



香港心臟專科學院
Hong Kong College of Cardiology
(Incorporated in Hong Kong with limited liability)



10 March 2021

Dr Edwin Lok-Kin TSUI

Controller

Centre for Food Safety

Via email: harmful-sub-consultation@fehd.gov.hk

Dear Dr Tsui,

Re: Proposed amendments to the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations (Cap. 132AF)

The Hong Kong College of Cardiology (HKCC) is pleased to know that the Centre for Food Safety has proposed to regard partially hydrogenated oils "PHOs" as a prohibited substance in food in the Harmful Substances in Food Regulations, by prohibiting the sale of any food (including edible fats and oils) containing PHOs and the import of any edible fats and oils containing PHOs. We also support the proposed amendment regarding hydrogenated oils in the prepackaged food labelling requirement in the Food and Drug (Composition and Labelling) Regulations. We fully support the proposed amendments with the aim to remove PHO and industrially produced trans fatty acids (IP-TFA) from our food supply.

The main dietary source of intake of TFA is from food produced with PHO. The harmful effects of TFA are well proven. Consumption of TFA is strongly associated with increased risk of coronary heart disease. TFA increases level of LDL-cholesterol, one of the most important risk factors for cardiovascular disease, and decreases level of good HDL-cholesterol. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that TFA intake is responsible for more than half a million premature deaths from coronary heart disease each year around the world. Clinical studies have found that for every 2% increase in energy intake from TFA, the risk of heart disease increases by



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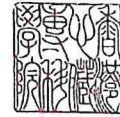
23%. In order to reduce the threat of TFA to heart health, many countries around the world have responded to the WHO's call to eliminate IP-TFA. Heart disease is the third most common cause of death in Hong Kong. Elimination of IP-TFAs from the food supply in Hong Kong will help reduce the incidence of cardiovascular disease and its related mortality, which is also the goal of the HKCC.

One of the main objectives of the HKCC is to safeguard the heart health of the Hong Kong citizens. To respond to the WHO's goal of eliminating TFA, the HKCC has been promoting the awareness of the negative health impact of TFA among the public. In the past two years, we have been carrying out a public health education campaign promoting heart healthy diet, advocating ZERO TFA intake. In order to understand and arouse the awareness of the harmful effects of TPA among the public, we conducted a survey on TPA awareness from July to August 2019 and successfully collected more than 600 valid questionnaires. It was found that 36% respondents did not know about TPA; 65% respondents did not know that TFA was more harmful than saturated fat; and 71% respondents did not know that even if the TPA content of the pre-packaged food was marked as zero in the food label, it might still contain small amount of TPA. Between mid-November and early December 2020, we conducted another survey on high cholesterol awareness, interviewed more than 800 local citizens aged 18 or above. It was revealed that half the respondents did not know that they should avoid TPA in their diet. Besides these two surveys and the related press conferences, we have also produced several educational videos about the harmful effects of high cholesterol and negative health impact of TPA, which can be viewed on our Heart Health Channel (H₂C). We believe that public education and adoption of policies to eliminate PHOs from our food supply are complementary.

Once again, the HKCC would like to reiterate our full support for the Centre for Food Safety's proposal, to protect the heart health of the Hong Kong citizens. Elimination of IP-TPA from our food supply promptly and permanently will help Hong Kong citizens reduce their risk of



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cardiovascular disease. We are eager to work with you on this meaningful initiative and offer our assistance if necessary.

Thank you for your attention!

Dr Ngai-Yin CHAN
President
Hong Kong College of Cardiology

Dr Godwin Tat-Chi LEUNG
Honorary Secretary
Hong Kong College of Cardiology