

MENU LABELING POLL

fact sheet



What According to a new Field Research Corporation poll, 68 percent of Californians failed every question on a four-question fast food nutrition quiz. The quiz asked people to identify which items on common restaurant and fast food chain menus had the fewest calories, the least salt, the most fat or the most calories compared to other options. The poll also showed that 84 percent of Californians support requiring fast-food and chain restaurants to post nutritional information such as calorie counts on their menus and menu boards.

Why California is in the midst of a growing obesity epidemic. More than half of the state's adults are overweight, putting them at an elevated risk for chronic diseases like diabetes, heart disease, stroke and some cancers. Restaurants and fast-food outlets are a key concern because Americans consume about one-third of their calories at these establishments.

Who The poll was conducted by the Field Research Corporation and commissioned by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy.

When The study is based on telephone interviews completed March 20 - 31, 2007.

How The 523 individuals polled were drawn from telephone listings of individual voters selected from a random sample of all registered voters in the state of California.

Health Implications

- More than half of all California adults are obese or overweight.¹
- Overweight and obesity are serious health issues associated with increased risk of morbidity and mortality from chronic diseases.²

Eating Out

- Americans now spend over 46 percent of their food dollar away from home, compared with only 25 percent in 1955. That figure is expected to climb to 53 percent in 2010.³
- Americans consume about one-third of their calories from restaurants and other food-service establishments.⁴
- Food eaten away from home tends to be more calorie dense and nutritionally poorer than food prepared at home.⁵
- Almost half of adults patronize a restaurant on any given day⁶ and eat, on average, 218 restaurant meals each year.⁷

KEY FINDINGS

- Sixty-eight percent of Californians failed all four questions about the nutrition content of common fast-food menu items
- Only 10 percent of Californians can choose the menu item with the fewest calories, the least salt, the most fat or the most calories compared to other options
- Not a single respondent answered all four questions correctly
- Scores were equally poor regardless of education or income levels
- Eighty-four percent of Californians surveyed support requiring chain restaurants to post nutritional information on menus and menu boards

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Overweight: by body mass index, Trends Data: California." <<http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/brfss/Trends/trendchart.asp?kkey=10080&state=CA>> Accessed November 16, 2006.

2. Visscher T.L. and Seidell, J.C. The Public Health Impact of Obesity. *Annu Rv Public Health*, 2001, 22:355-375; and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Overweight and Obesity: Health Consequences." Accessed November 29, 2006. <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/topics/obesity/calltoaction/fact_consequences.htm>.

3. "2005 Fast Facts." California Restaurant Association. www.calrest.org.

4. Lin B, Guthrie J, Frazao E. Away-From-Home Foods Increasingly Important to Quality of American Diet. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, 1999. Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 749.

5. Stewart, Hayden, Blisard, Noel and Jolliffe, Dean. "Let's Eat Out. Americans Weigh Taste, Convenience, and Nutrition." U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. October 2006. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/eib19/>.

6. "Ad Age Almanac: Eating Out." Advertising Age. December 31, 2001, p. 22.

7. "Industry at a Glance." National Restaurant Association. Accessed at <http://www.restaurant.org/research/ind_glance.cfm> on April 12, 2002.

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY



MENU LABELING POLL

nutrition quiz



Fast Food Nutrition Quiz

A new Field Research Corporation poll asked Californians to identify the low calorie, low salt, high fat or high calorie menu items from a list of four choices. Of people surveyed, 68 percent failed every question, and no more than 11 percent got any one question correct. Think you can do better?

1. (A) (B) (C) (D) Which of the following breakfast items that are served at Denny's do you think has the fewest calories?

A Ham and Cheddar Omelet
B Country Fried Steak and Eggs
C Three Slices of French Toast with Syrup and Margarine
D Three Pancakes with Syrup and Margarine
2. (A) (B) (C) (D) Which of the following items that are served at Chili's do you think has the least salt?

A Cajun Chicken Sandwich
B Classic Combo Steak & Chicken Fajitas
C Guiltless Chicken Platter
D Smoked Turkey Sandwich
3. (A) (B) (C) (D) Which of the following items that are served at Romano's Macaroni Grill do you think has the most fat?

A Traditional Lasagna
B Chicken Caesar Salad
C Pasta Classico with Sausage and Peppers
D BBQ Chicken Pizza
4. (A) (B) (C) (D) Which of the following items that are served at McDonald's do you think has the most calories?

A Two Big Macs
B Two Egg McMuffins
C One Large Chocolate Shake
D Four Regular Hamburgers

Answer Key:
1. (B) Country Fried Steak and Eggs (464 calories); 2. (A) Cajun Chicken Sandwich (2,220 mg sodium); 3. (B) Chicken Caesar Salad (69 g fat); 4. (C) One Large Chocolate Shake (1,160 calories).

For full information, visit <http://www.publichealthadvocacy.org/>

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY



MENU LABELING POLL

quiz answers



How did you do?

Not a single person surveyed answered all four questions correctly. Over 65 percent were unable to answer even one question correctly. Did you do much better? Eighty-four percent of Californians surveyed support menu labeling.

1. ☐ A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ D Which of the following breakfast items that are served at Denny's do you think has the fewest calories?

A Ham and Cheddar Omelet (595 calories)
B **Country Fried Steak and Eggs (464 calories)**
C Three Slices of French Toast with Syrup and Margarine (1,003 calories)
D Three Pancakes with Syrup and Margarine (650 calories)

2. ☒ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Which of the following items that are served at Chili's do you think has the least salt?

A **Cajun Chicken Sandwich (2,200 mg)**
B Classic Combo Steak & Chicken Fajitas (2,660 mg)
C Guiltless Chicken Platter (2,780 mg)
D Smoked Turkey Sandwich (2,920 mg)

3. ☐ A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ D Which of the following items that are served at Romano's Macaroni Grill do you think has the most fat?

