ADDED SUGARS AND SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES

This month, the U.S. Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee (DGAC) released its 2015 Scientific Report outlining its recommendations for the national dietary guidelines. The advisory committee, a panel made up of nutrition and health experts from the U.S. Departments of Agriculture and Health and Human Services, revises the national guidelines every five years. The latest report makes a number of recommendations to improve the health of the U.S. population. Notable among these is the recommendation to greatly reduce Americans' consumption of added sugars.

Below are the main findings and recommendations by the DGAC regarding added sugars and sugar-sweetened beverages:

- There is strong and consistent evidence that the intake of added sugars from food and/or sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with excess body weight in children and adults.

- The reduced consumption of added sugars and sugar-sweetened beverages decreases body mass index (BMI) in both children and adults.

- Strong evidence shows that higher consumption of added sugar, especially sugar-sweetened beverages, increases the risk of Type II diabetes. Consumption is also consistently associated with increased risk o hypertension, stroke and coronary heart disease.

- Nearly 90% of the U.S. population exceeds the recommended daily intake of added sugars.

- Nearly 100% of children ages 1 to 3 and 4 to 8 years exceed the recommended daily limit for added sugars.

- Sugar-sweetened beverages supply 47% of the total added sugar intake in the American diet.

- Americans should limit their added sugar intake to no more than 10% of their daily calories, a recommendation that is consistent with the recommendations from other national and international health organizations like the American Heart Association and the World Health Organization.

- Americans should reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and water should be the beverage of choice, especially for children and teens.

- Taxing sugar-sweetened beverages could reduce consumption of these beverages while producing revenue to promote nutrition programs, such as those subsidizing fruits and vegetables

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