



# Research Week 2020

## Increasing Self-Efficacy and Body Appreciation in Collegiate Athletes as Part of a Cooking Education Intervention

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### Keywords

Sports nutrition, body appreciation, self-efficacy, cooking, nutrition education

### Abstract

#### Purpose

Collegiate athletes often consume inadequate diets and have a high prevalence of disordered eating behaviors and body dissatisfaction. To improve dietary intake, previous research suggests that the use of a cooking and nutrition curriculum may support nutrition knowledge and self-efficacy. While these studies have provided insight into the relationship between nutrition education and confidence in cooking skills, incorporating a body appreciation component to the curriculum may support optimal health, athletic performance, and overall well-being. The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of a nutrition and cooking education curriculum in improving self-efficacy and body appreciation in collegiate athletes.

#### Methods

A four-week nutrition education and cooking curriculum was developed and implemented in college athletes. A mixed methods approach was used to assess the effectiveness of the intervention. Quantitative data was collected at baseline and completion of the intervention to assess changes in self-efficacy and body appreciation. Qualitative data was collected at completion of the intervention to assess feasibility of the intervention.

#### Results

Ten athletes participated in the intervention. Quantitative results indicated significant improvements in self-efficacy ( $P=.003$ ) and no change in body appreciation ( $P=.28$ ). Qualitative data confirmed quantitative findings suggesting improvements in nutrition knowledge and self-efficacy in meal preparation.

#### Conclusions

Our findings indicate that the implementation of a cooking and nutrition education curriculum is indeed feasible and significantly increases self-efficacy in cooking and meal preparation as well as increases nutrition knowledge among collegiate athletes.

