

What are you eating?

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Diners need to know exactly what goes into their meals at restaurants if they are to make healthy choices.



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Nutritionists and dieticians agree that the South African food industry must move towards giving consumers more information about their food.

Christel de Wit, a nutritionist for Unilever SA, said consumers will make healthier choices if they knew what they were putting into their mouths.

"In recent years, we have seen a boom in fast and convenience food.

"With this has come concern about the nutritional effects of modern eating habits.

"The results of this research clearly demonstrate that there is a global need for greater transparency around nutritional information when eating out to empower consumers to make healthier choices," she said.

What's in it?

A study by Unilever Food Solutions, published recently in the World Menu Report, found that nine of 10 consumers who eat out at least once a week in the US, UK, China, Germany, Russia, Brazil and Turkey are demanding to know what is in their food, how safe it was and where it came from.

Restaurant franchises in the US with more than 20 outlets are required by law to display nutritional information.

In South Africa, most restaurant patrons do not know what goes into their meals because displaying information about food is voluntary.

Dietician Anne Till said that franchises such as Nando's, Kauai and Wimpy have been displaying nutritional information, but for South Africans to combat lifestyle diseases such as obesity all restaurants should do so, in an understandable format.

Source: The Times

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