

Knowledge, Attitudes and Perceptions Of Carbohydrates among Nutrition Undergraduates in Canada

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Financial Interest Disclosure

(over the past 24 months)

I declare that I have not had any relevant financial relationships with any commercial interests over the past 24 months.



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Background

- Communication of evidence-based nutrition information by health professionals plays an important role in improving Canadians' health. Students gain knowledge from nutrition courses and develop critical thinking skills required for future careers.
- However, students and health professionals may also be influenced by competing messages on the internet, mainstream media and social media that often communicate opinions not always based on best-available science.



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Objectives

The purpose of the study is to:

- Assess knowledge and attitudes/perceptions of carbohydrates (including sugars) among students enrolled in undergraduate nutrition courses in Canada



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Participating Universities



Ryerson
University



UNIVERSITY
OF MANITOBA



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Methods

- Cross-sectional questionnaires were distributed in nutrition courses to undergraduate students at different stages of their training
- The questionnaire contained 32 questions including student demographics, knowledge of carbohydrates, and perceptions of topics on carbohydrates and health.

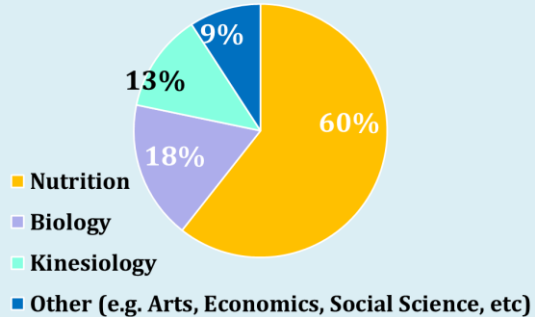


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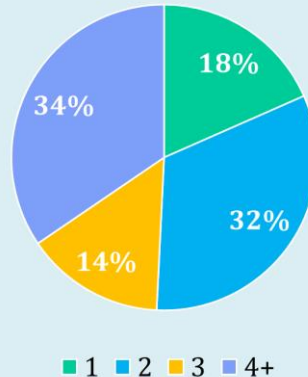
Results: Participant Demographics

- A total of 1207 students participated in the study between January 2016 and February 2017

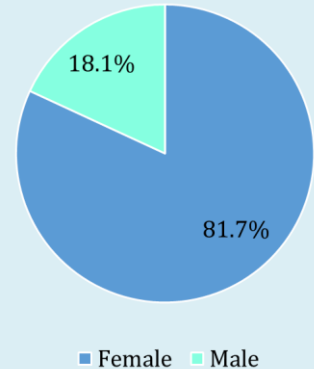
Degree Programs



Year of Program



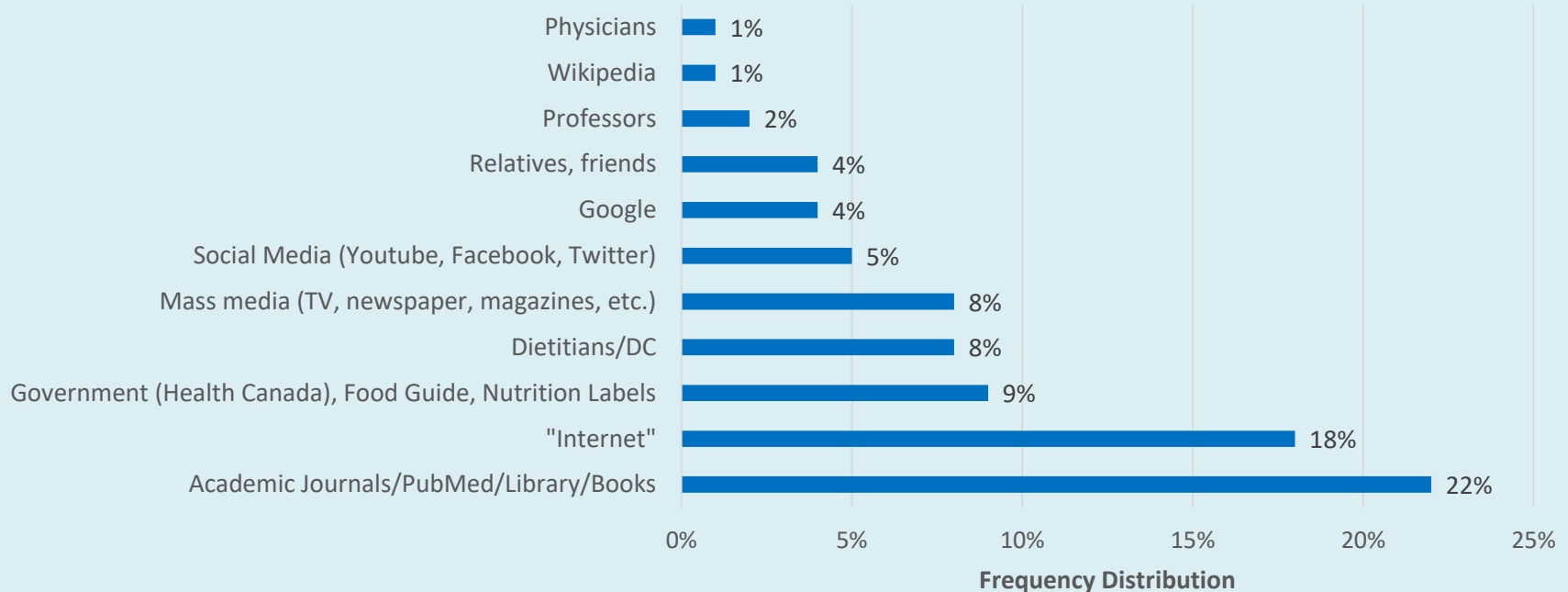
Gender distribution (%)



