

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

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1272  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 6<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2026**

**ARTIFICIAL SWEETENERS AND HEALTH EFFECTS**

**1272. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:**

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

- (a) whether it is true that the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended against using artificial sweeteners to control weight and prevent lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether it is also true that high intake of artificial sweeteners has been reported to increase the risk of type-2 diabetes by 23 per cent and cardiovascular diseases by 32 per cent and hypertension, bladder cancer, etc. by 13 per cent and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) whether the consumption of artificial sweeteners, including those used in diet and zero-calorie soft drinks, is associated with any adverse health consequences and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE  
(SHRI PRATAPRAO JADHAV)**

(a) to (c): Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) has informed that the World Health Organization (WHO), in May 2023, issued a guideline advising against the use of non-sugar (artificial) sweeteners for weight control or for preventing lifestyle diseases such as diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. WHO has recommended reducing overall dietary sweetness rather than substituting sugar with artificial sweeteners.

Evidence from large systematic reviews and meta-analyses, including those evaluated by the WHO, indicates that higher consumption of non-sugar (artificial) sweeteners has been

associated with an increased risk of adverse health outcomes. These reviews report a 23% higher risk of type 2 diabetes, a 32% higher risk of cardiovascular diseases, and an increased risk (around 13%) of conditions such as hypertension and certain cancers, including bladder cancer, particularly with long-term exposure. However, these findings are largely based on observational evidence, and WHO has noted the need for cautious interpretation while considering the totality of evidence in dietary guidance.

Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has laid down the standards for various artificial sweeteners in the Food Safety and Standards (Food Products Standards and Food Additives) Regulation, 2011. These standards for non-caloric sweeteners and limits for use of such non-caloric sweeteners in various food products have been laid down on the basis of risk assessment and Acceptable Daily Intake (ADI) established by Joint Food & Agriculture Organization (FAO)/World Health Organization (WHO) Expert Committee on Food Additives (JECFA) and the limits are in harmonization with Codex Alimentarius Commission.

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