

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in the Caribbean

Why is this study needed?

Fruits and vegetables have many health benefits and protect us against heart disease and high blood pressure. Despite their benefits, fruits and vegetables are not consumed enough in the Caribbean. This study examines whether the neighborhoods where people shop for food are related to how much fruit and vegetables they consume, helping us understand why fruit and vegetable consumption in the Caribbean is so low.

Who was involved?

This study involved 1,962 individuals living in community-dwelling in Barbados, Puerto Rico, Trinidad and Tobago, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Individuals included were 40 years or older, spoke either English or Spanish speaking and were permanent residents for 10 or more years.

What were the study results?

- Fruit and vegetable consumption in the Caribbean is lower than recommended.
- Individuals who thought fruits and vegetables were affordable were more likely to eat them.

Citation: Oladele CR, Colón-Ramos U, Galusha D, Tran E, Adams OP, Maharaj RG, Nazario CM, Nunez M, Pérez-Escamilla R, Nunez-Smith M. Perceptions of the local food environment and fruit and vegetable intake in the Eastern Caribbean Health Outcomes research Network (ECHORN) Cohort Study. *Prev Med Rep.* 2022, April (26).

Takeaway Message

The local food environment plays a part in whether people eat fruits and vegetables in the Caribbean. We can increase the amount of fruits and vegetables that people eat if we make them affordable.