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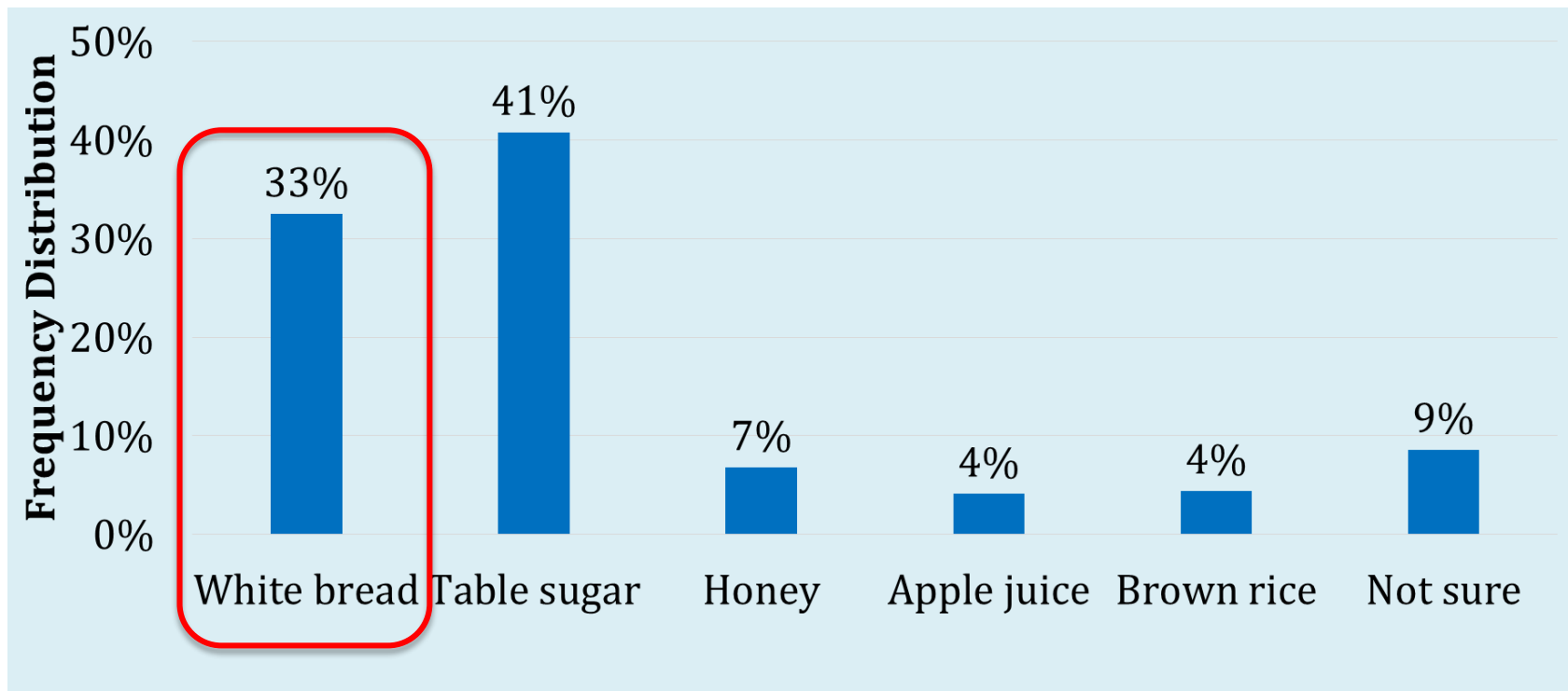
Results: Source of Nutrition Information

