

Indicators of Diet Quality and Health for Americans by Program Participation

Client: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

Overview

The Food and Nutrition Service's nutrition assistance programs seek to increase food security and reduce hunger and obesity through access to affordable healthy food and nutrition education. This study is the fourth in a series to examine the relationship between diet quality and participation in three such programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The SNAP portion of the study also examines how outcomes vary for participants who participate in many food assistance programs (SNAP plus WIC or NSLP).

The study uses three waves of NHANES data to examine the relationship between food assistance program participation and two types of measures: (1) measures of dietary intake assessment (diet quality, nutrient intakes, and food consumption patterns) and (2) selected measures of health status (overweight and obesity, body composition, blood pressure, and selected blood biomarkers and biochemical indicators). Insight addressed the following study objectives:

- Compare Americans' overall diet quality and nutrient intakes with reference values and recommended levels.
- Compare Americans' nutrition and health status based on selected indicators, with recommended values.



- Compare the overall diet quality, nutrient intakes, food consumption patterns, and nutrition and health status of program participants with those of income-eligible and higher income nonparticipants.

Using NHANES data, Insight calculated descriptive statistics and standard regression-adjusted estimates to compare nutrition and health status among program participants and nonparticipants of SNAP, WIC, and NSLP. Multivariable regression techniques were employed to examine associations between program participation and these outcomes. Insight developed three reports that separately examine outcomes for participants in the three programs: SNAP, WIC, and NSLP.

Products

Final reports for each program examined, including SNAP, WIC, and NSLP