



Does the public really want menu-labeling in fast food restaurants?

Jennifer Piron, MPH
Lisa V. Smith, MS, DrPH
Tony Kuo, MD MSHS
Christopher Jarosz, PhD
Paul Simon, MD, MPH

County of Los Angeles, Department of Public Health
Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention



Presenter Disclosure

Speaker: Jennifer Piron

The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

- No relationships to disclose



Objectives

- Describe the scope of the obesity epidemic and its contributing factors.
- Examine the attitudes about menu labeling and influence on purchasing intentions.
- Present practical research strategies for sampling the public regarding nutrition and local food environments.



Scope of the obesity epidemic and its contributing factors



- 66% of Americans are overweight or obese^a
- Nearly 50% of the food dollar is spent on foods consumed outside of the home
- In 2006, only 54% of leading restaurant chains had nutrition information in some form^b
- Many consumers have no idea how many calories a meal contains at food facilities



^ahttp://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/pubs/pubd/hestats/overweight/overwght_adult_03.htm;

^bWootan MG, Osborn M (2006). Am J Orev Med.

Example of Menu-labeling

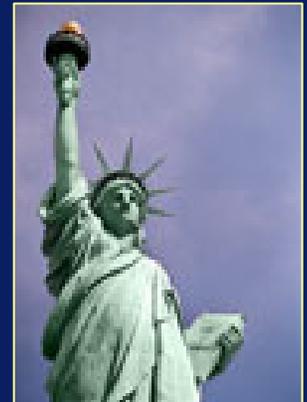
McDreamy's Restaurant & Donut Shoppe

<u>Item</u>	<u>Calories</u>	<u>Price</u>
Cheeseburger (4 oz.)	300	\$2.79
Large fries (5.4 oz.)	500	\$1.39
Large soda (32 oz.)	310	\$1.19
Apple pie (2.7 oz.)	250	\$0.99
Total	1,360	



Current Legislation

- Menu-labeling is a strategy for addressing the obesity epidemic
 - New York City was the first to enact a menu-labeling ordinance
 - King County (Washington)
 - San Francisco
 - California (SB 1420)



California Legislation



- A previous attempt at menu-labeling failed in 2007 (SB 120)
- SB 1420 was passed on September 30, 2008*
 - By July 1, 2009 chains (>20 outlets in state) will have to provide brochures with nutrition information
 - By January 1, 2011 chains must provide calorie information on their menu boards



But, will they use the information?



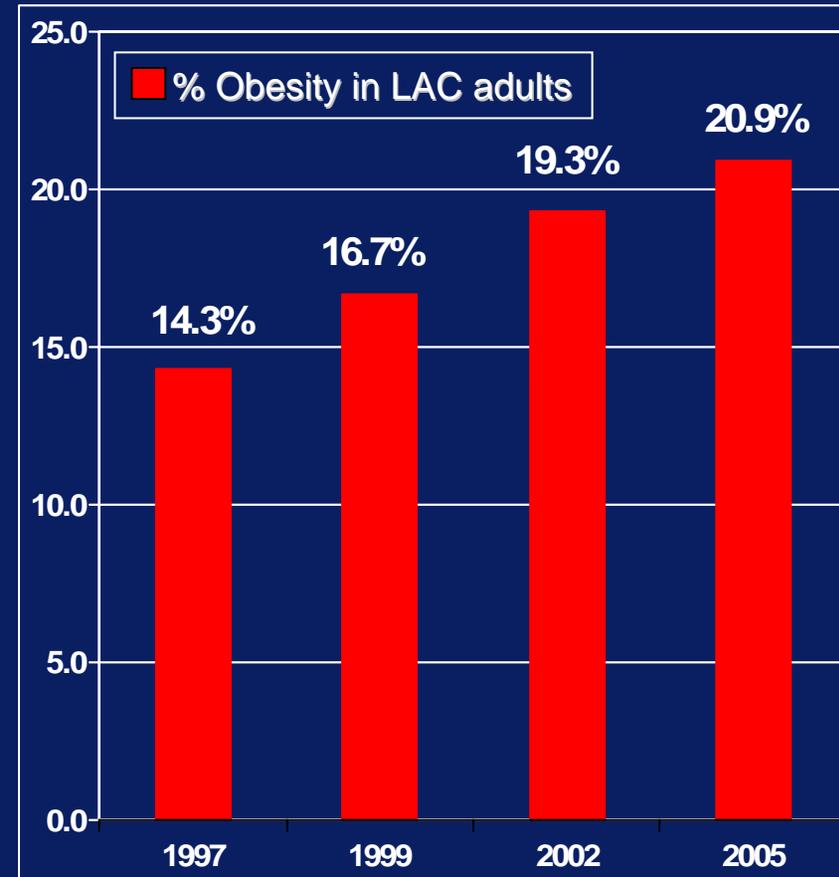
- Limited research has assessed the public's desire for, and use of, this information
- Emerging evidence suggests that calorie information has resulted in food purchases with lower calorie content
- Few studies have described the views and purchasing intentions of overweight and obese consumers



