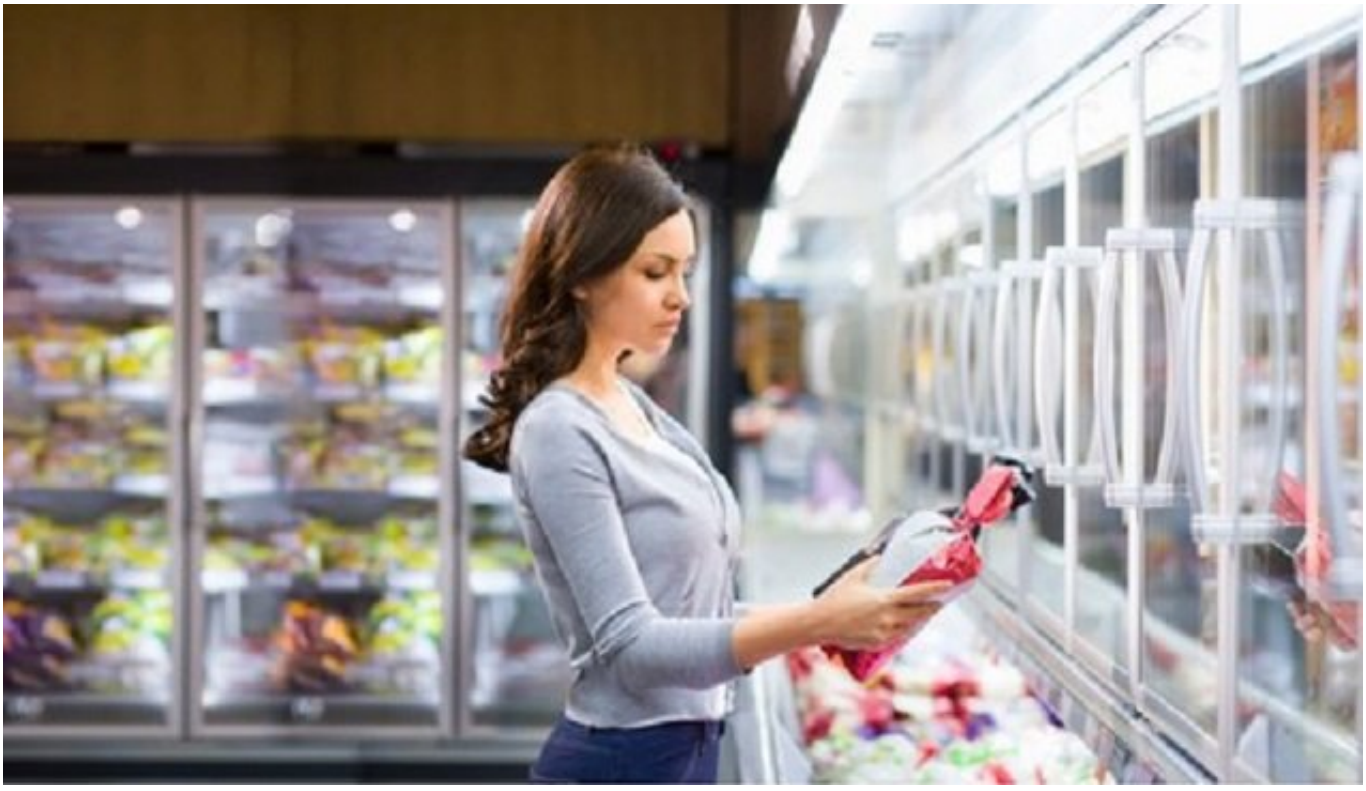
NEWS | DOCTORS & NUTRITIONISTS

Health experts call for ‘high-in’ warning labels on food and beverages

Leading doctors and global public health experts have come together to emphasise on the importance of consumer-friendly warning labels, which will address the rising burden of non-communicable diseases in India.

By **Pooja Yadav** | August 12, 2021



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Front-of-package warning labelling is a key component of a comprehensive strategy to promote healthier lives

Leading doctors and global public health experts have come together to emphasise on the importance of consumer-friendly warning labels, which will address the rising burden of non-communicable diseases in India.

As India prepares to adopt front of package labels (FOPL) for its rapidly growing packaged food and beverage industry, experts participating in the roundtable discussion highlighted how over 5.8 million Indians die every year from Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) (such as cancer, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases) and how most of these deadly diseases, although hard to treat, can be prevented by modifying diets and transforming the food industry.

Ashim Sanyal (COO, Consumer Voice) said that a consultative process has been initiated, “The civil society and consumer rights organisations have been consulted by the FSSAI. We have made a strong representation for an effective label design and a scientific nutrient profile model – the two elements of a strong and mandatory FOPL system. The next few months are crucial for India, and we will continue to work in close collaboration with the government towards this historic paradigm shift in our food system.”

Research has revealed that countries such as Chile which have adopted the warning label system of FOPL have succeeded in reducing consumption of the unhealthiest ultra-processed foods and beverages.

Citing the Australia experience, renowned global expert on food policy, Dr Christina Pollard (Associate Professor, Curtin University, Perth, Australia) shared, “Australia adopted the highly controversial Health Star Rating (HSR) five years ago under significant industry pressure. A voluntary system, HSR has neither incentivised the food industry to re-formulate nor has it had any impact on the health of Australian people or guided them to make healthier choices. HSR hinders more than it assists. Based on the evidence coming from Australia, I would not recommend that India should experiment with this weak labelling system to improve its food supply and address its NCD challenge. “

Simple measures, such as front-of-package labels (FOPL), can allow for a paradigm shift in the food consumption pattern of the country and as a result, avert an impending NCD crisis.

Read online: https://nuffoodsspectrum.in/news/10/17862/health-experts-call-for-high-in-warning-labels-on-food-and-beverages.html

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