

ABSTRACT

THESIS: Effectiveness of a Virtual Grocery Store Tour on the Ability of Parents to Understand and Use the Nutrition Facts Panel

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Low socioeconomic families must make many difficult decisions when purchasing foods for their family. As a result, many low-income families base their diets on less expensive, nutrient-poor convenience foods. The purpose of this pilot study was to determine the impact of a virtual grocery shopping tour on the ability of low-income Delaware County adults to understand and use the Nutrition Facts Panel. Twenty-one low-income adults participated in the virtual grocery tour that focused on how to use the Nutrition Facts Panel to select healthier food items. Results indicated participants' confidence in their ability to "use the Nutrition Facts Panel" (7.0 ± 3.5 vs. 9.2 ± 1.8 ; $t=2.53$, $p=0.021$) and to identify a low sodium breakfast cereal ($t=3.375$; $p=0.003$) increased after the intervention. However, there was no increase in the participants' confidence to choose healthy items at the grocery store ($t=1.34$; $p=0.196$) or in their ability to identify if a cereal was "high" in fiber ($t=1.714$; $p=0.104$), "high" in iron ($t=0.438$; $p=0.667$), or a "good" source (e.g., 10-19% DV) of calcium ($t=0.438$; $t=0.667$). Future efforts should focus on a narrower curriculum so as not to overwhelm participants.