

## Messages tailored to people's locus of control affect healthy food intake

**Introduction.** Messages tailored to individuals' personality are found to be more effective than general advertisements. This experimental study investigated whether healthy eating messages tailored to people's Nutrition Locus of Control (LoC), i.e. whether individuals take themselves as responsible for healthy eating ("internals") or rely on the guidance of others ("externals"), influenced their (un)healthy snack choice and intake while watching a movie.

**Method.** Participants ( $N = 65$ ; 97% internals) were exposed to a healthy eating message which either matched (congruent condition) or mismatched (incongruent condition) their LoC. Food choice (grapes and/or chocolate peanuts) before and actual intake during the movie were assessed.

**Results.** Participants' food choice did not significantly differ between experimental conditions. However, participants exposed to a congruent message consumed significantly more grapes than those exposed to an incongruent one, with no difference in chocolate intake.

**Conclusion.** This study shows that messages adjusted to people's LoC affect their healthy food intake.

**Keywords:** tailoring messages, personality, food choice, consumption