Author's response to reviews

Title: Adolescent Nutritional Awareness and Use of Food Labels: Results from the National Nutrition Health and Examination Survey 2005-6

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Author's response to reviews: see over
Dear Editors,

Thanks for reviewing our paper. We have made the suggested revisions and have revised the paper as recommended by the editors.

Reviewer #1

**Minor Essential Revisions:**

**TABLE 1:** I would prefer SD was used, as it gives a better idea on the range, while SE really shows how sure one is of the mean.

Thanks for making this suggestion. We have now changed SE to SD as recommended by the reviewer in Table 1.

**TABLE 4:** Is it correct to say "check cholesterol on label" is significant when the OR, but not the adjusted OR is significant. The position of the asterix should move to be next to the adjusted OR. This result must be treated with great caution as it is the only one adjusted OR to be significant out of 17 (Unless the adjusted OR for "check fat" is also significant as it appears to be - in which case it needs an asterix too).

Thanks for making this suggestion. We have now moved the asterix so it indicated that only the unadjusted “check cholesterol on food labels” is significant and not the adjusted one. We have also taken this point out of the abstract. The check fat is also not significant (so does not need an asterix). As the reviewer points out, the fact that there is only one out of 17 variables that has any association, is an important point and is now highlighted more directly in the discussion (page 13 – bottom of the page).

Reviewer #2

**Methods section:**

1. The authors have now added some information to the methods section to make the methods more clear, but the methods section remains to be one of the weaker sections of the paper and needs more elaboration and a clearer structure. There could be a more clear distinction between the procedure of the study (not all readers are familiar with the NHANES study) and measurement of the variables that are used in the present study. As written now, it is for example not clear whether the data were collected through interviews only, or whether also survey data (from questionnaires) was used.

Thanks for raising this important point. We have now included more general information on the NHANES (page 4 – middle of the page), which describes the
interview and data collection process in more detail.

2. Apparently the n=742 sub-sample were interviewed about nutrition reading behaviour, but how was the data about awareness of nutrition guidance programs assessed in the larger sample?

Thanks for pointing out this lack of clarity. We have now more clearly explained the different questions that were asked in the sub-sample versus larger sample on page 5 (first paragraph).

3. Also a more clear description of how the type of questions that were asked to assess awareness of nutrition guidance programs and label reading information would be required (examples of specific questions could be helpful). It would also be helpful to include the number of questions in the questionnaire/interview and the number of items used to assess one concept.

Thanks for making this useful suggestion. We have now included a description of the questions asked as well as described the number of questions used to assess one concept on page 5 (changes made throughout the page).

4. It would be helpful to state the main outcomes of interest earlier in the methods section.

Thanks for making this important suggestion. We have now moved the main outcomes of interest section to the bottom of page 4 (earlier in the methods section).

Results:
5. The authors have now included multivariate analyses in the study and present these in the tables, but the results of these analyses are not described in the results section in an optimal way. The authors state that ‘there was little difference between the unadjusted and adjusted odds ratios evaluating the relationship between awareness of nutrition programs, use of nutrition information and risk for overweight and obesity. This is not correct. There are some differences in odds ratio’s and the most important difference is that the association between ‘check cholesterol on food labels’ and BMI is not significant anymore. This needs to be presented in the results section and needs to be discussed in the discussion section. The results of the multivariate analyses should be more important in interpreting the results of the study.

Thanks for emphasizing this shortcoming. We have now pointed out in the results that there were no significant associations in the adjusted analysis for all the nutrition variables surveyed in relation to risk for overweight and obesity (bottom of page 9) and discussed these findings in the discussion section of the
paper (page 13 – bottom of page – last full paragraph).

6. Were the results (that are not presented in the tables) on awareness of nutrition guidance programs and BMI the results of univariate or multivariate analyses?

Thanks we have now clarified that these results include both unadjusted and adjusted analyses (last paragraph – page 9).

7. It is not clear what the message is that the authors want to bring across in the last sentence on page 8 (In the analyses of interaction between.....). Some words seem to be missing in this sentence.

Thanks. We have now modified this last sentence.

Discussion:
8. The discussion on the finding that reading information on cholesterol in the nutrition facts panels is associated with increased risk for overweight needs to be revised. This was not the case in the multivariate analyses.

Thank you for raising this issue. Please see the answer to #5 above.

Tables:
9. The number of respondents in the various analyses need to be added to tables 2 – 4.

Based on the number of missing respondents, the total N varies for each question asked. However, we have added the total N for each sub-group on the tables as marked.

10. The revised title of table 2 is not clear. Which behaviours are involved?

Thanks. We have now changed the title of table 2.

Thanks and we look forward to hearing from you regarding our revised submission.