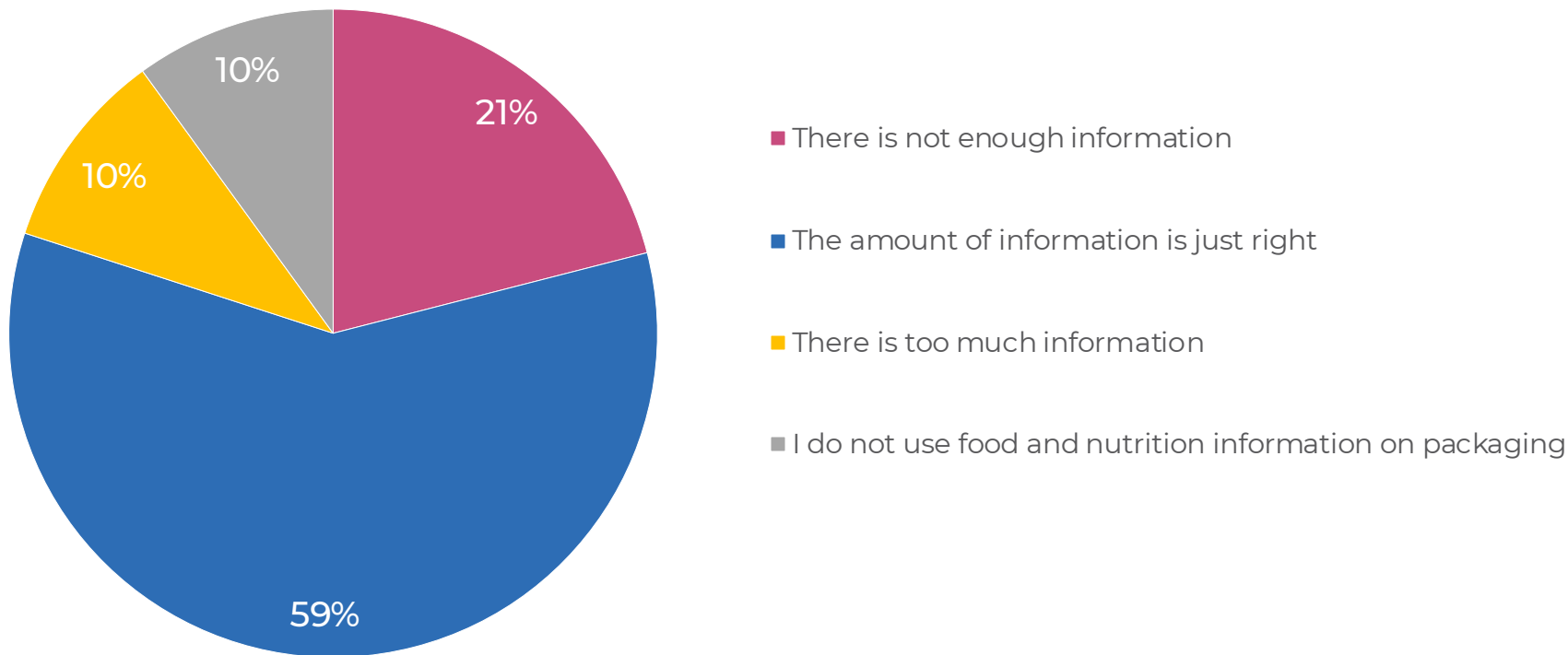
The top two ways Americans say they would decide if a food is “ultraprocessed” are by looking at information currently on food packaging—the ingredients list (53%) and/or Nutrition Facts label (49%). Fewer would use AI assistance (19%), the food’s location in a store (12%), and/or a food app (11%). One in ten (11%) say they know an “ultraprocessed food” when they see it.

Approaches To Identifying Ultraprocessed Food
(Of those familiar with the term “ultraprocessed food”)



