



Processed Foods: Concerns to mitigate NCDs

**Dr Anupa Siddhu
Lady Irwin College
New Delhi**

Processed food intake has increased in India over the years (NSSO)

Markets now flooded with processed food produced in India and abroad

Important feature of nutrition transition- need of convenience food and hygienically packed food and water.

Phenomenal increase in NCD in India. Diabetes capital of the world. There is a global problem of NCD increase.

**2008-2013 Action Plan
for the Global Strategy
for the Prevention and Control
of Non communicable Diseases**

- **Working in partnership** to prevent and control the 4 non communicable diseases — cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancers and chronic respiratory diseases and
- the 4 shared risk factors — tobacco use, physical inactivity, unhealthy diets and the harmful use of alcohol.

WHA 2008

The Action Plan sets out six objectives, actions to be implemented over the six-year period of 2008–2013, and performance indicators to guide the work of WHO at national, regional and global levels, with a particular focus on low - and middle – income countries and vulnerable populations.

OBJECTIVE 3.

To promote interventions to reduce the main shared modifiable risk factors for non communicable diseases

Implement the actions recommended in, but not limited to, the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health in order to:

- A. promote and support exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life and promote programs to ensure optimal feeding for all infants and young children;**
- B. develop a national policy and action plan on food and nutrition, with an emphasis on national nutrition priorities including the control of diet-related non communicable diseases;**

C. establish and implement food-based dietary guidelines and support the healthier composition of food by:

- **reducing salt levels**
- **eliminating industrially produced trans-fatty acids**
- **decreasing saturated fats**
- **limiting free sugars**

D. provide accurate and balanced information for consumers in order to enable them to make well-informed, healthy choices;

E. prepare and put in place, as appropriate, and with all relevant stakeholders, a framework and/or mechanisms for promoting the responsible marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, in order to reduce the impact of foods high in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, free sugars, or salt.

FSSAI

Now working on regulations on labeling and claims.

Aims to make consumers aware and protect their safety.

Labeling- Nutrition facts. Declaration on TFA, SFA

Claims – nutrient, nutrient function, disease reduction claim

Envisage industry to be sensitive to health of the consumer for disease reduction and food security and nutrition security. Nutrition security through even fortification guidelines.

Looks upon Food Industry for innovations and technology in reducing disease burden

Food Industry is now increasingly sensitive in selecting correct ingredients and efforts for sodium and sugar replacement is now evident in many processed food- High fiber, low sodium. Zero trans as nutrient claims. Producing low SFA products has been a major achievement. Fat replaced by FOS and using other innovations is in hands of food industry. **Make Healthy foods should be done with missionary zeal!**

While there is no precise definition for "health food", the United States Food and Drug Administration has warned food manufacturers against labeling foods as being "healthy" when they have a high sugar, salt, or fat content

Consumer Awareness and media

No efforts can succeed if consumer is not made aware and consumer does not seek.

There can be labels but consumer cannot understand the information or does not read what they should for health. Generally read label for expiry/best before or place of manufacture.

Correct and authentic consumer information!

Clearly raw foods as sources!

Mayo Clinic 10 foods Raw fruits, veg and nuts- apple, almonds, blueberries, broccoli, red bean, salmon, sweet potato, wheat germ, vegetable juice, three items make a dinner.

Give your diet a healthy boost with these 10 health foods. They're among your best bets for eating well because they meet at least three of the following criteria:

- **Good or excellent source of fiber, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients**
- **High in phytonutrients and antioxidant compounds, such as vitamins A and E and beta carotene**
- **May help reduce risk of heart disease and other health conditions**
- **Low in calorie density, meaning you get a larger portion size with a fewer number of calories**
- **Readily available**

Every food is processed: Farm to Fork

Food that has been subject to washing, cleaning, milling, cutting, chopping, heating, pasteurizing, blanching, cooking, canning, freezing, mixing, and packaging that alter the food from its natural state is considered a “processed food.” That means that the orange juice that you pour from the carton in the morning, even though it states that it is “freshly squeezed” is actually a *processed* food.

