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Herbalife Nutrition Survey Debunks Top Nutrition Myths in APAC Consumers

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Premier global nutrition company, Herbalife Nutrition, today released additional findings from its Asia Pacific Nutrition Myths Survey 2020, uncovering that 60 percent of consumers were confused about nutrition facts. The survey was conducted with 5,500 respondents from Australia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam 2020.



Internet Misinformation Contributes to 60% of Consumers Lacking Nutrition Knowledge

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In a general nutrition knowledge quiz administered together with the survey, a total of 48 "True or False" questions spanning nine nutrition areas - general nutrition, protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, caffeine, weight management and breakfast - were presented to survey participants. The results revealed that less than a quarter (23%) of the respondents scored passing marks (answered half or more of the questions correctly).

The quiz also found that the top three areas with the biggest nutrition knowledge gaps were:

- Minerals: only 28% of respondents answered the questions in the category correctly
- Caffeine: only 33% of respondents answered the questions in the category correctly
- Protein: only 34% of respondents answered the questions in the category correctly

Based on the results from the quiz, Herbalife Nutrition also uncovered a list of the top nutrition myths commonly believed by Asia Pacific consumers, with more than six in 10 consumers providing incorrect answers or said that they are unsure of the right answers to the nutrition statements presented to them.

"The prevalence of nutrition myths on the Internet has led to widespread confusion over nutrition facts versus fiction. Not only do the majority of consumers believe that consuming carbohydrates alone will result in weight gain, many of them also believe that less protein is required as they grow older - which is far from the truth," said Stephen Conchie, Senior Vice President and Managing Director, Asia Pacific, Herbalife Nutrition.

"To help address these nutrition information gaps, we have been working with leading health and nutrition experts to make accurate nutritional knowledge widely available for Asia Pacificâ??s consumers. We believe a collective effort by governments, healthcare institutions and the nutrition industry would be more effective in keeping consumers better informed in the long run, and hope more can partner with us on this journey to help people lead healthier lives," added Conchie.

Top Nutrition Myths in Asia Pacific Uncovered by the Survey

Myth #1: Carbohydrates make you gain weight

Fact: Carbohydrates alone donâ??t cause weight gain; consuming excess calories do. The Herbalife Nutrition Philosophy recommends that carbohydrates form 40 percent of daily calorie intake. Healthy sources of carbohydrates such as vegetables, fruits, legumes and wholegrains also provide important nutrients like calcium, iron and B vitamins.

Myth #2: Less protein is required as we grow older

Fact: Starting in our early 40s, we may experience a gradual, progressive loss of muscle mass and function known as sarcopenia. This process can be mitigated by boosting protein intake and incorporating resistance exercise as we age.

Myth #3: Caffeine causes dehydration

Fact: While caffeine has diuretic properties, moderate intake of between 2 to 3 cups of coffee a day is unlikely to cause dehydration. A study by Institute for Scientific Information on Coffee also found that coffee can be as hydrating as water.

Myth #4: Peak bone mass can be optimized at any age with sufficient calcium intake

Fact: Our peak bone mass (max bone size and strength) is dependent on calcium intake and reaches its peak by age 30. However, sufficient calcium intake throughout life can reduce the risk of osteoporosis. Calcium supplementation can protect against bone loss at older ages, especially for post-menopausal women who have higher calcium needs.

Myth #5: A ketogenic diet is a healthy way to lose weight

Fact: Very low in carbohydrate, moderate in protein and very high in fat, the ketogenic diet forces the body to rely on body fat for fuel, resulting in weight loss. However, healthy carbohydrates are beneficial to the body, supplying energy, vitamins and minerals. To lose weight sustainably, adopt a balanced diet and exercise regularly.

Myth #6: A very low-fat diet is the best way to lose weight

Fact: Studies have shown minimal reductions in weight after the first year from very low-fat diets, making it an ineffective long-term weight loss strategy. In fact, our bodies need some fat to stay healthy, as it helps to build cell membranes and hormones, and aids the absorption of fat-soluble vitamins A, D, E and K.

Myth #7: The Glycemic Index is a good tool for choosing the healthiest carbohydrates

Fact: The Glycemic Index measures how the carbohydrate in a food impacts blood sugar levels but cannot be relied on alone for choosing a healthy diet. The amount of carbohydrates you consume as well as what the food is being eaten with also needs to be considered in totality.

Myth #8: Protein powder is not a healthy source of protein as compared to protein from natural foods

Fact: Protein powder can be as good as protein from natural foods if derived from high-quality sources. For instance, soy protein from soybeans is a complete protein, providing a full range of nine essential amino acids for the bodyâ??s nutrition requirements.