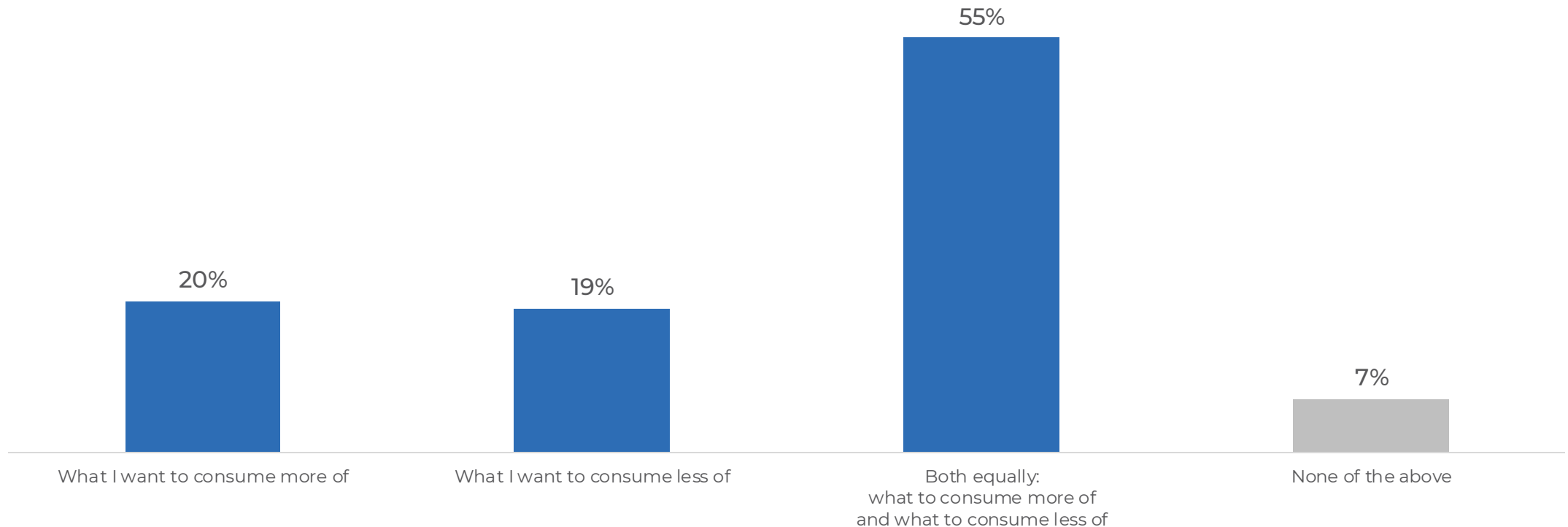
Six in ten Americans say the amount of information currently provided on food and beverage packaging is just right.

One in five Americans (21%) say food and beverage packaging lacks enough information, while half as many (10%) say there is too much. One in ten (10%) do not use food and nutrition information on packaging.



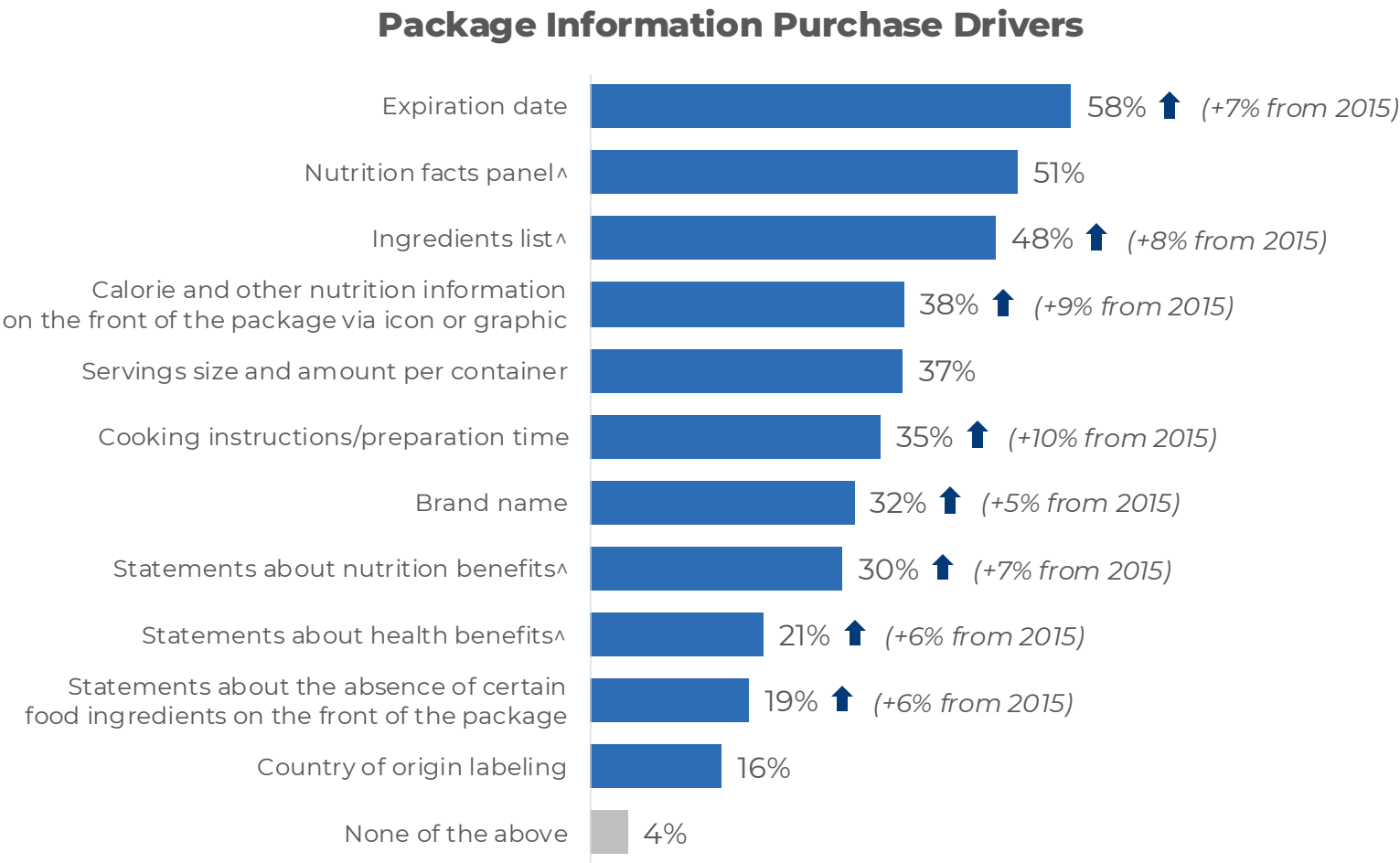
Among those who use food and nutrition information on packaging, more than half say they focus equally on what they want to consume more of and what they want to consume less of.