Source of Nutrition Information in Addition to Textbook



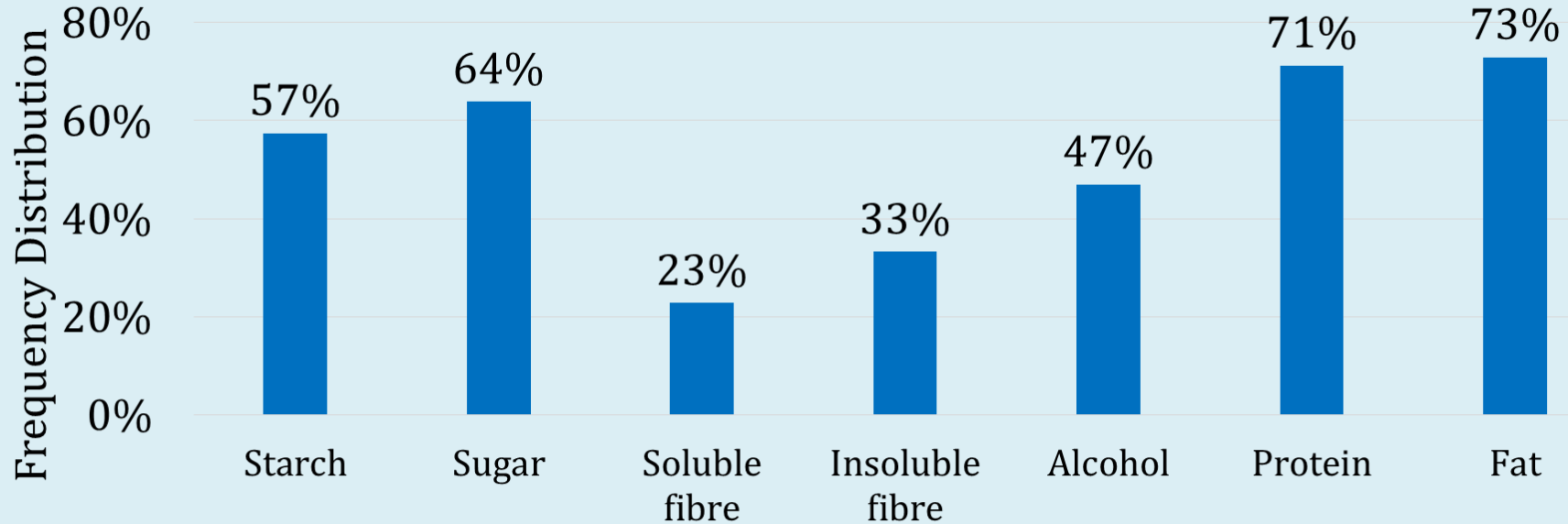
Results: Glycemic Index

Question: Which of the following has the highest Glycemic Index?



Results: Calories from macronutrients

Percentage of Students Who Provided Correct Answers for Each Nutrient



Results: Added Sugars Consumption

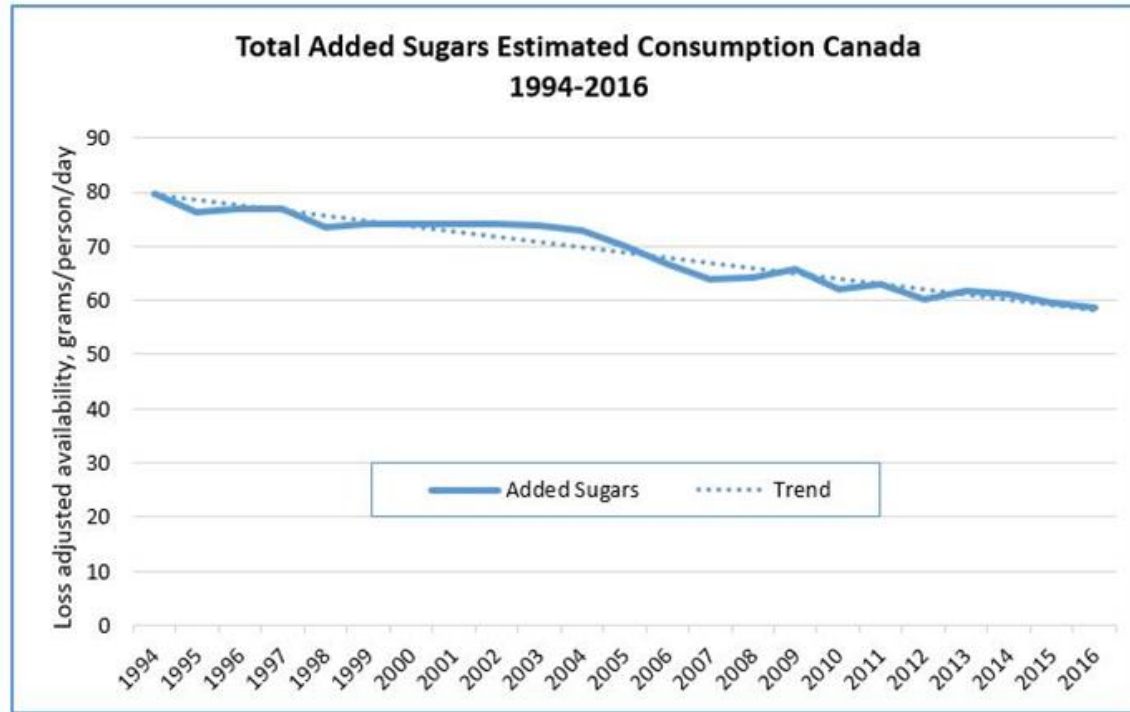
Question: Added sugars consumption in Canada has been _____ over the past 20 years.

