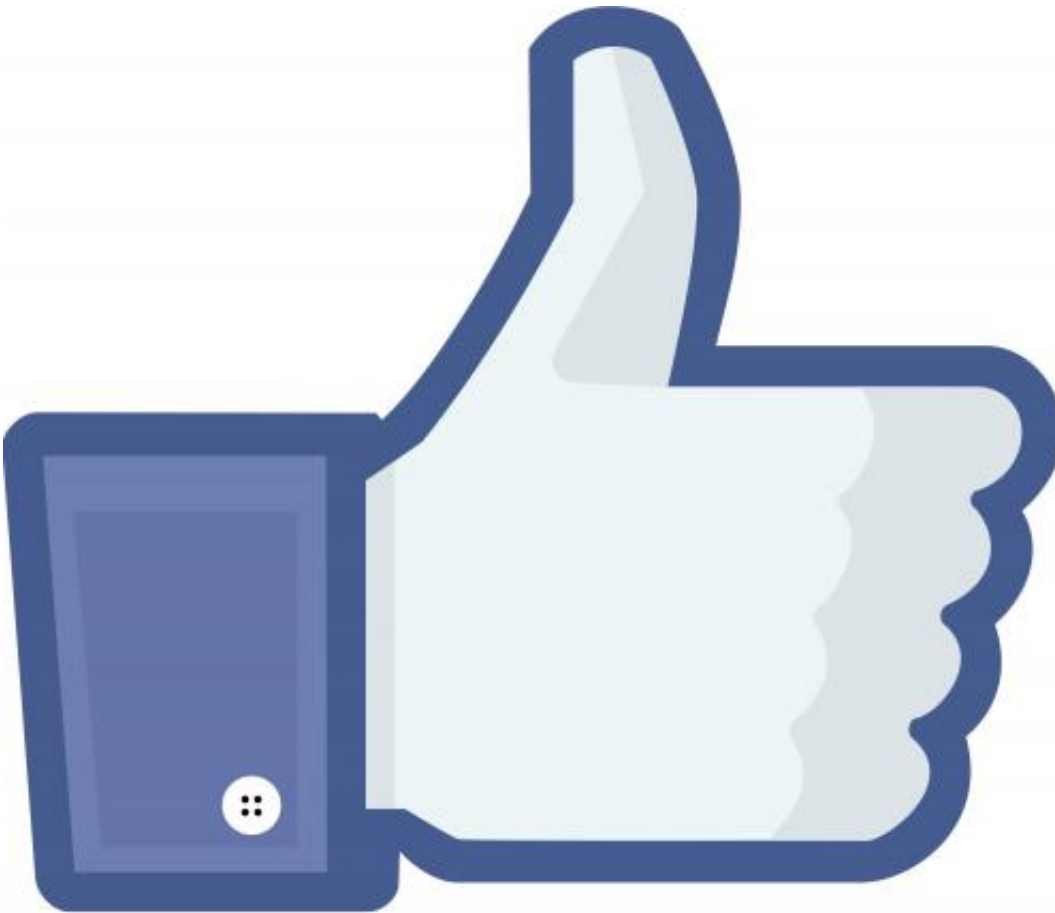


Is your Facebook account being targeted by food companies?

December 12 2017



Want to know if you are being targeted on Facebook by food and beverage companies?

Teenagers will be able to see what [food](#) and drink companies are targeting them via Facebook thanks to a new browser [extension](#) created by the University of Auckland.

The AdHealth browser extension has been created by academics at the University's School of Population Health as part of a project called "Exposure of adolescents to food advertising through Facebook in New Zealand".

Dr Stefanie Vandevijvere, a senior research fellow in Epidemiology and Biostatistics at the University, is co-ordinating this study.

"Food and non-alcoholic beverage advertising is recognised as an important factor influencing food choices related to obesity and diet-related chronic diseases," Dr Vandevijvere says.

"The monitoring of adolescents' exposure to food and beverage promotions, and the content of these promotions, is necessary to generate evidence to understand the extent of the problem, and to determine appropriate and effective policy responses."

The study is seeking teenagers aged between 16 and 18 years-old. They will need to install the AdHealth browser extension using Google Chrome as a [web browser](#) to participate in this study.

Dr Vandevijvere says participation in the study is free and entirely voluntary, and participants or their parents or caregiver have the right to withdraw from participation at any time.

The browser extension will run in the background of the web [browser](#) and record the advertisements seen by participants in their Facebook newsfeed. It also records the demographic of participants. It uses this information to give the participant an "Ad health" rating, which is based

on the exposure duration to unhealthy food [advertising](#).

The app will collect advertisements seen by the participant, their date of birth and gender, and any engagement they make with advertisements they see (whether they clicked, liked, commented on, or shared the advertisement).

But no personally identifiable information from participants' Facebook accounts will be collected in this study. Only data from advertisements will be collected from participants' Facebook Newsfeed.

More information: adhealth.azurewebsites.net/info/

Provided by University of Auckland

Citation: Is your Facebook account being targeted by food companies? (2017, December 12) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-12-facebook-account-food-companies.html>

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