Consumer Education on Sugar Reduction: The Role of Nutrition Society of Malaysia

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» Sweetener, Flavour enhancer
» Strong evidence - Excess intake linking to overweight and obesity and dental caries.
» Health authorities recommend reduction of free sugars from the diet.

Outline

» Sugars - excessive intake
» Intake Guidelines
  > WHO 2015 guidelines
  > Malaysian Dietary Guidelines
» Nutrition Society of Malaysia
  > Related Objectives
  > Programmes and Activities
  > Sugar Reduction Initiatives
» Concluding Remarks

Media centre
WHO calls on countries to reduce sugars intake among adults and children
Press release

4 MARCH 2015 | GENEVA - A new WHO guideline recommends adults and children reduce their daily intake of free sugars to less than 10% of their total energy intake. A further reduction to below 5% or roughly 25 grammes (5 teaspoons) per day would provide additional health benefits.

“We have solid evidence that keeping intake of free sugars to less than 10% of total energy intake reduces the risk of overweight, obesity and tooth decay,” says Dr Francesco Branca, Director of WHO’s Department of Nutrition for Health and Development. “Making policy changes to support this will be key if countries are to live up to their commitments to reduce the burden of noncommunicable diseases.”
1999 - one of the 8 key messages, “reduce sugar intake and choose foods low in sugar”

2010 - Key message 10: Consume foods and beverages low in sugar.

- **Key Recommendations**
  1. Eat foods low in sugar
  2. Drink beverages low in sugar

- **How to achieve**
  *e.g.* Consume foods containing sugar less frequently
  *e.g.* Check nutrition information panel on labels of beverages for sugar content

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**Main nutrition professional organization in the country**

- 30 years towards **promoting healthy nutrition** for all Malaysians

- **Support** the National Plan of Action for Nutrition of Malaysia

- Messages based on the Malaysian Dietary Guidelines (FBDG 2010)

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**Nutrition Society of Malaysia (NSM)**

**Consumer Education**

- To promote, advance and disseminate the scientific knowledge of food and nutrition

- To inform and acquaint the public and the Government with matters related to food and nutrition

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**NSM objectives**

**NSM activities**

- **Collaborations** with other professional organisations and private sectors, particularly the food industry.

- **Variety** of approaches, channels, formats.

- **Target groups** include infants, children and women, and families.
» NSM has **not** implemented a dedicated sugar-reduction campaign or programme
» However, messages on **Sugar Reduction** consistently in our educational materials:
  - Leaflets
  - Booklets
  - Series of **Recipe books**
» Selected *examples* in the following slides

**Sugar reduction initiatives**

Primary text:

A series of leaflets to promote understanding and usage of MDG 2010

**Educational Leaflets**

» Nutrition Month Malaysia (NMM) — an annual nationwide community nutrition promotion programme jointly implemented by NSM, Malaysian Association for the Study of Obesity (MASO) & Malaysian Dietitians’ Association (MDA).
» Focus on NCDs in recent years

**NMM Booklets**

Consume Least at the tip of the Food Pyramid

2. Sugar

Sugar is present in many forms. This includes simple sugars (like fructose and glucose), sucrose (also known as common table sugar), molasses, honey, and high fructose corn syrup. It is used as a sweetener, a preservative, and a flavour enhancer. It can also alter the texture or colour of foods.

However, if looking at the nutritional aspects of sugar in our diet, it can actually be excluded. This is because we get enough from the digestion of foods that contain carbohydrate such as rice, breads, cereals, tubers, milk, legumes, and fruits.

Sugar is energy-dense, so eating too much of it can cause an excessive energy intake. This will contribute to obesity, if you do not balance that calorie intake with adequate physical activity. Obesity is a proven risk factor for developing NCDs. As a general guide, no more than 6-10% of your daily total energy intake should come from sugar (which is approximately 8 teaspoons).

Therefore, you should gradually reduce your intake of sugary foods and sweetened beverages.
» Provide the public with recipes for healthier ways to prepare meals at home 😊

New!

Healthy Recipe books

All recipe books have a general section on healthy eating:

> Always include a food pyramid, to highlight eating the least from the tip – sugar, salt and fat

» Healthier cooking methods and ingredients are emphasised, including using less sugar, salt and oil

Recipe book to encourage children to prepare simple meals
NSM will continue to promote healthy eating and active living, to reinforce the programmes and activities in the National Plan of Action for Nutrition III (2016-2025).

We are committed to promoting healthy diet, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, from the public and private sectors.