Factors Affecting Older Adults' Fruit and Vegetable Consumption Erin C Lancaster and Elizabeth A Smith, PhD, RD, LDN Middle Tennessee State University

INTRODUCTION

Accompanying the longer lifespan in the older adult population are chronic diseases and illnesses that can increase healthcare costs and decrease quality of life.

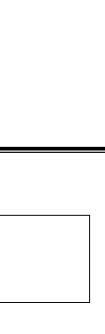
□ Diets rich in fruits and vegetables (F/V) are high in phytochemicals which are compounds that may help protect against chronic disease by lowering the effects of oxidative stress and inflammation.

□ This research project aimed to assess if voluntary attendance at nutrition education sessions improved older adults' F/V intake as measured by a carotenoid palm scanner (picture displayed on the top left).

METHODS

- □ Before educational sessions began, a total of 86 individuals' palms were scanned and recorded. These individuals were members at the St. Clair Senior Center in Murfreesboro, TN.
- Eight educational sessions took place at the center over a four-month period which focused on practical ways to increase intake of fruits and vegetables in the diet through food demonstrations.
- An average of fifteen individuals attended each session. Ages of participants ranged from 56 to 92 years old.
- □ After all demonstrations were complete, participants' and nonparticipants' palms were scanned again and compared to previous scans.
- The following recipes were demonstrated at the educational sessions:
- butternut squash soup
- sweet potato fries
- tomato basil soup
- vegetable soup
- pumpkin muffins
- roasted fall vegetables
- pumpkin-butterscotch gingerbread trifle













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scores attend.

DISCUSSION & FUTURE PLANS

participated in this research.

RESULTS

Out of those who attended the sessions: nine out of fourteen had an increase in palm

one individual's score stayed the same four had decreases in scores • Out of those who did not attend the sessions: nine individuals had an increase in scores eight had decreases in scores Individuals who attended sessions and had increases in scores had considerable increases in palm scores compared to those who did not

Despite the small sample size, educational sessions improving individuals' F/V intake seems promising, and ongoing research is suggested to provide more evidence correlating attendance to sessions and increases in F/V intake.

To resolve the issue of obtaining an adequate amount of score data, in the future, researchers will request participant contact information.

□ MTSU nutrition and dietetics students will continue to present nutrition education at the senior center due to increased requests from those who