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CONSUMER MESSAGING ON NUTRITION



OVERVIEW

- Nutrition information comes from many sources
 + Food advertising
- × Health and nutrition claims
 - + Which claims are being used and how often?
 - + Which claims are more beneficial for consumers?
 - + How should we promote healthy foods?
 - + How do we help consumers make comparisons?

HEALTH & NUTRITION-RELATED CLAIMS IN ADVERTISING

REGULATION OF ADVERTISING CLAIMS

- × Nutritional Labeling and Education Act
- Requires food labels that bear nutrient content claims and certain health messages to comply with specific requirements

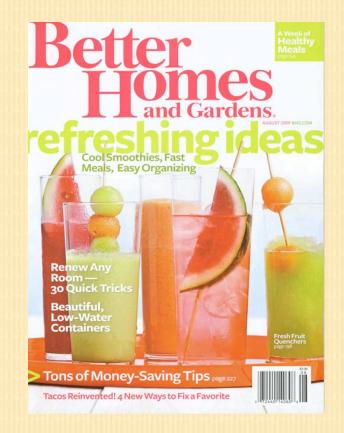
FOOD CLAIMS IN ADVERTISTING

- **× Health claims** –describe a relationship between a food, a food component, or dietary supplement ingredient and reduction in risk of a disease or health-related condition
- **× Nutrient claims** statements that imply that a food has particular beneficial nutritional property
- Structure/function claims describe the effect of a dietary supplement on the structure or function of the body.

HEALTH AND NUTRITION-RELATED CLAIMS IN MAGAZINE FOOD ADVERTISEMENTS

WOMEN'S VS. MEN'S MAGAZINES

- * Ads in women's magazines used more health and nutrient claims (86.4%) than ads in men's magazines (13.6%)
- Nutrient content claims were most often used claims in ads across all types of magazines



WOMEN'S VS. MEN'S MAGAZINES

- Lack of health claims stating reduction in disease or health condition
 - + Space limitations
 - + Legal ramifications
- Health claims may be more useful in guiding consumers to make healthy food choices, compared to nutrient content claims



WOMEN'S VS. MEN'S MAGAZINES

- Although magazines have begun to offer more advices on healthier lifestyles, food advertisements continue to market unhealthy products
- X Unhealthy foods full of sweeteners, artificial flavorings, trans fat, salt, and preservatives are still among the most advertised, while fruits and vegetables are the least.

- In the past, food marketers have used taste claims more often than health and nutrition claims in advertising
- Health and nutrition related claims in women's magazines in the United States are now nearly as prevalent as taste claims (Kim, Cheong, & Zheng, 2009)

- × Hedonic foods
 - + taste claims



Functional foods+ health and nutrient claims



× Some research has shown:

- + Taste claims are effective in promoting functional foods and generating positive attitudes or purchase intentions in consumers
- + Health and nutrition claims are more effective in promoting hedonic foods and generating positive attitudes or purchase intentions in consumers

- When promoting healthy or functional foods, we should consider making taste claims
- This is consistent with the notion of schema congruity theory
 - + A certain degree of difference between the type of advertising claim and the nature of the product is desirable.



NUTRIENT CLAIMS: ANCHORING PHENOMENON

MORE ABOUT NUTRIENT CLAIMS

× Categories of nutrient claims

- + 1) Healthy claims generally state that the food is "healthy"
- + 2) Nutrient content claims describe a food product in relation to a specific nutrient component (e.g., low in fat, saturated fat, sodium and cholesterol)
- + 3) General nutrition claims use nonspecific terms such as "wholesome" and "nutritious" to imply a food product's goodness

CONTRASTING NUTRIENT CLAIMS

- Some nutrient content claims will provide a contrast to other products
 - + Messaging using contrasts may have different effects on consumer perceptions of food products

"3 MUSKETEERS" EXAMPLE

 * "45% less fat" claim made on packaging

 * "45% less fat than average of the leading candy bars" claim made in TV commercials





ANCHORING

- People begin with a numerical reference point of comparison, which they use as an anchor that adjusts subsequent estimates about another numerical value (Tversky & Kahneman, 1974)
- Contrast effects in anchoring
 + "10 calories vs. 30 calories" compared to simply "10 calories."
- * People perceive a product as having less fat/calories when anchor provided (Paek, Yoon, & Hove, 2011).

ANCHORING

- × Implications
 - + "Halo effect" often created people perceive less fat, they believe food product "healthy" overall
 - + Low fat claims lead individuals to ignore serving sizes



RESEARCH GAPS

* How to promote the concept that "good for you foods taste good"

+ Also cost-effective and easy to prepare

- Consumer understanding of health and nutrition claims
 + How claims influence behavior
- Effective alternative ways of promoting healthy foods
 + Social media, television programming, etc.