



BMI and Healthcare Cost Impact of Eliminating Tax Subsidy for Advertising Unhealthy Food to Youth

The exposure of children and adolescents to advertising campaigns is huge and includes the viewing of thousands of food-related television advertisements each year, most of which are nutritionally poor foods and beverages. Children and youth are particularly vulnerable to such tactics as they are unable to identify persuasive intent. Currently, the advertising of nutritionally poor food and beverage products in the United States is currently subsidised by the government. The purpose of this study was to estimate the impact on body mass index and cost-effectiveness of an intervention that eliminates the tax deduction available for advertising 'unhealthy' products.

It was estimated that the intervention would reach approximately 74 million youth between the ages of 2 and 19 years. Overall, it was concluded that the intervention was cost-saving and would most likely have a significant societal impact, reducing the body mass index in children. It would also have a downstream impact on healthcare expenditures and generate revenue. Finally, it seems that such an intervention would most likely receive strong public support, despite opposition from the food industry.

Reference: Sonnevile KR, Long MW, Ward ZJ, et al. BMI and Healthcare Cost Impact of Eliminating Tax Subsidy for Advertising Unhealthy Food to Youth. *Am J Prev Med.* 2015;49(1):124-134. doi:[10.1016/j.amepre.2015.02.026](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.amepre.2015.02.026)