

Development of a nutrition knowledge translation workbook for physically active adults: outcomes from a pilot Study with varsity athletes

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Adequate nutrition knowledge is a key part of health literacy; however, health literacy is low within the general adult population and is associated with lower health outcomes. Regular physical activity is also associated with a healthy lifestyle, however, increasing activity may require additional nutrition knowledge to ensure dietary intakes and energy requirements are addressed. Collectively, this highlights the need for community-based nutrition education initiatives to enhance nutrition knowledge and promote healthy lifestyles in physically active adults. This pilot study assessed the effectiveness of an evidenced-based nutrition education workbook that included information about nutrient requirements and meal or snack ideas as a knowledge translation (KT) tool for physically active adults. The KT workbook was pilot-tested by varsity swim athletes ($n=20$, 8 males and 12 females aged 18-22), who completed an online questionnaire following workbook review. Athletes have higher nutritional requirements based on their physical activity level, yet studies report athletes' health literacy is low. Nutrition/health literacy knowledge was increased post-workbook review (90%, $n=18$) and applicable to daily life (85%, $n=17$). Common barriers in meeting adequate dietary intakes included challenges with time management (90%, $n=18$), lack of nutrition knowledge for meal preparation (70%, $n=14$), food affordability (65%, $n=13$), inadequate cooking skills (55%, $n=11$), and being too fatigued to cook/prepare meals (65%, $n=13$). Participants identified hydration (70%, $n=14$) and nutritional supplements (80%, $n=16$) as relevant topics for further education that were not included in the workbook draft. Participants' baseline nutrition knowledge (assessed based on completion of undergraduate-level nutritional science courses) was not related to their perceptions of the efficacy/usefulness of the KT workbook ($r=0.248$, $p=0.293$), or the applicability/relevance of the KT workbook to daily life ($r=0.160$, $p=0.500$). Collectively, these results indicate the utility of a nutrition education workbook as an effective KT tool for supporting varsity athletes to improve nutrition knowledge and could be adapted promote health literacy among community adults with lower physical activity levels to improve population health.

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