A Traditional Lasagna (54 g)
B **Chicken Caesar Salad (69 g)**
C Pasta Classico with Sausage and Peppers (50 g)
D BBQ Chicken Pizza (24 g)

4. ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D Which of the following items that are served at McDonald's do you think has the most calories?

A Two Big Macs (1,080 calories)
B Two Egg McMuffins (600 calories)
C **One Large Chocolate Shake (1,160 calories)**
D Four Regular Hamburgers (1,000 calories)

For full information, visit <http://www.publichealthadvocacy.org/>

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY



MENU LABELING POLL

poll results

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS ANSWERING CORRECTLY

Based on a survey of 523 registered California voters

All four questions	0 %
Three questions out of four	0.8 %
Two questions out of four	5.0 %
One question out of four	26.6 %
No correct answers	67.7 %



QUESTION-BY-QUESTION BREAKDOWN

1 Which of the following breakfast items that are served at Denny's do you think has the **fewest calories**?

	Percentage of Respondents Choosing Each Option
a. Ham and Cheddar Omelet (595 calories)	36.2 %
b. Country Fried Steak and Eggs (464 calories)	11.0 %
c. Three Slices of French Toast with Syrup and Margarine (1,003 calories)	14.7 %
d. Three Pancakes with Syrup and Margarine (650 calories)	28.5 %
e. Don't Know	9.6 %

2 Which of the following items that are served at Chili's do you think has the **least salt**?

	Percentage of Respondents Choosing Each Option
a. Cajun Chicken Sandwich (2,220 mg)	6.6 %
b. Classic Combo Steak & Chicken Fajitas (2,660 mg)	7.6 %
c. Guiltless Chicken Platter (2,780 mg)	24.9 %
d. Smoked Turkey Sandwich (2,920 mg)	51.5 %
e. Don't Know	9.4 %

3 Which of the following items that are served at Romano's Macaroni Grill do you think has the **most fat**?

	Percentage of Respondents Choosing Each Option
a. Traditional Lasagna (54 g)	35.0 %
b. Chicken Caesar Salad (69 g)	10.1 %
c. Pasta Classico with Sausage and Peppers (50 g)	21.8 %
d. BBQ Chicken Pizza (24 g)	26.2 %
e. Don't Know	6.9 %

4 Which of the following items that are served at McDonald's do you think has the **most calories**?

	Percentage of Respondents Choosing Each Option
a. Two Big Macs (1,080 calories)	53.0 %
b. Two Egg McMuffins (600 calories)	8.4 %
c. One Large Chocolate Shake (1,160 calories)	11.2 %
d. Four Regular Hamburgers (1,000 calories)	22.1 %
e. Don't Know	5.2 %

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY



MENU LABELING POLL

sample menu board



SANDWICHES	CALORIES	PRICE
HAMBURGER	280	.89
CHEESEBURGER	330	.99
FILET-O-FISH®	470	1.99
CRISPY CHICKEN	550	2.79
QUARTER POUNDER®	430	2.29
BIG N' TASTY®	540	2.29
BIG MAC®	590	2.39
CHICKEN McGRILL®	450	2.89
DOUBLE QUARTER POUNDER®	760	2.99

Sample Menu Board with Calorie Information
<http://www.cspinet.org/menulabeling/>

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY



MENU LABELING POLL

organization backgrounder



The California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA) raises awareness about critical public health issues and mobilizes communities to promote the establishment of effective health policies. Established in 1999 by California's two public health associations — Southern California Public Health Association and California Public Health Association-North — CCPHA is an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization.



CCPHA uses tools of public health — epidemiological research, grassroots organizing, public and policymaker education, and partnership building — to design policy solutions that address California's public health challenges. CCPHA's strength lies in its unique approach of working simultaneously with facets of public health that are rarely combined.



CCPHA focuses on three main policy strategies: physical education in public schools, expanding access to healthy food in communities and assuring implementation of school nutrition standards.

Building on the historic strength of California's two Public Health Associations CCPHA is active in the following areas:

- Analyzing and publicizing important health information. CCPHA develops policy reports to provide policy-makers and the general public with a picture of major public health problems affecting their communities;
- Supporting community advocates in promoting local reform. CCPHA mobilizes teams of community residents in legislative districts and provides advocacy training throughout the state;
- Informing advocates about state legislation. CCPHA tracks major bills in the state legislature that address nutrition and physical activity;
- Sponsoring and supporting legislation. CCPHA's legislative efforts focus primarily on instituting policy reforms to curtail the state's epidemic of childhood obesity.



CCPHA has received funding to promote nutrition and physical activity policy development from The California Endowment, the California Vitamin Cases Consumer Settlement Fund, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the California Nutrition Network, The California Wellness Foundation, Kaiser Permanente, the William Randolph Hearst Foundations and donations from individuals and organizations that support their mission.

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY



MENU LABELING POLL

spokespersons list



- **Harold Goldstein, DrPH**

- Executive Director
- California Center for Public Health Advocacy
- 530.297.6000 x 201

- **Senator Alex Padilla**

- California Senate
- 916.651.4020

- **Jamie Morgan**

- American Heart Association
- 916.201.8115 (cell)

- **Alecia Sanchez**

- American Cancer Society
- 916.448.0500 x 305

- **Ann Gouré**

- American Cancer Society
- 916.448.0500 x 302

- **Mark DiCamillo**

- Director
- Field Research Corporation
- 415.392.5763

April 18, 2007

CALIFORNIA CENTER FOR
PUBLIC HEALTH ADVOCACY

