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Title: Economic assessment of nutritional recommendations

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PII: S0167-6296(14)00115-5
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.1016/j.jhealeco.2014.09.002
Reference: JHE 1802

To appear in: *Journal of Health Economics*

Received date: 28-2-2014
Revised date: 21-7-2014
Accepted date: 10-9-2014

Please cite this article as: <doi>http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhealeco.2014.09.002</doi>

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Economic assessment of nutritional recommendations

Abstract: *The effect of consumers' compliance with nutritional recommendations is uncertain because of potentially complex substitutions. To lift this uncertainty, we adapt a model of consumer behaviour under rationing to the case of linear nutritional constraints. Dietary adjustments are derived from information on consumer preferences, consumption levels, and nutritional contents of foods. A calibration exercise simulates, for different income groups, how the French diet would respond to various nutrition recommendations, and those behavioural adjustments are translated into health outcomes through the DIETRON epidemiological model. This allows for the ex-ante comparison of the efficiency, equity and health effects of ten nutritional recommendations. Although most recommendations impose significant taste costs on consumers, they are highly cost-effective, with the recommendations targeting salt, saturated fat, and fruits and vegetables (F&V) ranking highest in terms of efficiency. Most recommendations are also economically progressive, with the exception of that targeting F&V.*

Highlights:

- We simulate the effect of nutritional recommendations on whole diets.
- The economic model is linked to an epidemiological model to estimate health effects.
- Ten recommendations are ranked in terms of equity, efficiency and health effects.
- Most recommendations impose significant taste costs but are highly cost-effective.
- Targeting salt, saturated fat, and fruits & vegetables appears most socially desirable.

Keywords: food choice; diet; rationing; norms; healthy

Classification: D1; D6; I1

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