

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 4126  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 19<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2021**

**JUNK/FAST FOODS**

**4126. SHRI DHANUSH M. KUMAR:  
SHRI GAJANAN KIRTIKAR:  
SHRI DEVUSINH JESINGHBHAI CHAUHAN:  
SHRI C.N. ANNADURAI:**

Will the Minister of **HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether consumption of junk/fast foods like chips, burger and colas by children and youth are causing obesity and other serious health issues including fatty liver disease and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government will consider putting pictorial warning on junk foods to check the consumption of junk/fast foods especially by children and youth and if so, details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether any study has been conducted to correlate the possibility of triggering sudden heart attacks with the consumption of junk food, if so, details and the outcome thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has conducted/proposes to conduct any awareness programmes/campaign in this regard and if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether consumption of soft drinks and junk/ fast foods is responsible for increasing number of diabetic patients and other lifestyle diseases, if so, the details thereof and reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (f) other corrective steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND  
FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI ASHWINI KUMAR CHOUBEY)**

(a): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that foods high in calories, sugars, salts and fats devoid of nutrients like vitamins and minerals are called unhealthy food. Regular consumption of unhealthy foods is linked with elevated blood pressure, altered lipid profile, diabetes, obesity, heart attacks, stroke including fatty liver disease. Even among children and adolescents, unhealthy food / dietary habits increase the risk of these diseases.

(b): To ensure safe and wholesome food for school children, Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has framed and notified the Food Safety and Standards (Safe food and balanced diets for children in school) Regulations, 2020.

These regulations place a restriction on sale of foods High in Fat, Salt and Sugar (HFSS) to school children in school canteens/mess premises/hostel kitchens or within 50 meters of the school campus. There is also a restriction on advertisement of such products. Regulations aim to encourage schools to adopt a comprehensive program for promoting Safe food and healthy diets amongst school children and to convert school campus into Eat Right School focusing safe and healthy food, local and seasonal food and no food waste as per specified benchmarks.

(c): ICMR has informed that it has not conducted any specific studies to co-relate the possibility of triggering sudden heart attacks with the consumption of unhealthy food.

(d): FSSAI has informed that a nation-wide media campaign titled 'Aj Se Thoda Kam', featuring actor Shri Raj Kumar Rao, to encourage consumers to make dietary modifications by gradually reducing the consumption of fat, sugar and salt has been launched. A series of short videos (with subtitles in 12 languages) have been created for the same. The campaign is supported with flyers, banners, audio clips and an Eat Right India website with useful inputs on gradual reduction in consumption of fat, salt and sugar.

Manufacturers have also been encouraged and supported to reformulate their food products to healthier options.

Further, various Government agencies are taking up many initiatives towards community education. Some of the recent initiatives are as follows:

- ICMR-National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), Hyderabad has brought out several publications on Diet and Diabetes and Diet and Heart Diseases.
- ICMR-NIN conducts community awareness programmes and exhibitions in which these topics are dealt with.
- ICMR-NIN POSHAN Abhiyaan e-modules have dedicated sessions on healthy diets and NCDs.

(e): As mentioned in (a) above.

(f): Some of the steps taken by FSSAI to promote healthy diet and, thereby, help reduce diet related diseases include notification of following regulations:

- i. Standards for fortification of 5 key staples viz. Wheat flour and Rice (with Iron, Vitamin B12 and Folic acid), Oil & Milk (with Vitamins A and D) and Double fortified Salt (with Iodine and Iron) as well as fortification of processed foods to address issue of micronutrient deficiency and associated diseases.
- ii. Limiting Trans fatty acids to not more than 3% by weight in Oils and Fats from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2021 and to not more than 2% by weight by 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2022. Also, the limit of 2%, by mass of total oil/fats present in all the food products in which edible oils and fats are used as ingredient, has been notified to be effective from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022.
- iii. Limiting Total Polar compound to be a maximum of 25% in used cooking oil and 15% in fresh and unused cooking oil.
- iv. Health supplements, nutraceuticals, prebiotics and probiotic products fall in the category of functional foods and for which standards have been framed. Functional foods provide benefits beyond basic nutrition and play a role in reducing or minimizing risk of certain diseases and health conditions.
- v. Revised Labelling and Display Regulations with new provisions on food allergens, nutritional information (menu labelling) for specified restaurants and food service establishments etc to enable consumers to make an informed choice.