Making Menu Labeling Meaningful
How you can help your clients eat well while eating out

SNEB Webinar
May 27, 2015
Objectives

At the end of this presentation, you will be able to:

- Describe the history of menu labeling and the basics of National Menu Labeling Regulation
- Characterize the most recent evidence about menu labeling and dining out
- Leverage insights from consumer research to craft positive, meaningful messages about menu labeling
- Identify new resources to counsel clients to leverage menu labeling and "eat well when eating out"
Section 1: Why is menu labeling important and what does the regulation entail?
Why Menu Labeling?

“A BILL

To amend the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act to extend the food labeling requirements of the Nutrition Labeling and Education Act of 1990 to enable customers to make informed choices about the nutritional content of standard menu items in large chain restaurants.

“...people need nutritional information to manage their weight and reduce the risk of, or manage, heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure, which are leading causes of death, disability, and high health care costs; it is difficult for consumers to exercise personal responsibility and limit their intake of calories at restaurants, given the limited availability of nutrition information at the point of ordering in restaurants...”
Beginning in 2009, a patchwork of state and local menu labeling laws & regulations began emerging across the United States. FDA’s regulation provides a uniform, national menu labeling approach.

**How Did We Get Here?**

- **March 2010**
  *Affordable Care Act signed into law*
  Section 4205 requires restaurant chains and similar retail food establishments to provide calorie information for standard menu items.

- **April 2011**
  *FDA releases draft guidance*
  Available for public comment

- **December 1, 2014**
  *Final Regulation Announced*
  Published in Federal Register

- **TBD!!!**
  *December 1, 2015*
  COMPLIANCE DATE
Who Does This Apply To?

- FDA adopted a broad definition of covered establishments and developed a specific definition for restaurant type food.

- FDA defined a “covered establishment” as a restaurant or similar food retail food establishment ....
  - ✓ with 20 or more locations,
  - ✓ doing business under the same name,
  - ✓ offering for sale substantially the same menu items,
  - ✓ and selling restaurant-type foods

- “Restaurant-type foods” was defined as a food that is usually eaten on the premises, while walking away, or soon after.
What is Required?

- Covered entities must comply with three basic requirements:
  1. Calories must be disclosed for standard menu items on a menu or menu-board
  2. A statement must be posted on the menu concerning suggested daily caloric intake
  3. A statement must be posted on the menu advising that written nutrition information for standard menu items is available upon request (and that info must be available!)

- As with most regulations, there was a variety guidance of with regards to how this information must be disclosed… but a guidance document from FDA on application is still pending
About Compliance

- The regulation states establishments must have a *reasonable basis* for calorie and nutrient declarations – and they must be prepared to “show their work”

- Additionally, covered establishments must take all reasonable means to ensure that the method of preparation and amount of standard menu item offered for sale adhere to the factors on which its nutrient values were determined – and be prepared to show how that is done

   **In other words, the nutrient analysis must be based on a standardized recipe and reasonable steps must be taken to follow that recipe**
About Reasonable Basis

- FDA recognized that foodservice is distinctly different than packaged foods. Our meals are **handcrafted and made to order**— unlike a highly-controlled assembly line of a manufacturing plant. There is inherent, unavoidable variability throughout the process.

- **Extreme variability is not okay** … but some variability is to be expected.
Section 2:
What can we learn from published literature when it comes to menu labeling and the dietary impact of eating out?
Systematic literature review methodology

- A systematic PubMed literature search was conducted in late 2011 and updated quarterly through May 2015.
  - Limits set to Humans, English
  - Selected papers limited to U.S. and Canada
  - Search terms used:
    - Restaurant meals
    - Restaurant meals and health
    - Food away from home
    - Fast food and health (limited to last 5 years)
    - Fast food restaurants United States
    - Menu labeling
Overarching Observations

• The published literature examining the impact of Food away from home (FAFH) on diet quality and health outcomes is **widely varied** in study methodology, sample sizes, data collection methods and statistical quality.

• There are **no consistent definitions** for type of restaurant in the literature – e.g. fast food, quick service, fast casual, casual dining, sit down, full service. This makes an examination of the findings difficult.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TYPE OF STUDY</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Randomized controlled trial</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quasi-experimental</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observational</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohort</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case-control</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cross-sectional</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Before &amp; after study</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case series</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant density</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematical modeling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>94</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Health & Wellness
Based on a review of the literature, results are mixed on whether calorie labeling has an influence on immediate food choice.