- A. Rapidly increasing
- B. Slightly increasing
- C. Steady (neither increasing nor decreasing)
- D. Slightly declining
- E. Rapidly declining
- F. I am not sure about the answer



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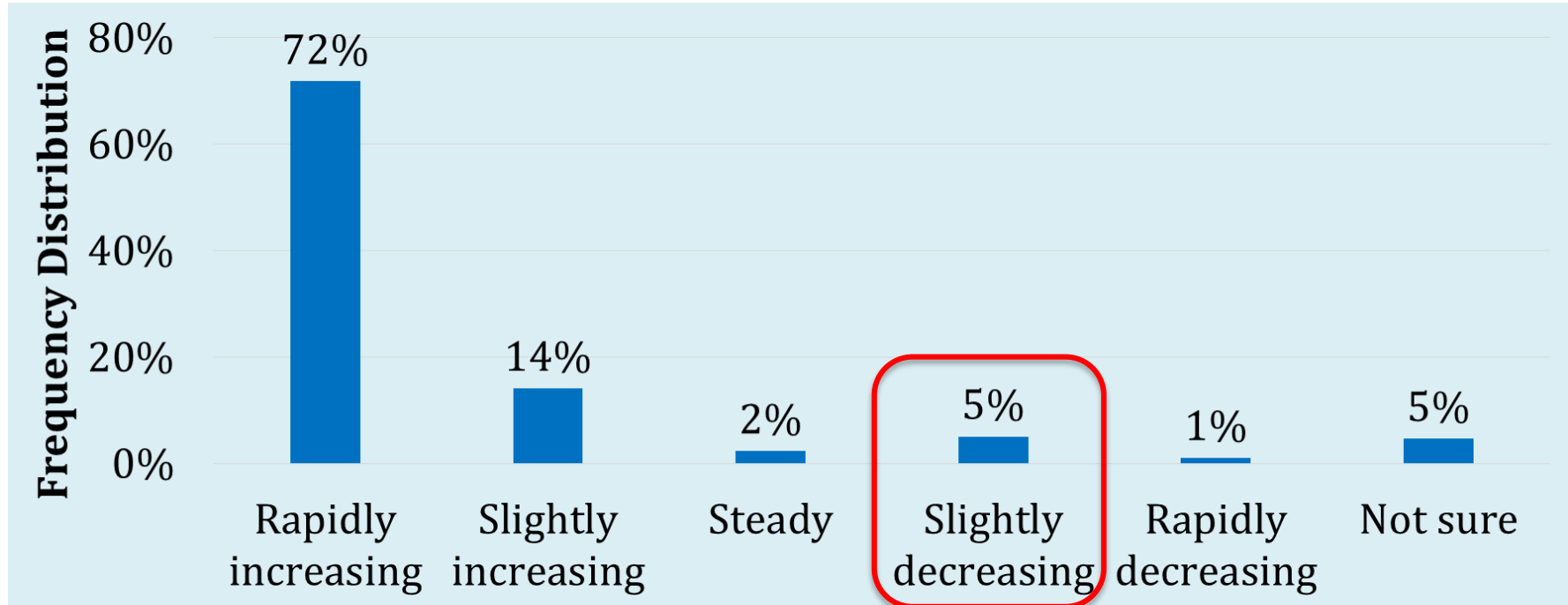
Results: Added Sugars Consumption



Data source: Statistics Canada, CANSIM Table 002-0011. Adjusted for waste using updated USDA Loss-Adjusted Food Availability ([http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-\(per-capita\)-data-system/_aspx#26705](http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-availability-(per-capita)-data-system/_aspx#26705)) Includes refined sugar, maple sugar, honey and sugars in soft drinks.

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Results: Added Sugars Consumption



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Conclusions

- Knowledge gaps on carbohydrate and sugars were identified.
- Perceptions of sugars-related health topics were generally negative, many reflecting information and opinions communicated online, in mass and social media sources.
- The importance of accessing nutrition information from credible sources needs to be reinforced throughout the degree program.
- It warrants greater emphasis on addressing knowledge gaps, improving knowledge retention and ensuring nutrition curricula being based on current, highest quality evidence.



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Thank You!

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