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Effectiveness of Salsa, Sabor y Salud Program and the Impact of a Salsa, Sabor y Salud Maintenance Program on Outcome Measures

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ABSTRACT

Chronic diseases in the United States are disproportionately higher in the Hispanic population. A significant factor in the high prevalence of chronic disease in Hispanics may be their overweight or obese status. Intervention strategies are imperative if this trend is to be reversed. Researchers have found that culturally sensitive health programs for the Hispanic population have a higher success rate, but very few of these programs are available. One culturally sensitive health program in particular that has had a lot of positive feedback is the Salsa, Sabor y Salud (SSS) program. Although research has shown that SSS is a successful program, SSS has not had a maintenance program to date. Health maintenance programs are essential for people to retain information and to continue the practice of skills needed to live healthy lifestyles. Research has shown that health program participants will revert to their old behaviors within five years time. Recent studies suggest that these reversions can be avoided with a health maintenance program. The objective of this pilot study was to evaluate the effectiveness of the SSS program and the impact of a Salsa, Sabor y Salud Maintenance (SSSM) program on outcome measures. In both the SSS and SSSM program the participants increased nutrient dense food consumption and chose lower fat options for food. The participants in both programs had a significant increase in overall knowledge of nutritious eating habits and the benefits of physical activity as well. With the addition of the SSSM program participants reported an increase in fruit and vegetable intake, and food label reading when shopping, which was not seen in the SSS program alone. This study further confirms the SSS program improves healthy lifestyle choices based on measured outcomes, but it also provides evidence that the SSSM program significantly enhances positive health outcomes.

KEYWORDS

Cultural Competency; Salsa Sabor y Salud; Maintenance Program

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