

# Teaching Third and Fourth Year Medical Students How to Cook: An Innovative Approach to Training Students in Lifestyle Modification for Chronic Disease Management

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## Abstract

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Only 27 % of medical schools meet the National Academy of Sciences' recommendation of 25 h of nutrition instruction for medical students [1]. Despite the efficacy of physician counseling on patient behavioral outcomes, only 19 % of graduating medical students are confident in their ability to provide nutrition education [2, 3]. The Goldring Center for Culinary Medicine at Tulane University addresses this disparity through one hour disease-centric seminars for third year students as well as a pioneering fourth year away rotation at Johnson & Wales University College of Culinary Arts. These programs build on a 24-h, eight module elective available to first and second year students. While prior piecemeal student nutrition initiatives have focused on lecture format, few studies utilize longitudinal hands-on cooking classes as well with sustained institutional support [4–6]. This contrasts with The Goldring Center providing students culinary and nutrition training over 4 years with the capstone away rotation at a culinary institute. Fourth year students there spend 53 h in culinary classes, 53 h teaching clinical care insights to culinary students, and 53 h learning nutritional counseling strategies in lifestyle modification and medication therapy for Rhode Island Hospital-associated clinics. Students transition into this opportunity from their third year seminars that unite hands-on

cooking with case studies in nutritional strategies for chronic diseases. This curriculum component in the students' final 2 years serves as the clinical translation of the classroom and community-based learning from the two preclinical years. Ongoing longitudinal analysis of school-wide surveys and national board scores are being used to assess the effectiveness of the center's curriculum from medical school into residency and clinical practice.

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