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Introduction

Shopping for Health 2004: Making Sense of Nutrition News & Health Claims is the 13th in a series of annual surveys of America's grocery shoppers. Sponsored by Rodale Inc., *Prevention* Magazine, and the Food Marketing Institute, this national survey examines shoppers' interest in and attitudes about health and nutrition, the efforts consumers make to manage their health, and the ways in which health and nutritional concerns play out in shoppers' purchase decisions in the grocery store. Among other things, this year's survey takes a special look at how closely shoppers follow nutrition-related health stories in the news, and also how package claims and labeling information affect purchase behaviors.

The primary objectives of the 2004 study are to:

- Track shoppers' assessments of their health, diet, and weight, and determine how concerns about these issues affect their behavior in the store.
- Track shoppers' attitudes and opinions regarding food, its role in maintaining good health, and shoppers' growing tendency to view food as a better way than medicine to manage illness.
- Identify which health and nutritional claims on food packages are most likely to get shoppers to buy products.

- Track shoppers' attention to the Nutrition Facts Panel, and determine if the panel is causing shoppers to change established buying patterns. And, if so, determine what changes shoppers are making and what panel information is causing the change.
- Assess the level of attention shoppers give media stories about nutrition and health, determine the amount of confusion these stories cause, and evaluate the extent to which this confusion might actually hinder efforts to eat a more healthful diet.
- Offer advice and merchandising tips that retailers can use in their own stores.

Survey data comes from telephone interviews conducted in March 2004 by Princeton Survey Research Associates, with a nationally representative sample of 1,003 adults. Respondents have primary or equally shared responsibility for their household's grocery shopping, and had shopped for groceries in the two-week period prior to being interviewed. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus three percentage points for results based on the total sample.

Merchandising tips for retailers were developed by Willard Bishop Consulting, Barrington, Illinois, who identified immediate opportunities for retailers to respond to market insights uncovered in this year's *Shopping for Health* survey.