COPE WEBINAR SERIES FOR HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

September 27, 2017

Global Food Policy to Prevent Obesity: Current Evidence and Recommendations

12 Noon-1 PM EST

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OBJECTIVES

• Understand the current evidence about the link between obesity prevention policy and dietary intake, obesity and chronic disease.

• Explore the various regulatory options being proposed and recommended as well as the obesity prevention policy knowledge gaps existing in the U.S. and around the world.

• Discuss the current and future state of regulatory options around the world.

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CE CREDITS

- This webinar awards 1 contact hour for nurses and 1 CPEU for dietitians
- Suggested CDR Learning Need Codes: 1080, 4000, 4010 and 5370

GLOBAL FOOD POLICY TO PREVENT OBESITY: CURRENT EVIDENCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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DISCLOSURE

Neither the planners or presenter have any conflicts of interest to disclose.

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Can We Prevent Obesity with Food Policy?  
*Perspectives from Across the Globe*

Lindsey Smith Taillie, PhD, MPH

Fall 2017

**Overview**

1. Understand the current evidence about the link between obesity prevention policy and dietary intake, obesity and chronic disease.

2. Explore the various regulatory options being proposed and recommended as well as the obesity prevention policy knowledge gaps existing in the U.S. and around the world.

3. Discuss the current and future state of regulatory options around the world.

**Why Food Policy?**
Global increases in:
• Added caloric sweeteners:
  • Beverages
  • Packaged foods
• Animal-source foods
• Refined carbohydrates, ultra-processed foods
• Problematic dietary behaviors:
  • Increased snacking
  • Away-from-home eating
  • Convenience and ready-to-heat food
  • Increased portion sizes
  • Edible oils for frying (unique to LMICs)

Global decreases in:
• Legumes, vegetables, fruits in most countries
• Food preparation time
• Physical activity

How did we get here?

Why regulate sugary drinks?
• Average American drinks >38 gallons of soda/year (eight 12-oz cans/week)
• A top source of calories in children and teens diets (118 kcal/day)
  • 60% of added sugar intake
• One 12-oz can of regular cola contains 9 teaspoons of added sugars
  • AHA recommends 6 tsp per day for women & 9 tsp/day for men
• Industry history of super-sizing
Why regulate sugary drinks?

Health risks:
- **Promotes weight gain**
  - Children: 55% greater odds of overweight/obesity
  - Adults: 27% more likely to become overweight/obese
- **Promotes diabetes**
  - Increased risk of diabetes even after accounting for impact on weight
- **Non-alcoholic fatty liver disease**
  - Daily consumption increases fat deposits in the liver by 150%
- **Coronary heart disease**
- **Tooth decay**
- **Costly:**
  - Costs for obese individual are 150% higher ($2,741/year) than normal weight
  - Diabetes cost $245 billion in 2012

A growing and global problem

Hawkes & Popkin Lancet 2016

Why regulate sugary drinks?

For some companies, that can mean specifically focusing on young people, as Ahmet Bozer, president of Coca-Cola International, described to investors in 2014. "Half the world’s population has not had a Coke in the last 30 days," he said. "There’s 600 million teenagers who have not had a Coke in the last week. So the opportunity for that is huge."

New York Times, September 2017
Why regulate “junk” food?

- Excess sugar: 75% of US food supply has added sugar
  - Increased weight and CVD risk
- Excess sodium:
  - Linked to higher blood pressure & CVD risk
- Excess saturated fat
  - Mixed evidence, but appears to be food-based
  - Linked to higher CVD risk
- Excess trans fat:
  - Raises LDL cholesterol, lowers HDL cholesterol
  - Associated with increased risk of CVD, stroke, etc.
- Combined into highly palatable ultra-processed foods
  - Consume more of them
  - Passive overconsumption & glycemic index
- Evidence of addiction/habituation
  - Behavioral and neurochemical changes: bingeing, withdrawal, craving

An example: Lunchables

When I asked Geoffrey Bilder, former C.E.O. of Philly Farms, about this shift toward more salt, sugar and fat in meals for kids, he smiled and noted that even in its earliest incarnation, Lunchables was held up as an example. “One article said something like, ‘If you take Lunchables apart, the most healthy item in it is the napkin.’”

Well, they did have a good bit of fat, I offered. “You lost,” he said. “Fat crackers.”
MINI BURGERS
MINI HOT DOGS
CHICKEN DUNKS

Nutritional Highlights
• Good source of Protein
• Chicken used is white meat only
$27 million dollars in advertising on Lunchables in 2012
- Children age 6-11 saw >1 ad for Lunchables per week
- Web traffic
- Placement in stores

**Bottom line:** food science, marketing, and pricing combine to create an obesogenic food environment where weight maintenance is difficult
How to work within existing food system?
Who is responsible?

- Debate about who has the responsibility to take action:
  - Individual
  - Society

Social-Ecological Model

Policy Options
Taxes

Fiscal policies

Taxes:
• Elements:
  • Need to be large enough to drive change
  • Healthy substitutes (that are less expensive)
• Main concerns
  • Are they regressive?

Sugary drink taxes around the world
Sugary drink taxes in the U.S.

Berkeley's Sugary Beverage Tax

- Penny-per-ounce excise tax passed on Nov 2014
- Taxed beverages: sugary sodas, juice drinks, sports and energy drinks, coffees and teas
- Intent to raise revenue for children's health programs
- Study: examine change in price, sales, and intake of sugary beverages

Labeling
**Nutrition labeling: front of package options**

- Simple guidance: + or -
- Complex guidance
- Facts and references
- Nutrition facts

**Example: Smart Choices**

- Image of Smart Choices packaging

**Nutrition labeling: exercise equivalents**

- Diagram showing exercise equivalents with snacks and their calorie counts.
Example: Competing claims

Nutrition labeling around the globe
- Netherlands: Choices logo
- South Korea, Canada, & the US: mandatory trans fat labeling
- New Zealand: Pick the Tick logo
- Washington State: mandatory menu labeling

All led to reformulations that improved the nutrient profile of products on the market. No evidence (yet) of individual behavior change.

