

Using cell phone camera pictures to record food intake and promote healthy eating

**N Gharibeh¹, N Zeeni¹, R Doumit², L Karam¹, L Mesky¹, N Farran¹, J Long³, C Kazandjian²,
C Boswell⁴, H Song⁴**

¹Lebanese American University, School of Arts and Sciences, Department of Natural Sciences, Byblos, Lebanon; ²Lebanese American University, School of Nursing, Byblos, Lebanon; ³ Lubbock Christian University, Department of Nursing, Lubbock, USA; ⁴Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, USA

Recording food intake may contribute to weight loss by promoting changes in eating behavior. The current spread of mobile phone embedded cameras offers new opportunities for recording food intake. Moreover, the act of taking pictures of food consumed may further increase chances of achieving dietary goals by enhancing visual consciousness of portion size and nutrient content. The present study tested the effect of using cell phone pictures to prompt memory on energy intake and food choice in college students. Participants (n=76) were randomly assigned to two groups. The first group was asked to enter their food intake online during three days based on their memory while the second group was asked to record intake using cell phone pictures for a memory prompt. Participants then crossed over to complete 3 more days of diet recording using the alternate method. Results revealed a decrease in energy intake (p=0.03) during cell phone-based recall (1334 ± 54.2 kcal/day) compared to memory-based recall alone (1446.4 ± 53 kcal/day). More precisely, cell-phone based recall was associated with a decrease in consumption of meat (p=0.008) and vegetable (p=0.021) exchanges. In conclusion, mobile phone pictures may be an easy and effective way to record diet when aiming at weight loss. The combination of cell phone-based dietary recording with healthy eating education may lead to greater improvement.