Los Angeles County



- 4,000 sq miles
- 10.3 million population
- 47% Hispanic/Latino
- 30% White
- 13% Asian/PI
- 9% African-American
- >19 major chains with 2700 locations*
- 21% adults were obese**



*Simon, P.A., et al., Proximity of fast food restaurants to schools: Do neighborhood income and type of school matter? Prev. Med. (2008), doi:10.1016/j.ypmed.2008.02.021; **2005 Los Angeles County Health Survey, LA Health Trends, September 2005



Calorie and Nutrition Survey



- Pilot study in Los Angeles County:
 - Examined public interest in menu-labeling
 - Assessed ways the public will use this information to make menu choices
 - Identified the characteristics of individuals who would use menu-labeling information to eat fewer calories



Study Design, Questionnaire Development, and Data Collection



- 2-page, self-administered questionnaire in English and Spanish
- Questions: modified from previous CDC surveys on nutrition
- Survey was administered to patients at six public health centers in fast food dense areas



Data Analysis



- Univariate and bivariate analyses
- Logistic regression to identify characteristics of individuals who would use menu-labeling information to eat fewer calories
 - Applied Health Belief Model & current literature to select variables
 - Hosmer-Lemeshow Test assessed goodness-of-fit
- Performed all analyses in SAS 9.1



Demographic Variables

- Gender
- Age
- Race/Ethnicity
- Education
- Body Mass Index using height & weight*

*According to CDC and USDA Nutrition guidelines.