- Approximately ½ of studies showed a positive impact; ½ showed no impact
- Barriers to usage includes confusion and a general lack of understanding of calorie values
- Nutrition information is most impactful when consumers are provided with the context of how calories and nutrients fit into their overall diet

**Education will be critical to help consumers understand and use the calorie on menus**
Adults and health outcomes

Twelve papers were found that reported on restaurant meals and body weight or BMI. There is no strong, consistent body of evidence to suggest that full-service restaurant (FSR) meals contribute to increased body weight or adverse health outcomes.

1. Only one was an intervention study
2. Two reported a negative association with body weight or BMI
3. One reported FSR were associated with lower rates of obesity, diabetes and mortality in metro & non-metro areas
4. One reported FSR use was unrelated to weight and positively related to increased vegetable intake.
5. Three papers reported a positive association with weight
   • Krishnan’s paper was limited to restaurant meals of hamburgers, fried chicken or fried fish
   • Bes-Rastrollo’s research was conducted in Spain and did not specify the type of restaurants studied
Children and health outcomes

Two papers were found. Neither paper reported a negative association with body weight.

- One paper reported a positive association between FSR use and intakes of fruit and vegetables
- A second found FSR proximity was not associated with BMI
A first-ever study analyzing dietary energy intakes by age group, food-purchase location and specific food source offers a comprehensive analysis of energy intake by food-purchase location, allowing us to better understand where our calories are coming from. Findings include:

- 63% to 76% of dietary energy comes from grocery stores (depending on age group).
- Total food away from home represents up to 32% of total daily calories, but no age group consumes more than 25% of their calories from restaurant foods.
- Less than 11% of calories are derived from Full-Service Restaurants for any age group, which is significantly less than store-bought foods for every age group.
- Store-sourced breads, desserts, pasta and soft drinks accounted for higher energy intakes than those sourced from restaurant foods.

Drewnowski & Rehm Nutr J 2013
The only intervention study

- The only randomized control trial in the current literature demonstrates that eating out can be part of a healthy diet pattern.
- The intervention, using six weekly two hour small group sessions, focused on reducing calorie and fat intake when eating out through education, behavior change strategies, and mindful eating meditations.
- This resulted in lower calorie intake and weight loss

Timmerman & Brown J Nutr Educ Behav 2011
The big picture

Full-Service Restaurants are a small part of the “food away from home” environment, providing ≤11% of calories.
Healthy Eating Index 2010 (HEI-2010) is a valid measure of diet quality
- Composite score of 12 dietary components
- Maximum score is 100
- Higher score indicates a higher quality diet

Mean score for U.S. population 2+ years is 53.5 (NHANES 2007-2008)

National Cancer Institute published HEI-2010 scores based on individual menus
- The menu with a score of 48 was used to model menu items to determine the impact on HEI-2010 score
HEI-2010 Menu Modeling - Results

### Olive Garden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dinner meal was replaced with:</th>
<th>HEI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lasagna Primavera with Grilled Chicken</td>
<td>51*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 breadstick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 serving house salad with dressing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Wheat Linguine with Meat Sauce</td>
<td>62*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 breadstick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 serving house salad with dressing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grilled Salmon with Steamed Broccoli</td>
<td>55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 breadstick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 bowl of Minestrone soup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All you can eat soup and salad)</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 bowls of Minestrone soup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 breadstick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 servings of house salad with dressing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(All you can eat soup and salad)</td>
<td>51*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 bowls of Pasta e Fagioli soup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 breadstick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 servings house salad with dressing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LongHorn

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dinner meal was replaced with:</th>
<th>HEI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grilled Salmon Salad</td>
<td>63*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 slice honey wheat bread with 1 tsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flo’s Filet, 6 oz</td>
<td>53*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baked potato, plain with 1 tbsp sour cream, Fresh green beans, 1 slice honey wheat bread with 1 tsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinach Feta Chicken (Dinner portion)</td>
<td>51*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh steamed broccoli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 slice honey wheat bread with 1 tsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renegade Sirloin, 6 oz</td>
<td>55*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet potato, plain with 1 tbsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed green side salad with light ranch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 slice honey wheat bread with 1 tsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grilled Chicken &amp; Strawberry Salad with vinaigrette</td>
<td>58*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 slice honey wheat bread with 1 tsp butter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant increase in new HEI score

Health & Wellness
HEI-2010 Menu Modeling - Summary

- Modeling demonstrated that menu items could be selected to significantly increase HEI-2010 score
  - Olive Garden menu items increased HEI-2010 score ranging from 51 to 62
  - LongHorn menu items increased HEI-2010 score ranging from 51 to 63
- It is possible to select menu items that fit into a healthy eating pattern based on HEI-2010 scores
Section 3:
If education is important to the success of menu labeling, how do we talk about this?
Most consumers say they want calories on the menu

- The majority of consumers have positive perceptions of menu labeling
- Most consumers say they will use the calorie information when posted

“I usually try to choose healthier options. The labeling will enable me to have a better idea of the calorie count.”

