LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Importance of user interaction with automated dietary assessment methods

The utility of using images, as described by Arab et al.,[1] which uses automated image-capture to aid completion of a web-based dietary recall to enhance recall of food and beverage intakes, is indeed promising. We have verified that individuals can correctly identify foods and beverages using an image up to 14 h after an eating occasion.[2] However, we do want to clarify an incorrect description of our system described on page 1157 in Arab et al.[1] The system in Boushey et al.[3] and Six et al.[4] referred to as the Mobile Phone Food Record (mpFR) is automated with image upload followed by 'decoding of images by automation'. In addition, the system also includes a user confirmation step, which Arab et al.[1] implied was not a part of the mpFR. The user provides the final confirmation of foods and beverages identified by the automated system; thus, the images are used directly by the participant. This step is clearly illustrated in the mpFR diagram[4] and in the process diagram.[2] This step is important because an automated system would need a method to identify new foods (whether new to the system or new to market), as well as correct foods that are misclassified. In addition to the advantages of soliciting contextual help from the user as described by Arab et al.,[1] this step provides a novel approach for selecting foods to add to an existing food composition database.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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