

New York City Tries Again to Require Restaurants to Post Calories

2008-01-28

New Yorkers wondering just how many calories they are consuming in each grande-size white hot chocolate at Starbucks (490) or Double Whopper with cheese at Burger King (990) could soon see those numbers printed alongside the price, according to revised regulations approved on Tuesday by the city's Board of Health.

Under the rules, which officials rewrote after a federal judge struck down similar provisions in September, any chain that operates at least 15 outlets nationwide would have to display calorie content on their menu boards, menus or food tags - essentially wherever the restaurant lists the information that customers use to make their choices.

'Most people underestimate calorie content by a lot,' said Dr. Thomas R. Frieden, the city's health commissioner, adding that he considered the rules a potent weapon in the crusade against rising obesity rates. 'Even dietitians get a lot of it wrong.'

Dr. Frieden said his department's research showed that consumers often make faulty assumptions about the calorie counts of items on a menu. But when they have the information, he said, they tend to choose food with fewer calories.

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Source - New York Times

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