

WHO FOR ELIMINATING INDUSTRIALLY PRODUCED TRANS FATS BY 2023

Relevant for: Developmental Issues | Topic: Health & Sanitation and related issues

Trans fat, also called the worst form of fat in food, responsible for over 5,00,000 deaths globally from coronary heart disease each year, could be eliminated from the industrially produced global food supply by 2023 if the World Health Organization (WHO) has its way.

The WHO has welcomed its partnership with the International Food and Beverage Alliance (IFBA) to achieve this target. It said: "Eliminating industrially produced trans fat is one of the simplest and most effective ways to save lives and create a healthier food supply."

WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, in a statement, said they had met the IFBA representatives, including chief executive officers from several of the 12 companies comprising the alliance on May 2 to discuss actions to eliminate industrial trans fats, and reduce salt, sugar and saturated fats in processed foods.

The meeting also stressed the value of regulatory action on labelling, marketing and urged industry for full adherence to the WHO code of marketing of breast milk substitutes.

Dr. Ghebreyesus said, "The commitment made by the IFBA is in line with the WHO's target to eliminate industrial trans fat from the global food supply by 2023. Of particular note was the decision by IFBA members to ensure that the amount of industrial trans fat in their products does not exceed 2 gram per 100 g fat/oil globally by 2023."

Speaking about the relevance of this meeting and deadline for India, Medanta Hospital founder and heart surgeon Naresh Trehan said, "India has among the highest number of coronary heart disease cases in the world and we must try to beat this deadline."

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