



Kimberly Varner, RD Senior Regional Dietitian



I am a registered dietitian working in a community setting.

How long have you been a dietitian?

I have been working at Weis for about 7 years.

Where do you currently work?

Weis Markets, a grocery store chain with about 200 stores in the Northeast

How do you spend most of your time at work?

- 1) Conducting nutrition counseling sessions with Weis customers and associates to help them reach their health and nutrition goals.
- 2) Planning and putting on community events including kids cooking classes and adult nutrition presentations.
- 3) Putting together our in-store magazine HealthyBites, including choosing all recipes and editing the magazine.
- 4) Recording recipe videos and creating content for Weis Markets' social media.
- 5) Managing brand partnerships with the Weis dietitian team.

Why did you choose this career?

I started teaching group fitness in high school and became really interested in health and wellness. I have always been interested in nutrition and loved to cook, so a career in nutrition was a perfect fit.

What did you do to prepare for this career?

To become a registered dietitian, I had to complete a bachelor's degree, complete a dietetic internship, and pass the national RD exam. I completed my bachelor's degree in Nutrition and Food Science at Montclair State University. I completed my dietetic internship (about one year long) at the Medical University of South Carolina. Following my internship, I passed my RD exam and have to get continuing education credits regularly to maintain my credential.

What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy teaching kids cooking classes because it is great to be able to introduce kids to nutritious foods in a fun way.

What do you find most challenging about your job?

There are always lots of nutrition myths out there that are not based in science, and it can be challenging to help people understand which nutrition guidance is correct.

What was one of your first jobs and how did that experience influence your career path?

I had many jobs as a teenager including working in a bakery, at a pizzeria, and at Starbucks. My favorite job I started as a teen was teaching group fitness, which I still do as my side job many years later. That led me down the path of working in health and wellness.

What is one piece of advice you would give to a young person who is interested in your profession?

While many registered dietitians work in a hospital or clinical setting, there are many other options out there including what I do (working in retail), or working for a private practice offering nutrition counseling. Try to explore as many different career options as possible during college and your internship to discover what you enjoy most.

KIMBERLY'S FUN FACT

I love to travel and have been to several countries all over the world. Most recently, I traveled to Nepal and completed the trek to Mt. Everest Base Camp.



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