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# **Discounts may fuel the purchase of healthier foods**

In a new study, an old marketing tactic was tested on health food. Virtually every company that sells things, has tried at one time to lower prices in an attempt to generate more sales. It can be as simple as having a really cheap item designed to bring in customers that will buy normally priced merchandise or scientifically tested price points to maximize profit. What I have not seen before is discounting vegetables and fruits in an attempt to get people to buy more healthy food.

In a new study, this exact thing was done. Check out the excerpt below then click the link at the bottom to read the whole story. I don't know that this will work on a large scale because it probably doesn't result in more profit for anybody. It may take a government subsidy or tax credit to make it work, but eating healthier does lead to better overall health which would reduce the cost of health care so there may be a business case to be made for it. Only time will tell, but this is a good study to have as proof that people can be persuaded to buy more healthy food . . . now we just have to figure out if the people actually ate the food after buying it.

A total of 1,104 shoppers were randomized to receive a price discount on healthy foods, tailored nutrition education, a combination of the two or no intervention. Healthy foods, as recognized by New Zealand's Heart Foundation, were 12.5 percent cheaper for those randomized to receive discounts. Participants assigned to nutrition education received monthly packages of food-group-specific information, which were tailored to their shopping history. Handheld barcode scanners recorded all supermarket purchases.

According to a report in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, after six months of intervention, participants receiving price discounts bought approximately 1.7 more pounds (790 grams) of healthy food per week compared with those not randomized to pay the lower prices.

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