“The more informed we are, the better choices we can make. I see this as very positive.”

“I think it’s a great regulation. When I go to the restaurant I am never sure what to buy on the menu because I don’t have the information available.”
How do we talk to consumers about calories on the menu?

- We conducted 4 focus groups to understand consumer perceptions of menu labeling and evaluate consumer reactions to different response messages.

- Each focus group was comprised of six consumers who met the following criteria:
  - Men and women, ages 25 to 60
  - Annual household income of $30K or more
  - Have eaten at least three times in a casual dining restaurant within the past three months

- We used a “rapid response” technique
Knowing how many calories you need is an important step in managing your health.

Eating more calories than you need can lead to weight gain and other health problems.

Knowing how many calories you need is an important step in taking charge of your health.
Example 2

**ORIGINAL**

Calories are like a budget - you should only eat so many in a day. Knowing the amount of calories in your food will help you “spend” your daily calorie budget wisely.

**REVISED**

(Visual aid: trash can with crumpled papers)
A simple rule of thumb is that most people need 2,000 calories or less a day. To find out how many calories you need, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.

Although the number of calories people need varies, a simple rule of thumb is that most people need 2,000 calories or less a day. More information about your individual needs is available at www.choosemyplate.gov.
Example 4

ORIGINAL

The calories on restaurant menus can help you choose a meal that is right for you, whether you feel like indulging or choosing something lighter—it is up to you. If you want to choose something more indulgent, you can take half of it home in a to-go container.

REVISED

Calories on the menu can help you choose a meal that is right for you.
What we learned:

- Keep messages **POSITIVE:** Messages that preach the consequences of too many calories or contain negative words and phrases will be ignored.

- Emphasize the **YOU:** Everyone wants to feel in control, so remind them that having calories on the menu puts them in the driver’s seat.

- Provide a **RULE OF THUMB:** The general guideline of 2,000 daily calories provides context consumers need.

- Remind them of their **RESOURCES:** … but don’t be too ‘bossy’ about when and how to use them.

- Respect the **OCCASION:** Dining out at a “sit down” restaurant is usually a special occasion—analogies that sound like too much work (like label reading or budgeting) aren’t likely to be successful.
Section 5:
What role can food and nutrition communicators play in menu labeling? And what resources are available to you?
Food and nutrition educators can:

- Help consumers understand what calories are and why they are important.
- Teach consumers how many calories they need each day, so that the calories they see on the menu have context.
- Show consumers how to use the calorie information to select a meal that works for their needs on that occasion.
- Educate consumers and the media on why some variability in calorie reporting is to be expected.
- Ensure you have appropriate training, accurate ingredient and recipe information and adequate assumptions to do calculated (software) analysis for restaurants (this is complex work!)
Resources for You

http://www.nutrition411.com/education-materials/menu-labeling

- **Restaurant Reality**: a closer look at the inherent variability in restaurant food
- **Calorie Confusion**: a review of the literature
- **Mixed Messages**: exec summary of a media study by Sonar Strategies
- **Communicating Calories**: consumer tested messages about menu labeling
- **Menu Makeover**: a turnkey handout you can use with clients
- **A media toolkit**: which provides FAQs, story ideas and more
New Resource: Eating Well While Eating Out

The Lifestyle Decision Tree: What To Think About When You’re Eating Out

Eating well is part of an overall approach to healthy living. It considers the decisions you’ve made all week—both food and what you’re eating when you’re eating out.

