

Millennials' Nutrition Attitudes

Millennials or Generation Y are those individuals born roughly between the early 1980's and the early 2000's. In matters of health and wellness, millennials are less concerned about calories and fat than the general population, according to the International Food Information Council's 2015 Food and Health Survey. Millennial consumers also are more likely to use technology to achieve a healthier lifestyle.

In the survey, millennials' perceptions of fat and protein differed from those of the general population. One in three millennials recently have changed their opinions on the healthfulness of saturated fat, with millennial men more likely to view it more favorably. More than a third (36%) of millennials track daily food and beverage intake using an app or other means, compared with 22% of the general population, and 12% of millennials use an on-line support group or community to pursue wellness goals, compared with 6% of the general population. Millennials also are more likely to trust a health or nutrition blogger for accurate food information (33% vs. 24% of the general population) and rely on support of family and friends to improve eating behaviors (45% vs. 32%).

Millennials are more optimistic than other age groups about future food and exercise innovations and inventions that may support healthful living. According to Millennial Marketing, millennials are redefining personal fitness and valuing a drive for adventure and excitement in new forms of fitness instead of the traditional routine of going to the gym. Millennials are used to multitasking even in a traditional gym setting. While running on the treadmill, they will be listening to music, watching TV, or scrolling through their smartphone.

Marathons, unique races, and smartphone fitness apps involve Millennials through social media in ways that have not been used as widely in the past. Millennial participation in cycling and aerobics in groups rose by 30 percent and 20 percent respectively in 2011. Millennials value group fitness events which create an environment where everyone helps to push each other to be their personal best rather competing to win first place.

The challenge will be to keep Millennials healthy as they search out new and more adventurous options in physical activities outside the traditional gym environment.