

Healthy Lifestyles - Brazil - February 2013

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– Sheila Salina, Lifestyles Analyst

In this report we answer the key questions:

- Do Brazilians have healthy eating habits? What are their eating habits and what are the trends in the food market today?
- Is physical activity a common practice among Brazilians? How does the population exercise? What are the existing opportunities to increase this habit?
- What makes people strive for a better quality of life and better work/personal life balance? In what way does work impact the health of Brazilians?
- How does the older population deal with the challenges involved in maintaining a good health?

Brazil is going through a stage of economic development that has considerably impacted the lifestyle of the population.

The growing socio-economic group C, ie the majority of Brazilians, is having access to better quality products and services that were once restricted to higher income groups, such as education, leisure and private health care. This, in turn, has generated greater debt, but it also gave this socio-economic group a better standard of life.

In general, these consumers are busier, with less time for their personal life. Convenience and practicality are being prioritized, but habits that are typical of a tropical country are being kept, such as preference for outdoor exercising and for foods that are perceived as more natural. It is no wonder that the fast-food restaurant chains that are growing the most are the ones with a 'health' appeal.

Nevertheless, a busy life makes people develop habits that prioritize practicality over health. It is easier to eat out or buy ready meals; it is also more practical to exercise by walking to the office, and, especially in the case of women, who are a growing presence in the job market, by doing domestic chores as a way to exercise.

In this new reality, children and older adults are also developing unhealthy habits, such as watching more TV and substituting main meals for snacks. Today, older people spend more time at home, on the internet, reading information about their health problems.

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Brazil is looking at nations like the United States and European countries that have come up with creative solutions to fight obesity and high stress levels, improving the health of their population. By following their example, Brazil has the advantage of being able to anticipate negative effects and, therefore, look after the health of the population in a more effective way.

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