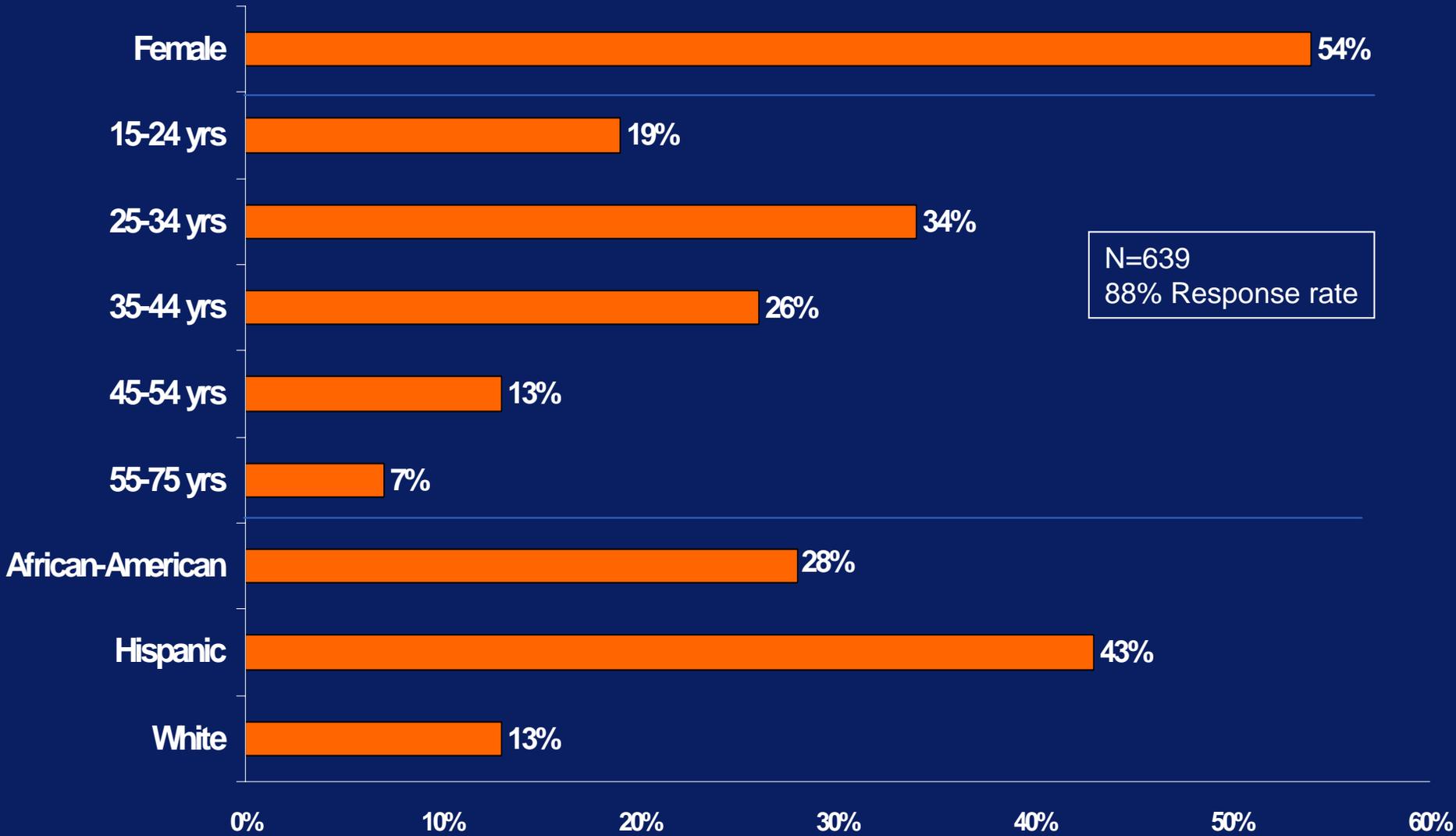
Study Measures

- Knowledge of daily caloric requirements*
- Frequency of visits to McDonald's
- Recalled seeing calorie info at McDonald's
- Importance of info on menu board
- Info should be posted on menu boards
- How menu info used to order foods & drinks

*According to CDC and USDA Nutrition guidelines.

