Examining the Health Consequences of the Nutrition Transition in

Lowland Bolivia.

Throughout the last fifty years, populations in developing countries across the world have undergone a health transformation known as the “Nutrition Transition” –- a major shift in food choices, dietary intakes, and activity patterns that has followed improvements and changes in economy, technology, living standards, and lifestyle habits. With this transition, the shift from a subsistence to a market-oriented lifeway, their traditional diets that are plentiful in fiber and nutrients are often replaced by highly processed and refined foods that contain large amounts of sugars, saturated fats, and animal products. Since 2002, the Tsimane Amazonian Study Panel (TAPS) has monitored lifestyle and health changes in 13 communities of the indigenous Tsimane population of lowland Bolivia, which has begun to experience Nutrition Transition. The Study has routinely tested these subjects for multiple health-related variables and factors, including waist circumference and body fat percentage, and the Panel has recorded and analyzed this data over time. The aforementioned dietary changes, when paired with decreases in energy expenditure caused by sedentary exercise levels, often result in increases of overall body fat percentage, body mass index (BMI), and blood cholesterol levels, as well as lead to fatal health complications and disorders such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.