

The Consumption of Sodium and Fat from Processed Foods

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Abstract : When convenience drives daily food choices, the increased consumption of processed foods may be associated with the increased intakes of sodium and fat and further with the onset of chronic diseases. The purpose of this study was to investigate the levels of sodium, saturated fat, and calories intakes through processed foods and the dietary patterns among adult populations in South Korea. We used the nationally representative data from the 5th Korea National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (KNHANES, 2010-2012) and a cross-sectional survey on the eating behaviors among university students (N=893, 380 men, 513 women) aged from 20 to 24 years. Results showed that South Koreans consumed 43.5% of their total food consumption from processed foods. The 24-hour recalls data showed that 77% of sodium, 60% of fats, 59% of saturated fat, and 44% of calories were consumed from processed food. The intake of processed foods increased by 1.7% in average since 2008 annually. Only 33% of processed food that respondents consumed had nutrition labeling. The data from university students showed that students selected processed foods in convenience store when eating alone compared to eating with someone else. Given the convenience and lack of time, more people will consume processed foods and it may impact their overall dietary intake and further their health. In order to help people to make healthier food choices, regulations and policies to reduce the potentially unhealthy nutrients of processed foods should be strengthened. This research was supported by the National Research Foundation of Korea for 2011 Korea-Japan Basic Scientific Cooperation Program. This work was supported by the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Korea and the National Research Foundation of Korea (NRF-2015S1A5B6037369).

Keywords : sodium, fat, processed foods, diet trends

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