New Food Pyramid Gets Mixed Reviews

By ACSH Staff — April 20, 2005

An April 20, 2005 article [1] by Kristen Greencher notes reactions to the federal government's new food pyramid nutrition guidelines, including the reaction of ACSH's Director of Nutrition, Dr. Ruth Kava:

The new pyramid's vertical strips aren't as intuitive as the horizontal bars used to be, said Ruth Kava, director of nutrition for the American Council on Science and Health, a nonprofit consumer education group.

"I don't think the layout is as obvious in terms of the amounts of food one should eat as the old pyramid was," she said...

While the logo isn't perfect, the Internet part is critical for reaching a new generation with a growing need for healthy-eating help, if the USDA markets it effectively, Kava said.

"The fact that it's on the Web and clickable is going to be good for getting the kids involved, as long as they know about it," she said. "We're the most concerned about kids' eating habits these days. We're seeing a huge increase in obesity and starting to see an increase in diabetes in young people."

The timing of the new pyramid also is causing concern after government officials announced Tuesday they may have overstated the risk of death from obesity. While the analysis didn't measure disability or disease rates, it showed people who are slightly overweight may have a lower risk of death than people of normal weight, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Hopefully that won't take away from people's interest in improving their diets and health," Kava said.