When using information on food packaging, one in five (20%) focus most on what they want to consume more of, while a similar share focus most on what they want to consume less of (19%).



The expiration date, Nutrition facts panel, and ingredients list are used most often when deciding to purchase a food or beverage.

More Americans report checking numerous pieces of on-package information than in 2015, but the top three remain the same.





DEMOGRAPHICS

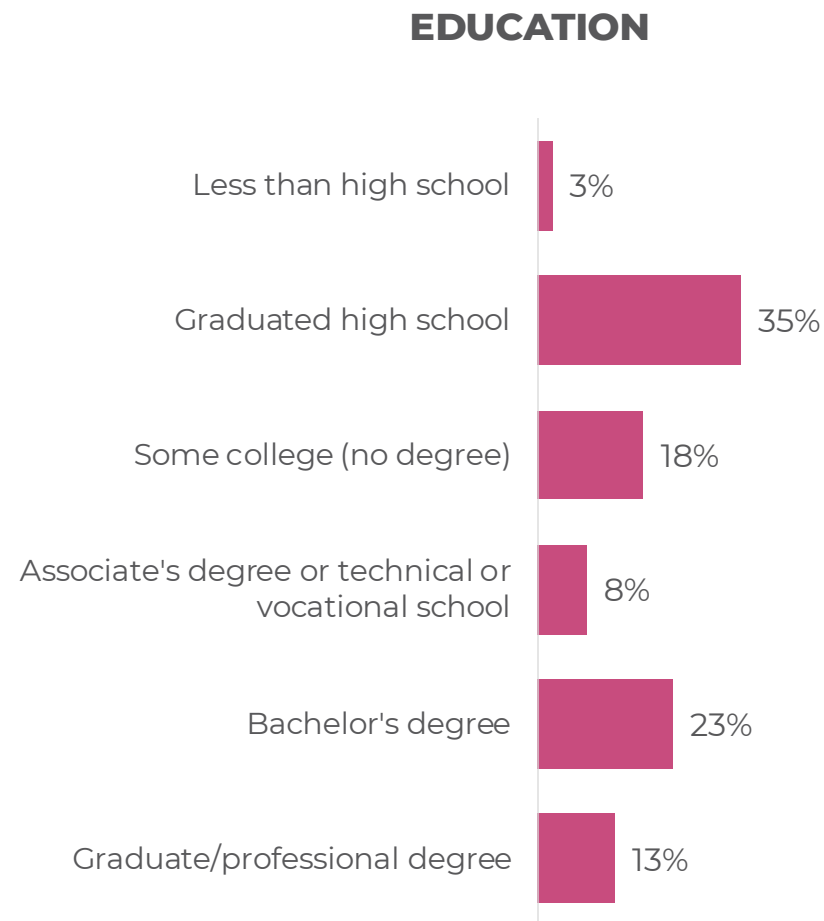
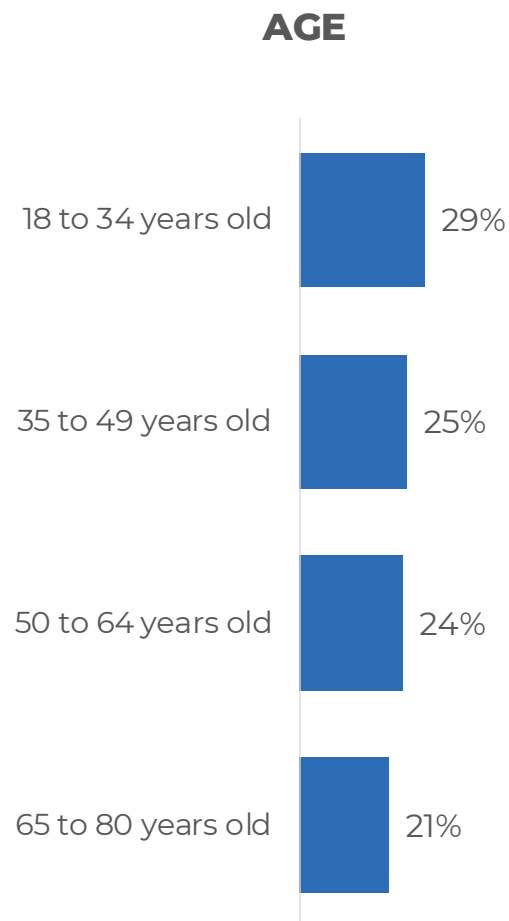


