

[IMAGE]

## Study: Health Buzzwords Misleading

When you go grocery shopping, do you notice the words "whole grain" canned pasta, "organic" candy and soda that contains "antioxidants"?

How likely are you to buy these without actually noticing they are not health foods? Very likely, according to researchers.

Recently in the journal *Food Studies*, found that the majority of consumers want to make healthful choices, but "food marketers are taking advantage of them by misleading those consumers with deceptive labeling."

Words can often motivate people to consume foods that are making them heavy and contributing to obesity and other diseases, including diabetes.

According to the study, when we see food packages with nutrition panels, usually on the side or back of a product, the words that appear on the front of packages don't always match up to what it is that we are really consuming.

The study included a total of 318 undergraduates who completed an online survey looking at packages and at nutrition panels.

organic food - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark They were asked to look at two versions of a product: the real one and the same one with words such as "organic" or "whole grain" removed. The participants found every version with the words included to be significantly more healthful, the study said. Some examples: Annie's Bunny Fruit Snacks, with and without "organic"; cherry 7-Up, with and without "antioxidants"; and Tostitos tortilla chips, with and without "all natural."

Then they were asked to look at two nutrition panels. They were told the category, such as cereal, but not the name of the product. They were asked to rate healthfulness. Based just on those numbers, 33% of participants chose Spam as more healthful than salmon, for example. Seventy-nine percent chose the less healthful cereal in a pair. But participants did choose juice over soda and carrots over potato chips.

Researchers are hoping this study can bring awareness to the public about food. When products have improved labeling and corporate responsibility people can feel better about the foods they are consuming.

Make sure to read the labels carefully next time you see health buzzwords that don't seem to match up to the products you are about to consume.

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