

## HEALTH RESEARCH ABSTRACT SUBMISSIONS

#29

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<b>Title of Research *</b>	Nutrition information needs survey among older adults
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**Introduction & Purpose \***

Among adults 65 years and older, less than one-third meet the 5 A Day (portions of fruit) recommendations. A healthy diet is important for maintaining good health in older adults, as well as improving quality of life, and extending the productive life span. Therefore, there is a need to educate and enable older adults to eat healthier, especially as by 2020, older adults will account for approximately 20% of the U.S. population. Focus groups in Iowa, found that older adults identified a need for more information about healthy nutrition. More research is needed to be better able to tailor nutrition education and information to the needs and perspectives of older adults. The purpose of this study was therefore, to identify perceived nutrition information needs and interests of older adults, and to identify nutrition information delivery strategies for this population.

**Experimental Design \***

This study is a formative research study. A telephone survey (n=321) was conducted among older adults (60-80 years) in Iowa, guided by Social Cognitive and Adult Learning Theory.

**Results \***

Overall, the findings suggest that participants are confident preparing healthy meals every day, and emphasize the importance of maintaining their health status and preventing disease and disability, instead of appearance and weight loss. Moreover, health professionals, health newsletters and sources they have at home, as well as Public Libraries were identified as sources they would like to get more information about healthy eating. Gender differences ( $p < .05$ ) could be found in regard to reasons and motivations to eat healthier, as well as sources and topics of nutrition information.

**Conclusions \***

Therefore, based on these findings, marketing efforts of healthy eating information and interventions for older adults may need to specifically emphasize the importance of healthy eating in regard to maintaining health status and preventing disease and disability. Next steps are to further explore intervention possibilities with public libraries in Iowa, and to design a pilot intervention study, tailored to the needs of this population.

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