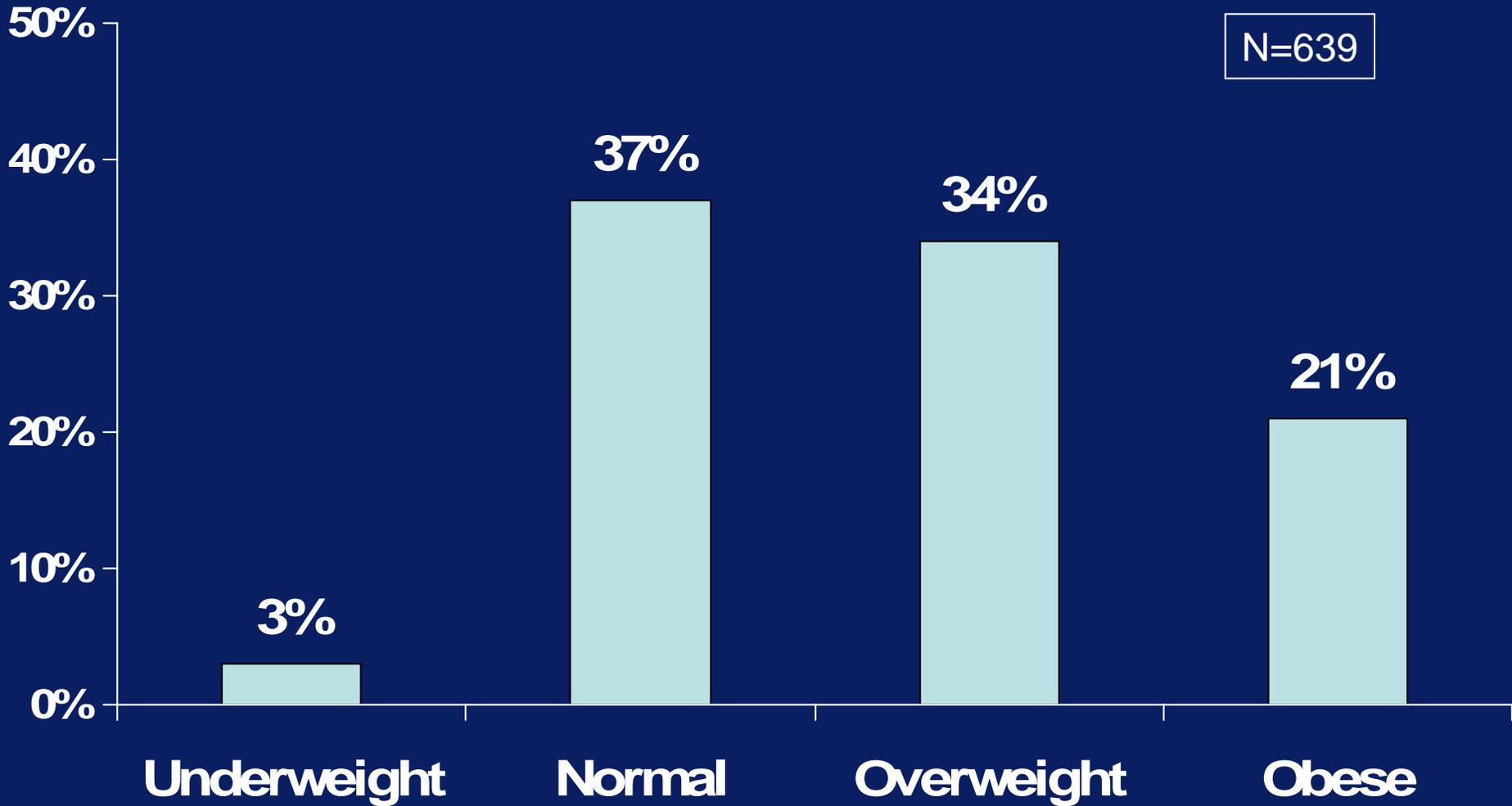


Who are the respondents?



*12% Asian/PI; 75% High school graduate

Weight Status



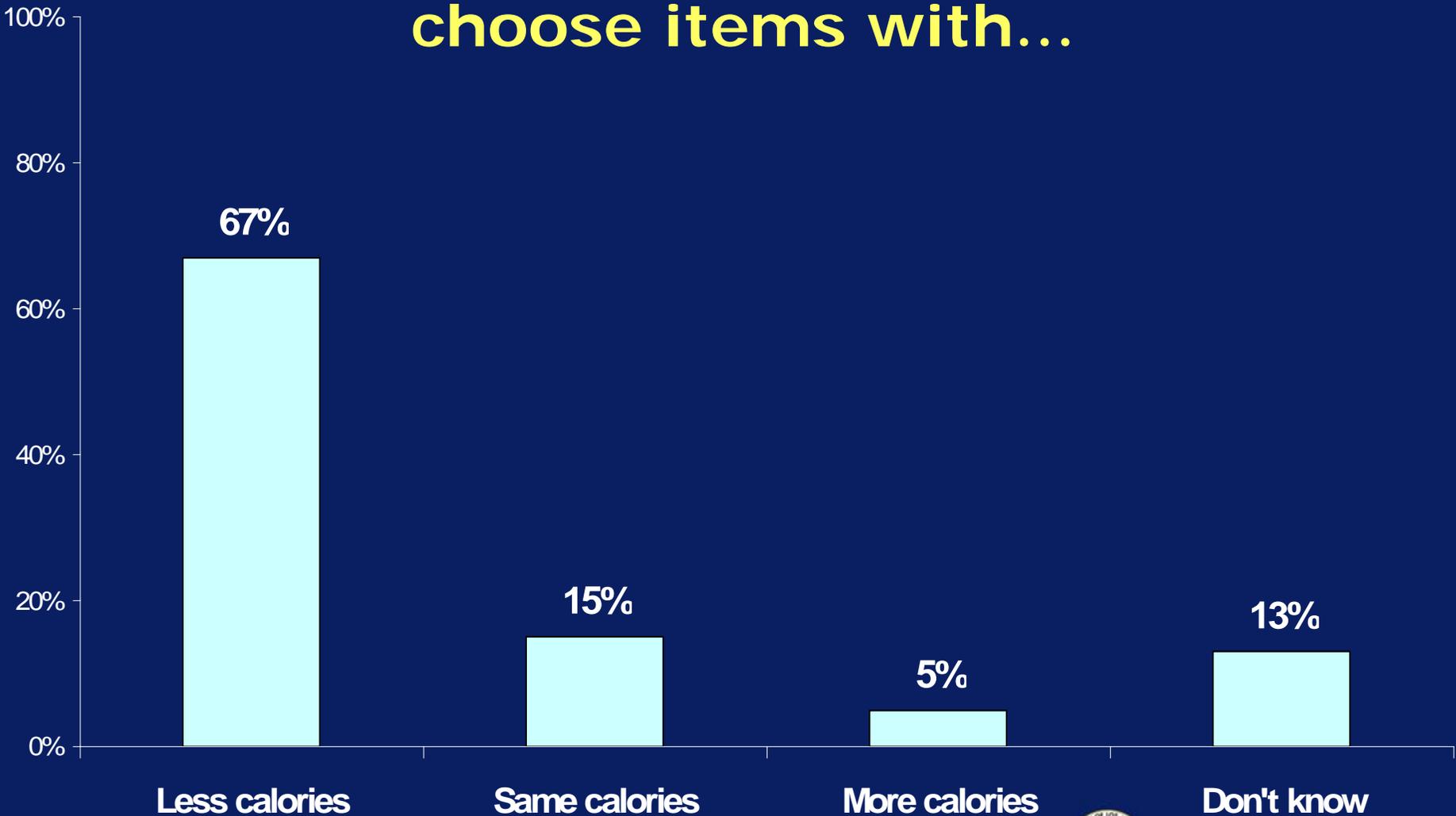
Calorie Knowledge, Restaurant Visitations, and Attitudes Toward Menu-labeling