FOOD & HEALTH
SURVEY



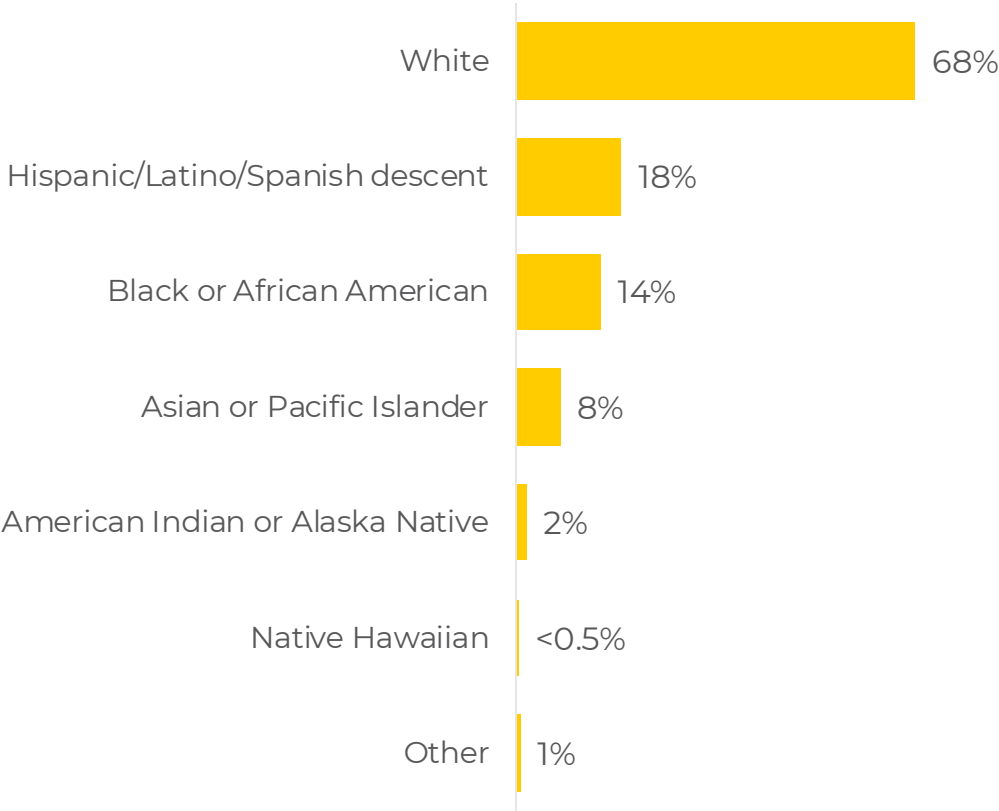
2025

Demographics

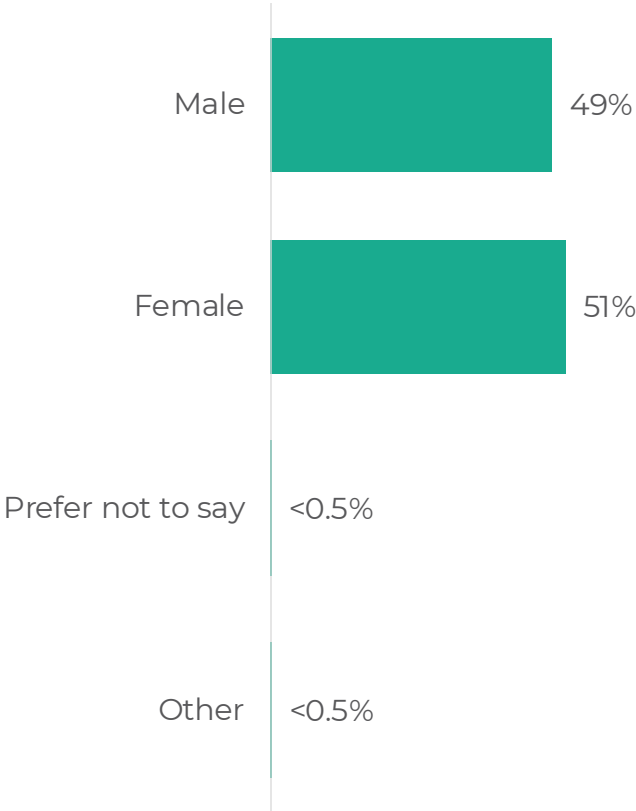


Demographics

RACE/ETHNICITY

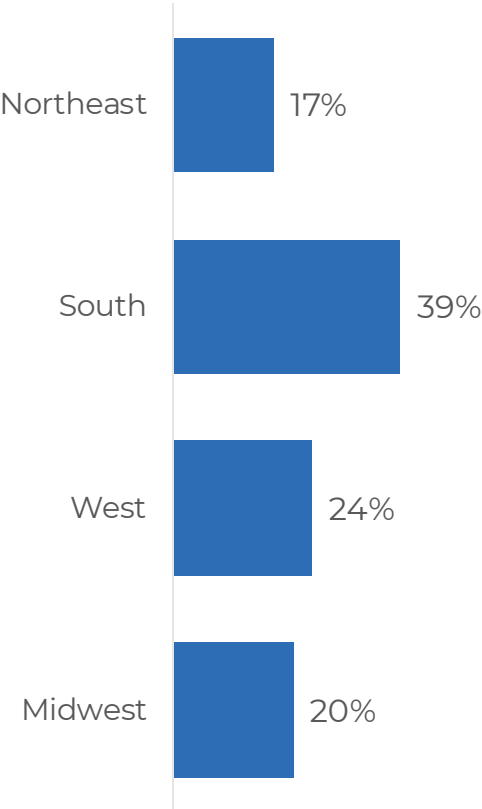


GENDER

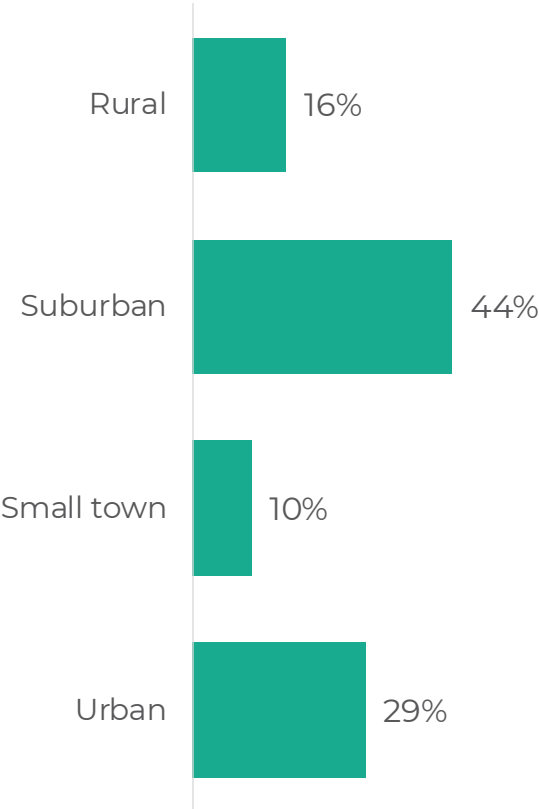


Demographics

REGION

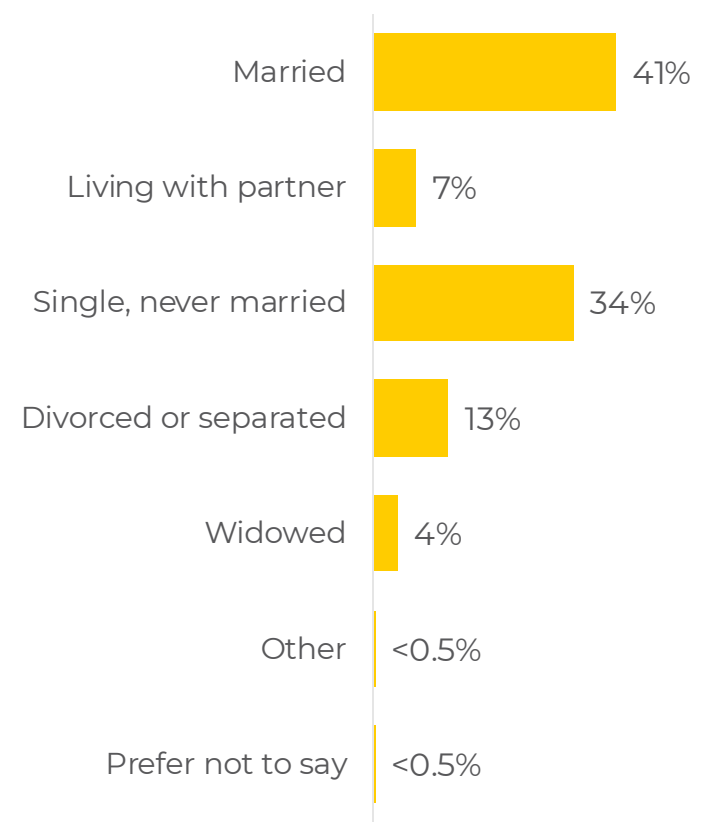


COMMUNITY

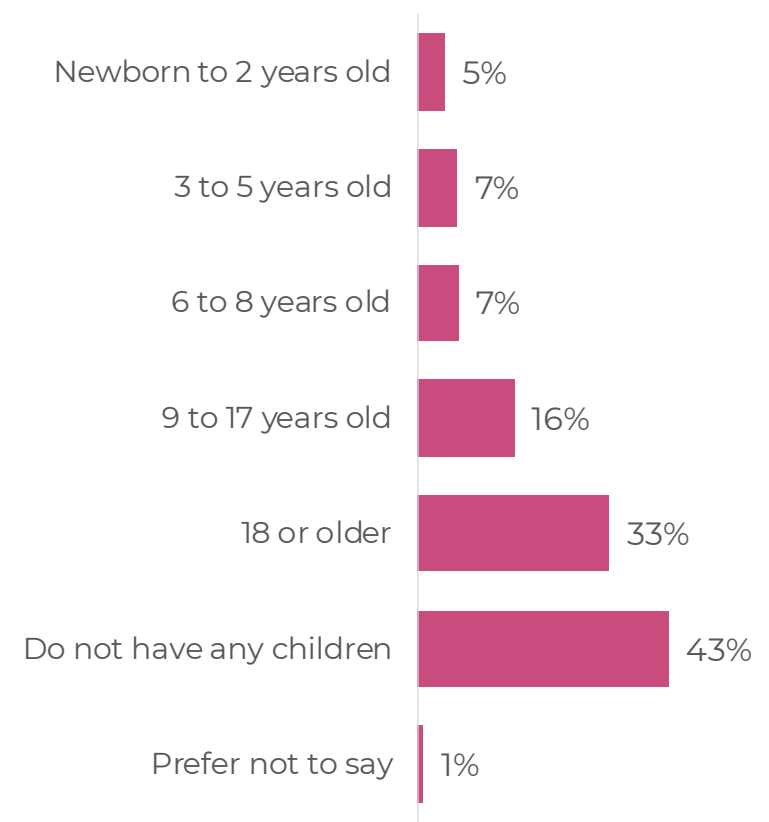


