

Senate Community Affairs Committee

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-398

OUTCOME 1: Population Health

Topic: AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL PREVENTIVE HEALTH AGENCY
EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT ANPHA'S WEBSITE INFORMATION AND
ADVICE.

Hansard Page: CA 99

Senator Fierravanti-Wells asked:

- a) Which guru tells you to swap a large portion of milk chocolate for a small piece of dark chocolate? Whose suggestion is that? You have all these things here. That is just one thing. But you have a whole lot of things.
- b) What is the basis of some of the suggestions that you have put in? There does not seem to be any sort of basis for that. Is that a calorie base?

Answer:

a) and b)

The swap suggestions for the campaign and on the website are based upon relevant chronic disease, physical activity, nutrition and overweight and obesity guidelines and research.

The healthy eating swaps are based on facts presented in the Clinical Practice Guidelines for Overweight and Obesity¹ which includes:

- Try to limit foods that contain a lot of energy;
- Set realistic goals; and
- Eat smaller servings.

The swaps are also supported by facts presented in the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*² including:

- Limit fat intake; and
- Take care with portion sizes, especially of energy dense foods.

¹ National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) (2003) *Clinical Practice Guidelines for Overweight and Obesity*, Canberra: NHMRC.

² National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) (2003) *Food for Health Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults*, Canberra: NHMRC.

Swapping a large portion of milk chocolate for a small piece of dark chocolate will result in a reduced amount of energy intake due to the smaller portion size. For example, a 150g portion of milk chocolate contains 3309 kilojoules (788 calories) and a 20g piece of dark chocolate contains 428 kilojoules (102 calories)³. Dark chocolate has also been found to contain high amounts of antioxidant and when consumed in small amounts may assist in preventing heart disease.^{4,5,6,7}

³ Food Standards Australia New Zealand (2010) Nutrient Composition Database NUTTAB <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/consumerinformation/nuttab2010/>

⁴ Grassi et.al. (2005) *Cocoa Reduces Blood Pressure and Insulin Resistance and Improves Endothelium-Dependent Vasodilation in Hypertensives*, Hypertension, vol 46, pp 398-405.

⁵ Buitrago-Lopez et.al. (2011) *Chocolate consumption and cardiometabolic disorders: systematic review and meta-analysis*, British Medical Journal, vol 343, d4488

⁶ Engler et.al. (2004) *Flavonoid-Rich Dark Chocolate Improves Endothelial Function and Increases Plasma Epicatechin Concentrations in Healthy Adults*, Journal of the American College of Nutrition, vol 23. no. 3, pp 197-204.

⁷ Hermann et.al. (2006) *Dark chocolate improves endothelial and platelet function*, Heart, vol. 92, pp119-120.