

Resolution 07-06

ADDRESSING THE PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACTS OF TRANS FATS IN THE FOOD SUPPLY

WHEREAS although a small amount of trans fat occurs naturally in meat, milk, and other foods, the majority of the trans fats in the American diet are industrially produced from partially hydrogenated vegetable oils;

WHEREAS the hydrogenation process converts the polyunsaturated fats into monounsaturated trans fats that are solid at room temperature and these fats are used primarily in frying oils and shortenings;

WHEREAS there is conclusive evidence indicating that consumption of trans fats raises LDL-cholesterol levels and lowers HDL-cholesterol, increasing the risk of cardiovascular diseases such as coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke;

WHEREAS trans fats have no known nutritional benefits;

WHEREAS foods high in trans fat tend to be relatively inexpensive and this encourages choosing lower-priced, less healthy food options;

WHEREAS the American Dietetic Association, the American Heart Association, and the Dietary Guidelines of Americans 2005 recommend limiting the consumption of foods that contain high amounts of trans fats including foods with partially hydrogenated vegetable oils;

WHEREAS the World Health Organization recommends reducing trans fats to less than 1% of food energy intake, and ultimately phasing out their use;

WHEREAS although it is required that nutrition facts on consumer product nutrition labels disclose trans fat information, there is no such requirement for retail food services and therefore customers are unable to assess the trans fat content of these food products; and

WHEREAS several major United States food processors and restaurant chains have voluntarily eliminated partially hydrogenated oils and trans fats from their food items without any apparent negative consequences;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Washington State Public Health Association (WSPHA) supports increased public awareness of the need to reduce trans fat intake, and replace with poly- and monounsaturated fats; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that WSPHA urges the food industry to reformulate its products to replace trans fats in prepared foods with liquid vegetable oils which are low in saturated fat and trans fat, and to offer a wider range of reduced-fat alternatives.

Signed by: Rick Porso, WSPHA President 2006-07

References:

1. American Dietetic Association. Policy Statement, Dietary Fatty Acids. Available at:
http://www.eatright.org/cps/rde/xchg/ada/hs.xsl/advocacy_7907_ENU_HTML.htm
2. American Heart Association. Scientific Position, Fats. Available at:
<http://www.americanheart.org/presenter.jhtml?identifier=4582>
3. American Medical Association. Policy, H-150.943: Reducing Trans Fats. 2007. Available at: http://www.ama-assn.org/apps/pf_new/pf_online
4. American Medical Association. Policy, H-150.945 Nutrition Labeling and Nutritionally Improved Menu Offerings in Fast-Food and Other Chain Restaurants. 2007. Available at: http://www.ama-assn.org/apps/pf_new/pf_online
5. American Public Health Association. Policy Statement, LB-06-03, Restricting Trans Fat in the Food Supply. 2006.
6. Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005. Available at:
<http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/document/html/chapter6.htm>
7. Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization Task Force Trans Fats Free Americas Conclusions and Recommendations. 2007. Available at:
http://www.paho.org/English/DD/PIN/TaskForce_Conclusions-17May07.pdf

Submitting Author:

Contact Full Name, Title: Beth Glynn, Public Health Educator

Agency: Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, Physical Activity and Nutrition Program

Address: 3629 South D Street, MS 408

City, State and Zip: Tacoma, Washington, 98418

Telephone Number: (253) 798-2886

Email Address: BGlynn@tpchd.org

American Medical Association Policy H-150.943 Reducing Trans Fats

Our AMA encourages and promotes the reduction of trans fats in the American diet in order to maintain good health and lower the incidence of coronary artery disease and will issue a statement that when trans fats are removed from foods, healthier fats or oils should be substituted. (Res. 430, A-07)

American Medical Association Policy H-150.945 Nutrition Labeling and Nutritionally Improved Menu Offerings in Fast-Food and Other Chain Restaurants

Our AMA: 1. supports federal, state, and local policies to require fast-food and other chain restaurants with 10 or more units (smaller, neighborhood restaurants could be exempt) to provide consumers with nutrition information on menus and menu boards; 2. recommends that nutrition information in fast-food and other chain restaurants include calorie, fat, saturated fat and trans fat, and sodium labeling on printed menus, and, at a minimum, calories on menu boards, since they have limited space, and that all nutrition information be conspicuous and easily legible; 3. urges federal, state, and local health agencies, health organizations, and physicians and other health professionals to educate people how to use the nutrition information provided in restaurants to make healthier food choices for themselves and their families; and 4. **urges restaurants to improve the nutritional quality of their menu offerings**--for example, by reducing caloric content; offering smaller portions; offering more fruits, vegetables, and whole-grain items; using less sodium; **using cooking fats lower in saturated and trans fats**; and using less added sugars/sweeteners. (Res. 419, A-07)