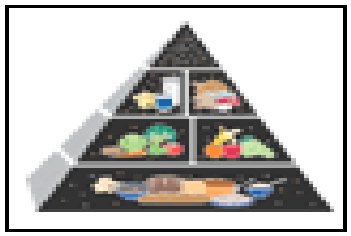

How Healthy are YOU?

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Introduction

Being a healthy individual is a goal most strive for because it allows us to have a more productive and happy life. However, our fast-paced lives make that difficult to achieve. Eating habits are influenced by time of day when most calories are consumed (de Castro, 2004), the amount of total caloric intake, meal size, types of food, where most meals are eaten and the amount of daily exercise (USDA, 2005).

The objective of this research was to evaluate our data as compared to the guidelines set up by the USDA (2005). These guidelines give us a reasonable idea of what defines a healthy lifestyle. We will compare these guidelines to the sample data we have collected from the general population in Weatherford, OK, and from SWOSU students. We will also investigate how the eating habits of collage students differ from the general population. In this study, we hypothesize student eating habits are not as healthy as the general population , as found by other researchers (Nelson, Larson, Barr-Anderson, Neumarkstainer, & Story, 2009).

Aim of Study

The following research questions were tested in this study:

- ❑To determine the time of day most calories are consumed.
- ❑To evaluate eating habits of the subjects based on food groups as defined by the USDA guidelines.
- ❑To determine how many calories are consumed per day.
- ❑To determine in what setting the general population and SWOSU students eat most often.
- ❑To compare how much planned exercise per day the general population conducts as compared to SWOSU students.

Materials and Methods

This project was done to meet requirements of ALHLT 3043 Health Statistics. The following steps were followed:

- ❑Received approval from SWOSU protection of Human Subjects Committee.
- ❑Conducted survey using convenience sampling of 50 SWOSU students (40 females, 10 males) in Biol 3704 Human Anatomy and 49 subjects from the general population in Weatherford, OK (32 females, 17 males). We surveyed 24 subjects from an optometry clinic and 25 from a M.D. clinic in Weatherford, OK on November 30, 2010.
- ❑Data was organized using Microsoft Excel® and analyzed via the Chi Square Test using PASW® software.
- ❑Data was compared to the USDA Dietary Guidelines (USDA, 2005).

Results

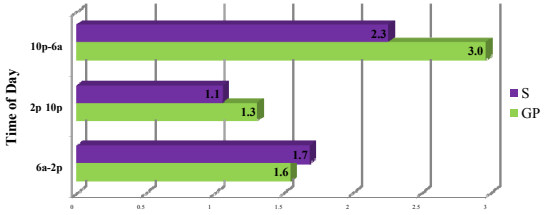

Figure 1. Average ranking of time of day when most calories were reported to be consumed by SWOSU Students (S) and the General Population (GP), where 1 = most and 3 = least.

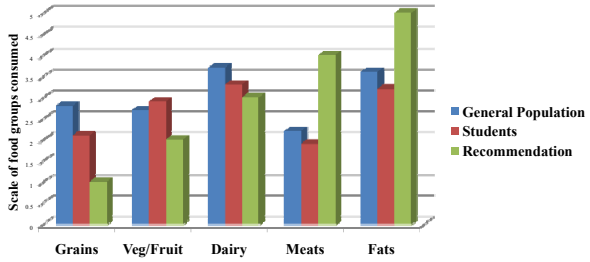

Figure 2. Ranking of food groups as reported by SWOSU Students and the General Population (where 1 = most consumed and 5 = least consumed) as compared to USDA Daily Recommendations (2005).

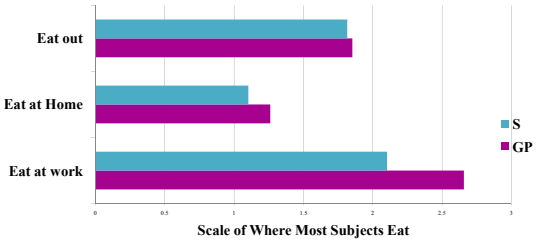

Figure 3. Ranking of setting where SWOSU Students (S) and the General Population (GP) eat most often, where 1 = most and 3 = least.

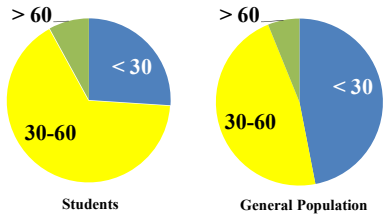

Figure 4. Reported time of planned exercise conducted per day by SWOSU Students and the General Population.

Conclusions

- ❑ Our results suggest most calories are consumed between 6 am and 10 pm for both groups of subjects (Figure 1).
- ❑ DeCastro (2004) reported that eating more calories earlier in the day and restricting intake during the evening might reduce overall intake and "serve as a treatment or preventative measure for obesity."
- ❑ Both the general population and students reported to consume foods mostly from the meat, grains and fruit/vegetable food groups (Figure 2). The USDA (2005) recommends grains be consumed most, whereas meats should be consumed in less quantity (fourth).
- ❑ The amount of calories reported to be consumed per day by the general population (1,785 calories) was similar to what was reported by SWOSU students (1,792 calories). The USDA (2005) recommends 2800 calories per day for men and 2200 calories per day for women.
- ❑ Both subject groups consumed the most calories at home (Figure 3).
- ❑ There was a tendency ($P = 0.09$) for students to exercise more than the general population (Figure 4).
- ❑ The problems encountered with this study were: (1) Not all subjects provided responses to survey questions, (2) Needed more of a balance in gender, and (3) survey responses were self-reported and actual measures were not taken.
- ❑ Overall, results suggest both students and the general population moderately healthy eating habits, but more exercise may be needed in the general population and more grains and less meat should be consumed in their daily diet.

Works Cited

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