

# Simple, personalized behavioral interventions as a means to modify diet quality in college students: A randomized intervention

<b>Submission date</b> 19/08/2022	<b>Recruitment status</b> No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered <input type="checkbox"/> Protocol
<b>Registration date</b> 24/08/2022	<b>Overall study status</b> Completed	<input type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
<b>Last Edited</b> 25/06/2025	<b>Condition category</b> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data

## Plain English summary of protocol

### Background and study aims

Diet is an important factor necessary for good health. College students are typically healthy, but they often struggle to maintain a good diet once they arrive at their college. The purpose of this research study is to determine if having college students select simple dietary behavior changes for themselves can successfully improve the quality of their diets, compared to just receiving general advice.

### Who can participate?

Students will be eligible to participate in this study if 18 to 25 years of age, enrolled full time as a student of your university, fluent in English, do not have any medical conditions or allergies that require modification of diet, or struggle with disordered eating practices.

### What does the study involve?

If eligible, participants will complete initial surveys and two diet recalls within a week's time, with help from members of the research team. After completing these initial surveys, participants will be assigned to participate in either the experimental or control group. In the experimental group, participants will be shown a list of seven simple dietary behaviors and asked to select the two behaviors they would most like to follow for the next four weeks. They will then receive a laminated card for each chosen behavior which are then attached to their key chain and carried for the next four weeks as a reminder of their selected dietary behaviors. They may also receive reminder text messages each week from the research team. The control group will receive a link to the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and asked to consider these guidelines in relation to their diet. Those in the control group will not receive laminated cards or specific instructions on dietary behaviors. After four weeks have passed, all participants will again complete two dietary recalls within a week's time frame. At this point the study is considered over, but after four more weeks have passed, participants will again be contacted to complete two final dietary recalls as well as close out surveys similar to what they completed in the beginning.

All study procedures will occur virtually over 9 weeks. The time required to complete all surveys will be approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes when spread out over the study period. The study will be conducted remotely, with the research team located on campus at UCI.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

Possible benefits participants may experience from the procedures described in this study include becoming more informed about how to improve diet quality. Possible risks and discomforts associated with the study include: anticipated discomfort with answering questions about one's personal life, including finances and dietary practices. In addition, participants will be providing information about their diet, and this may cause some anxiety for feeling judged or experiencing negative feelings regarding the quality of their diet. Furthermore, participants will be asked to perform specific behaviors that some may consider to be cumbersome or a burden in light of student-related duties.

Where is the study run from?

University of California, Irvine (USA)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

July 2022 to April 2023

Who is funding the study?

Investigator initiated and funded

Who is the main contact?

Dustin Moore, [dustinmm@uci.edu](mailto:dustinmm@uci.edu)

## Contact information

### Type(s)

Principal investigator

### Contact name

Mr Dustin Moore

### Contact details

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## Additional identifiers

### Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

### ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)

Nil known

**Protocol serial number**

Nil known

## Study information

**Scientific Title**

Personalized intention tags selected by college students, and meant to be attached to the students keys, with a four week trial period to observe if diet quality will improve, compared to general nutrition information provided to a control group of similar college students.

**Acronym**

SMPLDIET

**Study objectives**

The aim of the randomized controlled trial among college students is to evaluate whether or not simple, behavioral intention statements that are selected by the students and carried as keychain tags can result in improved diet quality, compared to general nutrition advice.

**Ethics approval required**

Old ethics approval format

**Ethics approval(s)**

Approved 18/07/2022, University of California Irvine Institutional Review Board (Office of Research, 160 Aldrich Hall, Irvine, CA, 92697-7600, USA; +1 949-824-6662; cshindle@uci.edu), ref: UCI IRB #963

**Study design**

Multicenter interventional randomized controlled trial

**Primary study design**

Interventional

**Study type(s)**

Quality of life

**Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied**

Diet quality among college students

**Interventions**

One group of students will be given a list of simple behavior change interventions, and asked to select two, which they will adhere to for the duration of the study. These selected behavior changes will be printed out onto laminate tags and given to students with the intention to be placed on their keys. The second group will be given a link and guide to MyPlate and the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which they will also be asked to read without specific dietary guidance. Both groups will complete baseline and follow-up surveys that collect information on demographics, current stress levels, willingness to change behavior, and diet quality, with the principal outcome being how the intervention affects diet quality. The intervention will run for a duration of four weeks, with an additional follow-up at eight weeks from baseline. The control arm of the study will be undergo data collection procedures at the same time points.

**Randomization:**

Using the NIH NCI Clinical Trial Randomization Tool (<https://ctrandomization.cancer.gov/home/>). This generated a randomized list of allocations. As participants are recruited and deemed eligible, they will be sequentially assigned the allocation determined by this list.

**Intervention Type**

Mixed

**Primary outcome(s)**

Diet quality as measured by the Healthy Eating Index 2015, using data collected from the Automated Self-Administered 24-hour Dietary Assessment Tool at baseline, week 4, and week 8

**Key secondary outcome(s)**

Feasibility will be assessed using a 7 question Likert scale survey developed by the researchers at week 8.

**Completion date**

15/04/2023

**Eligibility****Key inclusion criteria**

1. Between the ages of 18 and 25 years
2. Fluent in English
3. Enrolled full time at a university as a student.

**Participant type(s)**

Healthy volunteer

**Healthy volunteers allowed**

No

**Age group**

Adult

**Lower age limit**

18 years

**Sex**

All

**Total final enrolment**

131

**Key exclusion criteria**

1. Those with severe food allergies, medical conditions that require dietary modification
2. Those at risk for disordered eating or eating disorders
3. Those considered to already have a high diet quality in line with dietary recommendations

**Date of first enrolment**

29/08/2022

**Date of final enrolment**

31/03/2023

## Locations

**Countries of recruitment**

United States of America

**Study participating centre**

**University of California, Irvine**

Irvine

United States of America

92697

**Study participating centre**

**California State University, Long Beach**

1250 Bellflower Blvd

Long Beach

United States of America

90840

## Sponsor information

**Organisation**

University of California, Irvine

**ROR**

<https://ror.org/04gyf1771>

## Funder(s)

**Funder type**

Other

**Funder Name**

Investigator initiated and funded

# Results and Publications

## Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The datasets generated during and/or analyzed during the current study will be stored in a non-publicly available repository, but at a later point may become available if requested. This will be a password protected repository through the school public health at UC Irvine, with access given to only members of the research team, for the purpose of analyzing the data for publication.

## IPD sharing plan summary

Stored in non-publicly available repository, Available on request

## Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
<a href="#">Results article</a>		22/05/2025	25/06/2025	Yes	No
<a href="#">Participant information sheet</a>		01/03/2021	23/08/2022	No	Yes