- More recently: Chile & Ecuador warning labels

Nutrition labeling: Chile & Ecuador
Nutrition labeling: Updated NFP in US

Servings: larger, bolder type
New Added Sugars
Change in which nutrients are required for inclusion

US Warning labels

Sept 21 2017: US Court of Appeals, 9th Circuit ruled in favor of the American Beverage Association vs. City and County of San Francisco

Marketing
### Why regulate marketing?

- **Children are exposed to marketing:**
  - Mostly unhealthy foods & drinks high in fat, salt, and/or sugar
  - In large amounts
  - Across every media platform (broadcast, print, digital)
  - In many environments (schools, sports events, stores, restaurants)
  - Using sophisticated techniques and child appeals

- **Unhealthy food marketing affects children's:**
  - Product and brand preferences
  - Purchase requests ("pester power")
  - Eating/consumption behaviors

- **Children (and teens) are uniquely vulnerable:**
  - Highly impressionable
  - Cannot yet recognize advertising intent
  - Lack nutritional knowledge
  - Motivated by immediate gratification rather than long-term consequences

### Options for marketing regulations

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<td><strong>Where</strong></td>
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<td>Television</td>
<td>Movies</td>
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<td><strong>How</strong></td>
<td>Techniques</td>
<td>Branding</td>
<td>Product Placement</td>
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<td><strong>Whom</strong></td>
<td>Children</td>
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**Appeals**
- Fun, Cool
- Happiness, Humor
- Fun
- Entertainment
- Anti-adult
- Unique/New
- Flavored
- Calories
- Unhealthy
- Cholesterol
Countries with voluntary industry self-regulation

Not shown: IFBA's Global Policy provides minimum criteria for marketing directed to children <12y that is paid for/controlled by IFBA companies in every country where they market their products. Companies include: Ferrero, General Mills, Grupo Bimbo, Kellogg Company, McDonald's, Mondelēz International, Mars, Incorporated, Nestlé S.A., PepsiCo, Inc., Unilever.

Countries with statutory marketing restrictions

Strengths
- Applies to unhealthy foods & beverages, uses uniform nutrition criteria across categories
- Restrictions address both power of advertisements to influence (by restricting child appeals) and children’s exposure
- Universal 6a-10p ban beginning 2018 reduces ad-shifting
- Connected to FOP warning labels
- Includes comprehensive in-school restriction
- Includes brand equity characters

Chile: strongest law to date
Food Industry Response

Product Reformulations

- Beverage set goals to reduce sugar content
  - American Beverage Association aims for 20% reduction in beverage calories by year 2025
  - British Soft Drinks Association pledged 20% fewer calories by 2020

- Options:
  - Offer more products without or with less sugar (no/low-calorie drinks)
  - Reduce serving sizes
  - Reformulate/reduce sugar content of existing portfolio

Product reformulation

- Stealth vs. overt reformulations

- Company pledges
  - Cereal companies, especially children’s cereals: Rudd Center examined 22 varieties in 2009 vs. 2012
    - 45% had less sodium
    - 32% had less sugar
    - 23% had more fiber
  - Lunchables: by 2011, reduced salt, sugar, and fat by 10%

From Rudd Center’s General Health 2012 Project: Changes in nutrition content of child, family, and adult cereals, 2009-2012

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Significantly different from 2009 values (consumers only variables that existed in both 2009 and 2011, n=15

New products introduced

In 96g package:
- Lean turkey, white meat only
- American pasteurized prepared cheese product
- Crackers
- Double Stuf Oreo cookies
- Oven-roasted turkey
- Monterey jack cheese
- Whole wheat crackers
- Harvest blend trail mix
- Kettle corn crunch
- Chocolate-covered pretzels

In 130g package:
- Lean turkey, white meat only
- American pasteurized prepared cheese product
- Crackers
- Double Stuf Oreo cookies
- Oven-roasted turkey
- Monterey jack cheese
- Whole wheat crackers
- Harvest blend trail mix
- Kettle corn crunch
- Chocolate-covered pretzels

In 96g package:
- 330 kcal
- 10 g protein
- 7 g sat. fat
- 580 mg sodium
- 17 g sugar
- <1 g fiber

In 130g package:
- 465 kcal
- 16 g protein
- 8 g sat. fat
- 560 mg sodium
- 22 g sugar
- 4 g fiber

Portion size changes

Does it work?

Pledge to cut 1 trillion calories from the US food supply

But evaluations found:
1. These companies were already selling fewer calories before the pledge — so was everyone else.
2. Based on pre-pledge trends, these companies should have been selling even fewer calories than they did.


Does it work?
Final points

- Food policy goal: not to eliminate choice but make the healthier choice preferred
- How quickly and effectively policies work will depend on:
  - Social, economic, historical, and political contexts → Need to tailor to population
- Combination of actions will be needed to be mutually reinforcing and effective
- Evidence is still developing:
  - Health-related taxes: strong
  - Labeling, Marketing, others: TBA
- Ultimate goal: create systemic change
  - Improve diet
  - Reduce obesity

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UPCOMING COPE WEBINARS

October 11  Metabolically Healthy Obesity: Myth or Reality?
Carrie Dennett MPH, RDN, CD
Nutrition counselor and freelance writer
Nutrition for Carrie and Menu for Change, Seattle, WA

November 15   Food Marketing to Youth
María Romo-Palacio, RD, PhD
Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity

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QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

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