To Navigate “Everyday” Eating Occasions

1. Evaluate
2. Navigate
3. Adjust
4. Evaluate
5. Navigate
6. Adjust
7. Evaluate
8. Navigate
9. Adjust
10. Evaluate
11. Navigate
12. Adjust
13. Evaluate
14. Navigate
15. Adjust
16. Evaluate
17. Navigate
18. Adjust
19. Evaluate
20. Navigate
21. Adjust
22. Evaluate
23. Navigate
24. Adjust
25. Evaluate
26. Navigate
27. Adjust
28. Evaluate
29. Navigate
30. Adjust
31. Evaluate
32. Navigate
33. Adjust
34. Evaluate
35. Navigate
36. Adjust
37. Evaluate
38. Navigate
39. Adjust
40. Evaluate
41. Navigate
42. Adjust
43. Evaluate
44. Navigate
45. Adjust
46. Evaluate
47. Navigate
48. Adjust
49. Evaluate
50. Navigate
51. Adjust
52. Evaluate
53. Navigate
54. Adjust
55. Evaluate
56. Navigate
57. Adjust
58. Evaluate
59. Navigate
60. Adjust
61. Evaluate
62. Navigate
63. Adjust
64. Evaluate
65. Navigate
66. Adjust
67. Evaluate
68. Navigate
69. Adjust
70. Evaluate
71. Navigate
72. Adjust
73. Evaluate
74. Navigate
75. Adjust
76. Evaluate
77. Navigate
78. Adjust
79. Evaluate
80. Navigate
81. Adjust
82. Evaluate
83. Navigate
84. Adjust
85. Evaluate
86. Navigate
87. Adjust
88. Evaluate
89. Navigate
90. Adjust
91. Evaluate
92. Navigate
93. Adjust
94. Evaluate
95. Navigate
96. Adjust
97. Evaluate
98. Navigate
99. Adjust
100. Evaluate

At Olive Garden:
- Try the delicious herb salad dressing, which is half the calories of regular dressing.
- Start your meal with a bowl of homemade Minestrone soup for only 110 calories.
- Substitute whole wheat linguine for any pasta or fresh vegetables for any side.
- If you can’t resist skipping the famous breadsticks, choose freshly made marinara sauce, which is lower in calories and fat. Alfredo or Four Cheese Marinara sauce. Also, don’t have to stop the fun—try one of our 1,350 calorie-friendly appetizers with a side of hummus to bring—avoid having more than you need to eat.
- Check out the lighter Italian fare menu for flavorful even 375-calorie options.
- Substitute traditional pasta which is lower in calories and the pasta options.

At Bahama Breezes:
- Order two of the “tender or small plates” to create your own main course if you can’t make your mind up on one plate.
- Then with a cup of the Chicken Norilago Soup (145 cal) it will help satisfy your initial hunger so you don’t overeat when your main course.
- Take advantage of the fresh fish menu—enjoy any selection pan-seared or simply grilled with fresh vegetables for a fresh light meal.

Overcoming Obstacles: So You Can Dine Out Without Giving In

We’ve all been there. You’re out to eat at your favorite restaurant and tell yourself you’re going to choose something a little lighter this time. Then, temptation gets the best of you.

The trick to overcoming these obstacles is knowing your options and tackling them head on. Here are seven typical obstacles that many of us face when we eat out, and some tips for overcoming them:

1. Menu Mania
   - How it feels: “I heard I needed something light... but my eyes were bigger than my stomach. I ordered the large meal and dropped an appetizer too.”
   - How to overcome it:
     a. Do your homework. Ask the same question or ask your server to help you know what is the healthier choice.
     b. Don’t be a slave to the menu. It’s just a guide, not the ultimate authority.
     c. Be a critical thinker. Ask why the restaurant is promoting this dish over another.

2. The Hunger Game
   - How it feels: “I’m so hungry! I feel like I’m going to die if I don’t eat.”
   - How to overcome it:
     a. Take a deep breath. It’s just a feeling, not a real hunger pangs.
     b. Drink plenty of water before you eat. It will help you feel full and reduce your hunger.
     c. Ask your server for recommendations. They might have a healthier option that satisfies your hunger.

How can I practice mindful eating?

1. Start by slow and simple: Notice the aroma, taste, and texture.
2. Make the meal a slower process: Take smaller bites and chew more.
3. Drink water during the meal: Helps to reduce the feeling of hunger.
4. Pay attention to the food: Check your plate and watch how it changes when you take a bite.
5. What happens if you eat less: Think about how you feel after eating less.

How do I eat mindfully in a busy restaurant surrounded by my friends?

1. Focus on the food: Avoid distractions like checking your phone or talking too much.
2. Slow down: Take your time and enjoy each bite.
3. Be present: Pay attention to the food and your body’s cues.
4. Share the experience: Discuss the flavors and textures of the food with your friends.

The Darden Healthy Choices program offers a variety of options to meet your needs and wants, from cuts of meat to fresh vegetables. Enjoy your meal and enjoy your health!”

Darden Health & Wellness

Health & Wellness
In Summary

Adding calorie content to menus is an important step to empower Americans when they eat away from home.

Consumers will benefit most from this information if we teach them how to use it through positive, relevant messages.
QUESTIONS?

Thank you for your time!