Non-exhaustive list of healthy foods

The following is a non-exhaustive list of foods considered healthy(wikipedia)

Apple cider vinegar, a fruit vinegar considered a health food

Broccoli sprouts

Certain cereal products

Corn flakes, patented food invented in 1894

Digestive biscuit, English baked good from 1851, containing fiber and sometimes sodium bicarbonate

Graham cracker, cracker made with whole grain Graham flour (1829)

Graham bread, a type of whole wheat bread

Granola, a food made from mixed, toasted grains

Granula, the first manufactured breakfast cereal (1863)

Grape-Nuts, an American breakfast cereal made from baked and ground grain (1897)

Muesli, breakfast cereal of rolled oats, fruit and nuts, made by a Swiss doctor (1900)

Shredded wheat, whole wheat cereal (1893)

Herbal extract, plants, often medicinal that are concentrated and standardized

Herbal teas

Contd.

Honey, a naturally occurring whole sweetener

Malt, whole sprouted barley

Meat analogue, a dietary alternative to meat, found in health vegetarian and vegan diets

Molasses, black strap molasses has been sold as a health food

Certain oils, including olive oil and fish oil

Postum, a coffee alternative from 1895

Yogurt, traditional cultured milk product

Media Messages

World Health Day 7 April NDTV gives a list of 6 healthy foods:

- Pomegranate,
- banana,
- broccoli,
- walnut,
- oatmeal,
- mushroom

Media Messages

“Processed foods aren't always a bad thing but this does highlight the importance of clear food labels.” BBC

Media Messages

9 reasons when processed foods are bad by Kris Gunnars, Jan2014

- 1. Processed Foods Are Usually High in Sugar and High Fructose Corn Syrup*
- 2. Processed Foods Are “Hyper Rewarding” and Lead to Over consumption*
- 3. Processed Foods Contain All Sorts of Artificial Ingredients*
- 4. Many People Can Literally Become Addicted to Processed Junk Foods*
- 5. Processed Foods Are Often High in Refined Carbohydrates*
- 6. Most Processed Foods Are Low in Nutrients*
- 7. Processed Foods Tend to be Low in Fiber*
- 8. It Requires Less Energy and Time to Digest Processed Foods*
- 9. Processed Foods Are Often High in Trans Fats or Processed Vegetable Oils*

How to spot Healthy or unhealthy Processed Foods

Processed food falls on a spectrum from minimally to heavily processed:

- Minimally processed foods — like bagged spinach, cut vegetables and roasted nuts — are often simply pre-prepped for convenience.
- Foods processed at their peak to lock in nutritional quality and freshness include canned beans, tomatoes, frozen fruit and vegetables, and canned tuna.
- Foods with ingredients added for flavor and texture (sweeteners, spices, oils, colors and preservatives) include jarred pasta sauce, salad dressing, yogurt and cake mixes.
- Ready-to-eat foods, like crackers, granola, and deli meat, are more heavily processed.
- The most heavily processed foods often are frozen or pre-made meals like frozen pizza and microwavable dinners.

Still in process- Helping Guide Smart Food and Beverage Choices

The **Smart Choices Program** was created by a diverse group of scientists, academicians, health and research organizations, food and beverage manufacturers, and retailers. The group worked collaboratively to develop the program's foundation, goals, and criteria using these guiding principles.

- **Transparent** – both the nutrition criteria and governing mechanism would be shared openly
- **Coalition-based** – scientists, academicians, nutrition educators, public health organizations, food manufacturers, retailers, and government observers came together to create the system
- **Comprehensive** – program applied to diet and health needs of the entire U.S. population
- **Applied voluntarily** – all food companies were encouraged to utilize this one system to reduce the clutter of multiple, individual company front-of-pack labeling systems previously on the market
- **Flexible** – the nutrient criteria were based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and were designed to be reviewed when the 2010 guidelines are released

Conclusion

Processed Foods: Concerns to mitigate NCDs should be with missionary zeal by industry.

Consumer education

Industry efforts

FSSAI regulations

Other regulations : some worked some did not.

Are Indian market ready or what else will work for a healthy nation