



Improving lifestyles, tackling obesity: the health and economic impact of prevention strategies

Starting in 2007, the OECD undertook a project on the economics of chronic disease prevention, primarily aimed to developing an economic model of the impact of interventions to tackle overweight and obesity and their associated risk factors from a population level. This economic analysis was developed jointly by the OECD and the WHO with the aim of strengthening the existing evidence-base on the efficiency of interventions to tackle unhealthy diets and sedentary lifestyles. Through a range of interventions, the review aimed to reveal the cost-benefit and cost-effectiveness of interventions to promote diet and physical activity.

Included interventions were mass media campaigns, school-based interventions, worksite interventions, fiscal measures, regulation of food advertising to children and compulsory food labelling. Regarding food advertising regulation, the modelled intervention targeted exclusively children between 2 and 18 years and aimed to limit their exposure to food advertising on television. Overall, while most interventions were shown to have a limited impact on the scale of the obesity challenge, the gain in DALYs were higher than the gain in life-years and while interventions targeting children yielded significant results, it has been modelled that these only appear after about 40 years.

Reference: Sassi F, Cecchini M, Lauer J, Chisholm D. *Improving Lifestyles, Tackling Obesity: The Health and Economic Impact of Prevention Strategies*.; 2009. https://www.who.int/choice/publications/d_OECD_prevention_report.pdf