

Mexico restricts soft drink ads to fight obesity

July 16 2014

Mexico said Tuesday it will restrict TV ads for soft drinks, snacks and other high-calorie foods in a bid to tackle rampant obesity.

With immediate effect, such ads will be banned from open air and cable TV from 2:30pm to 9:30pm during the week and from 7:00am to 7:30pm at weekends.

Ads in [movie theaters](#) will also be restricted.

In total, 40 percent of advertising seen until now each year for [soft drinks](#) and other high-calorie products will vanish from Mexican TV, the health ministry said.

The government says 70 percent of Mexican adults and 30 percent of children are overweight or obese.

Mexico is the world's largest consumer per capita of [sugary drinks](#), at 163 liters per year. The Mexican diet is also heavy in fried foods.

Mexico also has the highest incidence of diabetes among the 34 countries that make up the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

The direct or indirect cost of weight problems will cost the [public health care](#) system 11.7 billion dollars in 2017, experts say.

In an earlier effort to tackle the scourge, late last year the government slapped taxes on high-calorie foods and drinks.

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Citation: Mexico restricts soft drink ads to fight obesity (2014, July 16) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-07-mexico-restricts-soft-ads-obesity.html>

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