



USING FRESH AVOCADOS

AS A **CULTURALLY-APPROPRIATE** INTERVENTION TO IMPROVE NUTRITION STATUS OF **HISPANIC AMERICAN FAMILIES**

Hispanic Americans are disproportionately more likely to be overweight or obese than non-Hispanic white adults, making them more susceptible to heart disease and stroke risk factors.

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends healthy eating patterns to minimize the risk of chronic diseases. Unfortunately, adherence to the guidelines among all Americans is low, with added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium exceeding suggested limits and even higher among Hispanic Americans. Educational dietary interventions that encourage the consumption of culturally-appropriate fruits and vegetables may be a strategic alternative to a dietary elimination approach.

Nutrient-dense, fiber-containing foods like healthy avocados also provide substantial amounts of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients with only 80 calories per serving.

1/3 of a medium avocado (50g) is one serving size



WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS



A clinical trial¹ randomized 72 Hispanic American families (97% Mexican) to receive one of two levels of avocado allotment plus nutrition education based upon MyPlate for six months.

The lower avocado control allocation provided three avocados/family/week, representing habitual avocado intake in the cohort. The higher avocado allotment provided 14 avocados/family/week or up to 2 avocados/family/day. Families eating 3 (720 extra calories) or 14 (3,360 extra calories) avocados per week experienced no changes in body weight, BMI, or waist circumference.

Yet, nutritional status changed with a higher avocado allotment. Specifically, those families that received 14 avocados per week reported a reduction in total calories, carbohydrates, protein, saturated fat, and sodium compared to those with low avocado allotment. Participants also reported lower animal and vegetable protein, total fat, polyunsaturated fat, vitamin D, and mineral (calcium, magnesium, potassium, iron) intakes with the higher avocado allotment. The Avocado Nutrition Center funded the study, and study limitations, including drawbacks of all validated food frequency questionnaires, prevent the generalization of the findings.



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The results support including fresh avocados in nutrition education to support weight management while reducing the overconsumption of saturated fat and sodium for Hispanic families.



Fresh avocados are a staple in most Latin American cuisine. Though technically a fruit, MyPlate counts avocados as a vegetable and recommends that adults consume 2-3 cups of vegetables per day, depending on calorie needs. One avocado counts as one cup of vegetables.

References:

1. Pacheco, L et al. "Effects of Avocado Intake on the Nutritional Status of Families: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial." *Nutrients*. 2021

Simple tips to encourage fruit and vegetable intake

USING FRESH AVOCADOS IN LATIN AMERICAN CUISINE

Fresh avocados are a healthy and versatile ingredient to add flavor and nutrients to various meals and snacks.



Serve guacamole with quesadillas, enchiladas or tacos



Add avocado slices to rice and beans



Toss fresh avocado into salads, soups, and breakfast dishes



Boost veggie intake by adding avocado to tortas



Swap avocado for meat in vegetarian burritos and enchiladas

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