

Change of nutrition labeling on domestic prepackaged food in Hangzhou in 2008 and 2010

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Objective. To survey the change of nutrition labeling on prepackaged food in Hangzhou supermarkets before and two years after promulgating the Regulation for Food Nutrition Labeling.

Methods. Nutrition facts, nutrition claims and nutrient function claims on prepackaged food in a supermarket were copied with prepared questionnaire in 2008 and 2010, and a normative judgment was made.

Results. There were 4 693 and 5 526 kinds of domestic prepackaged food investigated in 2008 and 2010, respectively. The number of prepackaged foods labeled with nutrition facts, nutrition claims and nutrient function claims was 1 369 (27.6%), 643 (13.0%) and 94 (1.9%) in 2008, and that was 1 937 (35. 1%), 424 (7. 7%) and 128 (2. 3%) in 2010, respectively. The number of nutrition facts labeled with energy, protein, fat, carbohydrate and sodium was 597 (43. 8%) and 1 661 (85. 9%) in 2008 and 2010, respectively; but only 134 (9. 8%) and 985 (51. 0%) of labeling were normalized. Nutrition claims and nutrient function claims were focused on vitamin, calcium and fiber.

Conclusion. Although the level of normalization for nutrition labeling was improved remarkably, the effect of encouraging normalization on the widespread use of nutrition labeling was small. Therefore, it is mandatory to enforce nutrition labeling, and to initiate health education on nutrition labeling.

Key words: Prepackaged food; nutrition labeling; cross-sectional study