- 23% correct about daily caloric requirements*
- 74% visited McDonald's in past year
 - 22% visited weekly
- 19% recalled seeing calorie info at McDonald's
- 93% important to have calorie info on menu boards
- 86% info should be posted on menu boards

*According to CDC and USDA Nutrition guidelines.



If calorie information were listed next to menu items, respondents would choose items with...



Predictors of Using Calorie Information to Order Foods with Fewer Calories

Characteristic	Adjusted Odds Ratio*	95% CL
Female (vs. Male)	1.8	1.1, 3.0
25-34 yrs (vs. 15-24 yrs)	2.4	1.2, 4.8
55-75 yrs (vs. 15-24 yrs)	7.0	1.3, 39.4
Hispanic (vs. White)	3.4	1.5, 8.0
Obese (vs. Normal)	2.3	1.1, 5.0
Believes calorie info is important	6.6	2.4, 18.2
Calories should be posted	2.4	1.1, 4.9

*Adjusted for education, knowledge of daily calorie requirements, and frequency of eating at McDonald's; H-L Goodness-of-fit = 0.55.



Conclusion



- There is moderate to strong public support for menu-labeling
- The public will use nutritional information at the point of purchase to reduce calorie consumption
- Further research is needed to study the impact of other nutritional information postings



Study Limitations

- Sample may not be representative of the general population
 - 28% African Americans in sample vs. 13% in general population
- However, sample is likely to represent the overweight/obese population and those who eat at fast food establishments
- Potential recall bias



Practical Research Strategies

- Use focus groups and scientific literature to develop survey instrument
- Number surveys and be sure to administer them sequentially
- If possible, avoid skip patterns and double-siding questionnaires
- Use friendly survey coordinators
- Provide nutritious (and tasty) food incentives (if using them)



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Maria Lopez, SCN, Central HC
Patricia Pineda, Tobacco Control
Ava Cato-Werhane, Health Educator, SPAs 7 and 8
Teresa Level, Health Educator, SPA 6

Nutrition Survey Coordinators

Lisa V. Smith, DCDIP, Supervisor
Jennifer Piron, DCDIP
Claire Kim, DCDIP
Fred Dominguez, HEA
Susan Feinstein, HEA
Milan Hill, HEA

Nutrition Survey Coordinators (cont.'d)

Kim Kisler, HEA
Maria Pacho, HEA
Maria Jose Salmeron, HEA
Erika Gist-Siever, HEA
Socorro Alanis, BBH

Incentives Team

Theresa Level, SPA Health Educator
Celeste Del Valle, Injury Violence Prevention
Orville Bigelow, Nutrition
Immunization Program

Technical Advisors

Pat Schenk, DCDIP Administration
Mercedes Bennett, CN, Torrance HC
Angel Aquino, SCN, South HC
Cristin Mondy, Nurse Mgr, Central HC
Virginia Bermudez, CN, North Hollywood
Norma Harris, Nurse Mgr, North Hollywood
Veronica Rodriguez, SCN, Hollywood HC
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Leticia Romero, STC, South HC





Questions?