Demographics

MARITAL STATUS

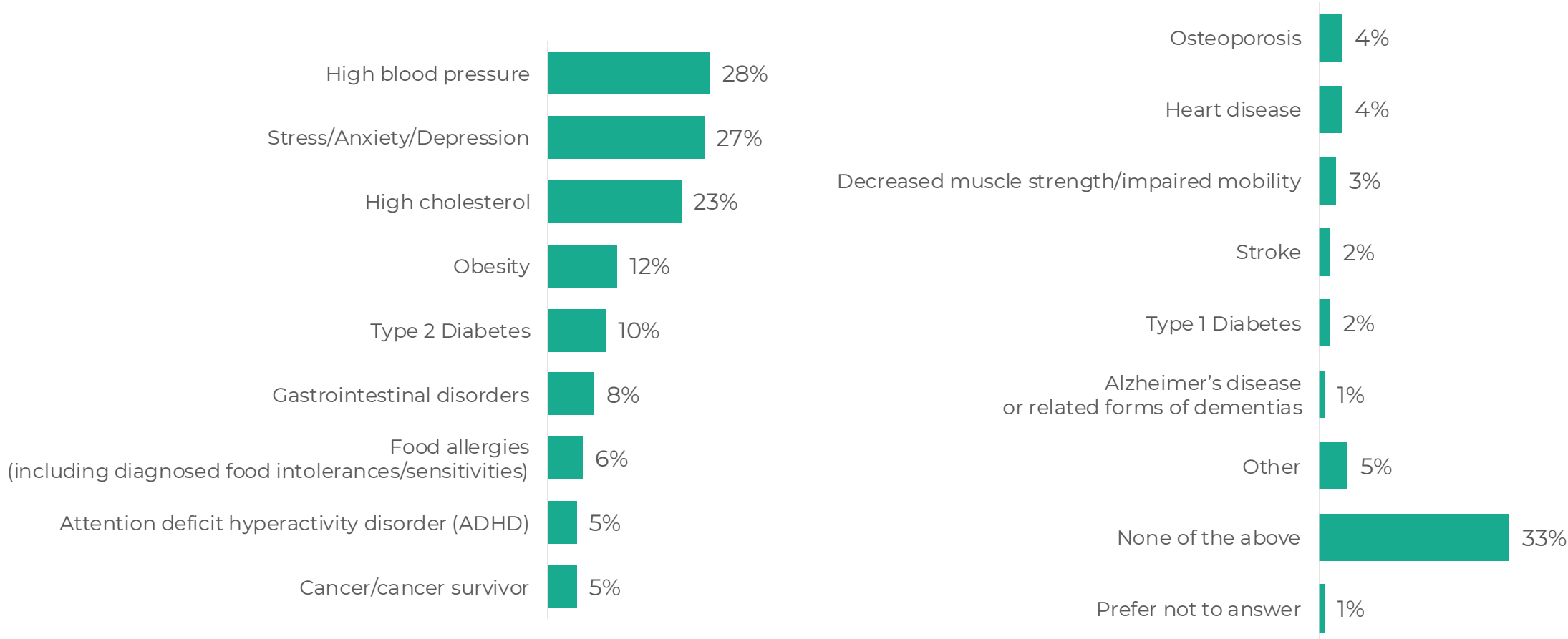


CHILDREN



Demographics

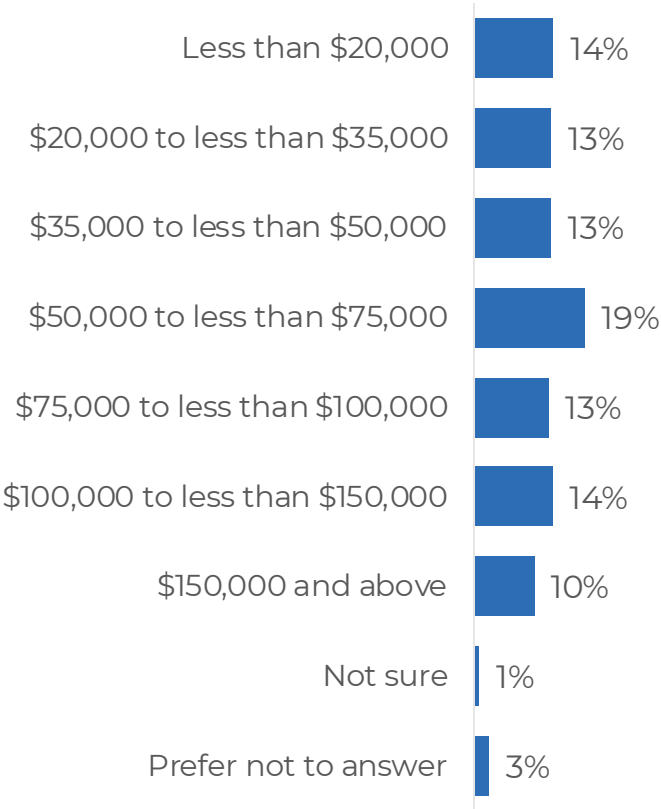
MEDICAL CONDITIONS



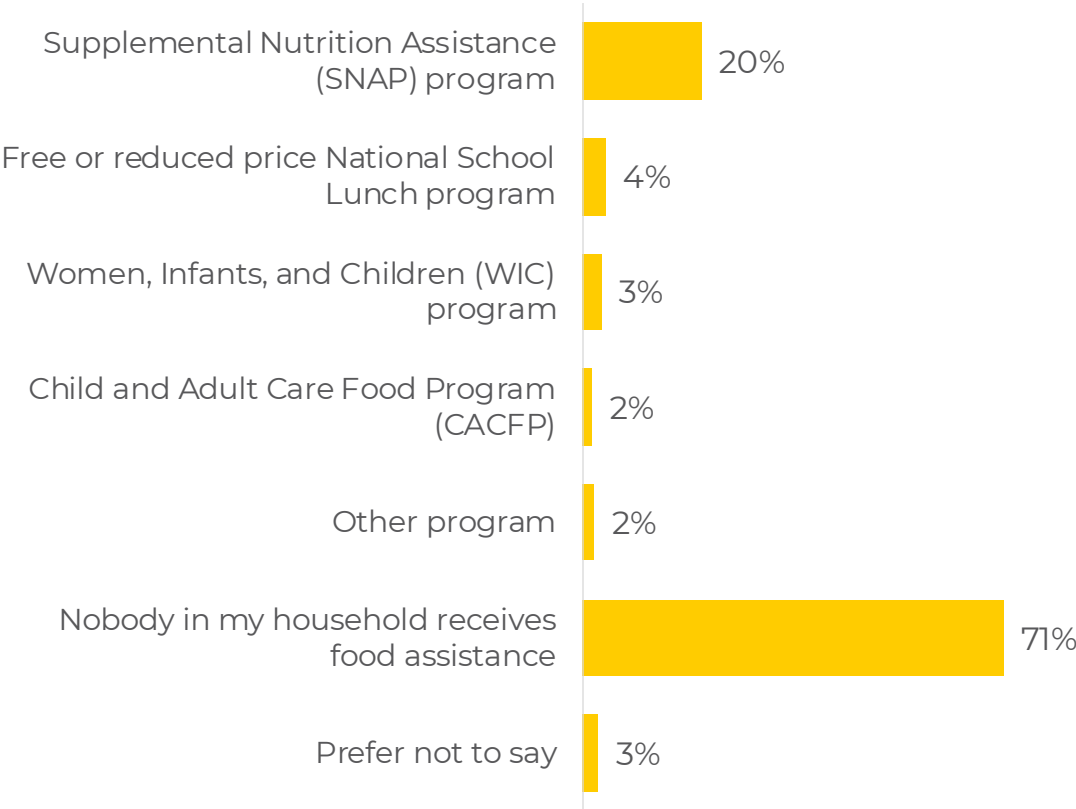
D4 Which of the following medical conditions, if any, have you been diagnosed with having? (Select all that apply.) (n=3000)
