

SOURCES OF NUTRITION INFORMATION IDENTIFIED IN A TELEPHONE SURVEY

K.L. RADIMER* and P.W.J. HARVEY**

The sources of nutrition information of 803 Queensland adults were investigated as part of a wider telephone survey of the impact of health messages in the media. The survey was conducted by The Roy Morgan Research Centre using standard quota sampling techniques. Respondents were asked whether or not they had found any useful nutrition information in the last 12 months in a list of 18 possible sources. They were then asked to identify the most useful sources. The table shows the percentages of Queensland adults who reported finding useful nutrition information in the eight most commonly reported sources by sex, age and locality. Other sources canvassed were: doctor, 44%; chemist/naturopath/health food store, 41%; advertisements on television, 39%; radio programs, 36%; pamphlets from government, 34%; advertisements in magazines, 33%; dietitian/nutritionist, 24%; advertisements in newspapers, 20%; advertisements on radio 15%; and, pamphlets from food companies, 15%. Only 2.5% of respondents reported not finding useful nutrition information in any listed source.

Source	Sex		Age		Locality		Total
	M	F	<35	>=35	Urban	Non-urban	
Magazine articles	52	74	66	62	62	64	63
Food labels/packaging	59	67	64	61	67	60	63
TV shows	63	61	72	57	60	63	62
Nat. Heart Foundtn.	57	66	56	64	59	63	61
Books	49	67	65	55	54	62	58
QLD. Cancer Fund	49	54	46	54	44	57	51
Newspaper articles	53	50	46	54	53	50	51
Family/friends	48	52	62	44	50	50	50

The observed percentages were higher than has been reported previously in Australia (Crawford and Baghurst, 1991), but this probably results from differences in questions asked, and possibly the telephone format of this survey. That food labels/packaging was amongst the most commonly reported sources may reflect increasing importance for this source, particularly for young respondents (77% in those under 25). As expected, women were more likely than men to report finding useful information, particularly in magazines and books, and from health professionals. Magazines and television, but not food labels, were identified as the most useful sources of information amongst those used.

CRAWFORD, D. and BAGHURST, K. (1991). *Aust. J. Nutr. Diet.* 48; 2: 40

* Dept. of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Queensland, Herston, QLD 4006
 ** Epidemiology and Health Information Branch, Queensland Health