

How can consumers be encouraged to choose healthier snacks and drinks?

Prompting healthier snack choices in shops and cafes



Even when healthy snacks and drinks are readily available in shops and cafes, many consumers choose less healthy options.

Signs that show consumers how healthy their choice is compared to other products on offer can help increase purchasing of healthier options. An example sign (a 'point of purchase prompt') is shown below.



What does research say?

In a study of >1 million items purchased in hospital shops across Scotland*, signs like the one pictured prompted consumers to choose options with fewer calories on average. While the effect was small, small changes in food choice over time play an important role in helping people to eat well and maintain a healthy body weight.



What are the benefits of introducing signs?

Signs can:

- Support consumers to make healthier choices
- Inform consumers about available range
- Increase sales of healthier product lines
- Be fitted easily, directly to existing shelves



How do I make signs for my own shop/cafe?

A template sign is available to download for free at www.abdn.ac.uk/iahs/research/enabling-healthier-snack-choices-in-hospital-shops-and-cafes--1594.php To make your own sign, see the instructions on the reverse of this sheet.

*Allan JL & Powell DJ (2020) Prompting consumers to make healthier food choices in hospitals: A cluster randomised controlled trial

Making your own sign

1. Decide on the product range you want to focus on e.g. sweet snacks, savoury snacks, cold drinks etc. Signs work best with 10 – 20 products.
2. Visit www.abdn.ac.uk/iahs/research/enabling-healthier-snack-choices-in-hospital-shops-and-cafes--1594.php and download the free template. You will need Microsoft Powerpoint to open the file.
3. Select the images that match your product range or upload your own. Make sure any photos you add have a white or transparent background so that they look the same as the other images.
4. Decide what health information you want to arrange products by – calorie content, sugar content, fat content etc.
5. Work out the health information for each item (e.g. if a chocolate bar has 300 calories per 100g but only weighs 50g, there are 150 calories in each bar).
6. Arrange your chosen products in order from the lowest value (healthiest) on the left to the highest (least healthy) on the right.
7. Move the product pictures and values around until they line up neatly. You can use the 'Arrange' and then 'Align' function in Powerpoint.
8. Print the signs in colour at a high resolution.
9. Laminate or insert into plastic covers.
10. Display next to the target product range in store. Signs can be attached to shelf price rails, displayed on walls or even printed as floor stickers depending on the layout of your shop/cafe.



Interested to know more?

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