

Title: Perceptions of Intuitive Eating Principles Among Registered Dietitians and Other Healthcare Professionals in South Carolina

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Objectives: This research aimed to assess the familiarity and attitudes regarding intuitive eating (IE) principles among of registered dietitians (RDs) and other healthcare professionals.

Design, Methods and Instruments: A previously validated questionnaire was condensed and distributed electronically to RDs and healthcare professionals throughout South Carolina. The survey included 26-Likert scale items assessing familiarity, attitudes, and beliefs regarding IE.

Results: Thirty-one participants completed the survey. The majority of respondents were practicing RDs (84%). Nearly 40% had less than five years of work experience followed by 32.3% with greater than 15 years of experience. The majority were familiar with IE (61.3%) and agreed that IE is more effective than restrictive dieting for weight loss (74.3%). The majority agreed dietetic students should be educated on IE principles (86%), and that RDs should use IE for weight management (94%). Twenty-three percent felt patients should monitor their weight and 45% felt it is easy to give dietary advice to eat fewer calories. The majority of participants (83.9%) agreed it is important to work with patients to increase self-acceptance of weight.

Conclusions: The IE paradigm is associated with improved psychological well-being, lower disordered-eating behaviors, and improved BMI. Current research suggests a paradigm shift towards the utilization of IE principles in practice, and this study corroborates these findings. However, there appears to be some discrepancy in the reported familiarity of IE and weight-centered beliefs. Future research should further assess the knowledge of IE principles among healthcare providers in South Carolina.

Conflict of interest/funding disclosure statement

There were no conflicts of interest or funding for this study.