



Republic of the Philippines  
Department of Health  
**FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION**



07 January 2014

**FDA ADVISORY**  
No. 2014-001

**SUBJECT: CONSUMER TIPS ON HEALTHY EATING**

We often blame processed food products in the market as the primary cause of obesity or chronic diseases, such as hypertension or diabetes. But this is only part of the problem. People have, in fact, coined the word “junk food” or “empty calories” to mean specifically processed food that offer little protein, vitamins or minerals, but have lots of calories from sugar or fat, or are high in salt. But there are also some fresh food that may also fit in the definition. FDA-registered processed food products are labelled with the ingredients or with nutrition facts to guide consumers in their choice of food. More often than not, the problem really is the choice people make or their unhealthy eating habits.

There are different reasons why fresh or raw agricultural products are processed and pre-packaged by food manufacturers, and some of the reasons are as follows: a) to store food longer or increase the shelf life, b) to make it more palatable or tastier, or c) to prevent food from spoiling. Different methods are used to preserve food, such as cooking, canning, drying, irradiation, chemical food preservation, and fermentation.

Some processed foods are high in salt, sugar, fat or caloric content. Consumers are advised to read the nutritional information on the label, such as the number of calories per serving, the number of grams of fat, the level of sodium added, the level of cholesterol, or sugar content. This nutritional information help consumers to reduce their nutritional health risks. They should watch out for calories to manage their body weight. They should watch out for sodium and cholesterol to reduce the risk of hypertension. Lastly, they should watch out for sugar levels in their food to prevent acquired diabetes.

Sodium, cholesterol, and sugar are all part of the normal diet of healthy people. People should watch out for serving sizes rather than deprive themselves of their favorite food or buy substitutes that are expensive. Limit your food intake rather than eliminate them. There are food products that appear to be “junk” or “empty in calories”, but are actually good sources of other micronutrients, such as calcium or potassium that are also important in maintaining good health.

**Balancing Innovation  
and Sound Regulation**





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Consumers are advised to remember or observe the following:

1. Sugar or fat can increase weight when the caloric intake from sugar or fat is more than what the body needs.
2. Never be influenced by advertisements or promotional gimmicks. Read the product nutritional label or nutrient content on the label.
3. Diversify your diet and eat a balance meal. Eat enough rice, bread, fruit, vegetables, meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, and fruits. Eat food in moderation.
4. Drink enough water to quench your thirst, for proper metabolism and to promote excretion of wastes from the body.

For more information, kindly email us via [inform@fda.gov.ph](mailto:inform@fda.gov.ph).

  
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Sound **Regulation**