D4A In the past year, have you ever used a prescription medication/drug to lose weight? (This could be a pill or injection. (n=3000)
Note: Totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

Demographics

INCOME

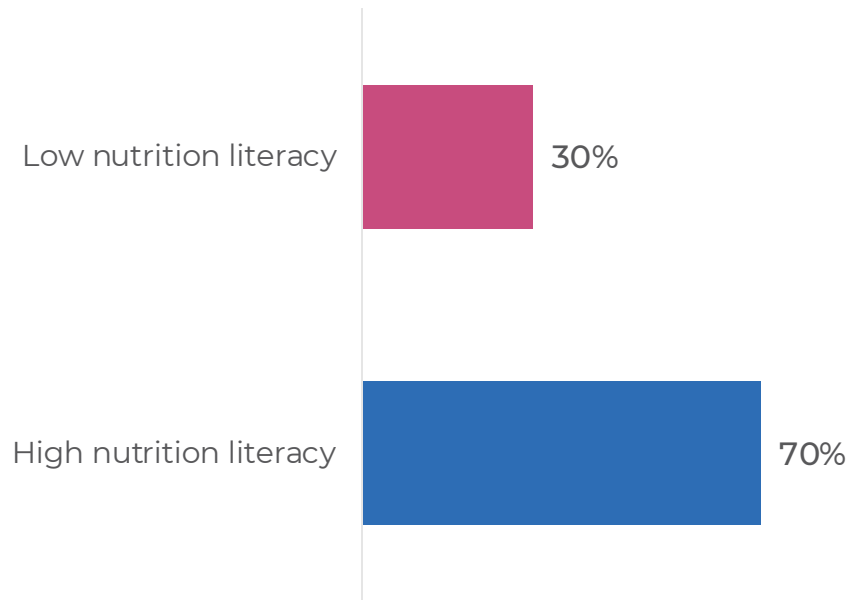


GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE



Demographics

NUTRITION LITERACY



Nutrition literacy was determined using a 3-point quiz containing two questions developed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in their consumer research on Front-of-Package Nutrition Labeling, as shown in Appendix D of the [FDA pretest screener](#).

Sums of scores from the 3-point quiz were used to determine nutrition literacy as follows:

- 0 or 1 correct answers = **LOW** nutrition literacy
- 2 or 3 correct answers = **HIGH** nutrition literacy

A Focus On **Dietary Guidance & Food Labeling**



An annual survey of American consumers to understand perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors surrounding food and food-purchasing decisions. 2025 marks the 20th consecutive year that the International Food Information Council (IFIC) has commissioned the *IFIC Food & Health Survey*.