

Arabia Saudí



Policies, Interventions and Actions

Labelling Standards for Restaurants and Cafes

From July 1st 2025, restaurants and cafes will have to label high-salt menu items, disclose caffeine content, and display the estimated physical activity duration needed to burn the calories from menu items. (Policy document currently unavailable,

Categories:	Labelling Regulation/Guidelines
Year(s):	2025 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Saudi Food and Drug Authority
Find out more:	www.caterermiddleeast.com
References:	Currently a web link to this policy is unavailable. If you are aware of the location of this document/intervention, please contact us at obesity@worldobesity.org . Media link is provided for further information

Guidelines for Marketing Requirements of Food Directed to Children

The Saudi Food and Drug Authority have issued voluntary guidelines to restrict the marketing of unhealthy food and drink targeting children under 12 years of age. The guidelines apply to all media formats, including social media. Unhealthy food and drinks are defined as those with either: over 30% of their energy from fat; 10% from saturated fat; >400mg of sodium per serving; or >10% of total energy from added sugar. (Document in Arabic)

Categories:	Evidence of Marketing Guidelines/Policy Industry/Government regulations - voluntary /pledges
Year(s):	2022 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Niños
Organisation:	Saudi Food and Drug Authority
Find out more:	shc.gov.sa
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Alsukait, R.F. et al. 2022. 'Obesity-Prevention Strategies and Policies for Saudi Arabia ' in Alluhidan, M., Alsukait, R.F., Alghaith, T., Shekar, M., Alazemi, N. and Herbst, C.H. (eds.) Overweight and Obesity in Saudi Arabia: Consequences and Solutions. International Development in Focus. Washington, DC: World Bank. doi:10.1596/978-1-4648-1828-8. License: Creative Commons Attribution CC BY 3.0 IGO

Prevalence, risk factors, and interventions for obesity in Saudi Arabia: A systematic review

This systematic review looks at the impact of different intervention approaches in Saudi Arabia, as well as the prevalence of obesity in the country and associated risk factors.

Categories:	Health Effectiveness Reviews (obesity related)
Year(s):	2022
References:	Salem, V., Noara AlHusseini, Razack, A., Naoum, A., Sims, O.T. and Alqahtani, S.A. (2022). Prevalence, risk factors, and interventions for obesity in Saudi Arabia: A systematic review. Obesity Reviews, [online] 23(7). doi: https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.13448 [Accessed 20.06.25]

Saudi Guideline on the Prevention and Management of Overweight and Obesity (2nd Edition, 2022)

This guideline provides healthcare professionals with recommendations to effectively prevent and manage overweight and obesity among children and adults, based on international evidence. This includes how to select appropriate weight management therapies and the safety, efficacy, and adverse effects of weight loss medications and surgery.

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2022 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Ministry of Health
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Ministry of Health, Obesity Control Program, 2022. Saudi Guideline on the Prevention and Management of Overweight and Obesity / Obesity Control Program (2); Riyadh

Guidelines For Bariatric & Metabolic Surgery

These guidelines intended to assure provision of the highest levels of safety and quality of bariatric services in licensed health facilities in Saudi Arabia. The guidelines are intended to be updated every two years and so the 2019 guidelines were updated in 2021. New guidelines are expected in late 2024

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2021 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos
Organisation:	Saudi Arabia Society of Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery
Find out more:	sasmbs.org
Linked document:	Download linked document

Obesity Control & Prevention Strategy 2020-2030

The purpose of the Strategy is to inform the coordination and implementation of a holistic response to improve health outcomes related to obesity in the Kingdom. It aligns current data, strategies, programs, and needs and identifies a leadership framework to guide implementation of a strategic and coordinated response.

Categories:	Evidence of National Obesity Strategy/Policy or Action plan
Year(s):	2020-2030
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	National Centre for Disease Prevention and Control
References:	https://ianphi.org/_includes/documents/sections/tools-resources/annual-meetings/2019annualmeeting/obesity-prevention-control-strategy.pdf

Strategy on nutrition for the Eastern Mediterranean Region 2020-2030

The WHO strategy on nutrition for the Eastern Mediterranean Region (2020-2030) sets objectives and plans to improve nutrition in the region by 2030. This includes preventing overweight, obesity, and diet-related NCDs. The strategy sets targets to reduce the prevalence of overweight in children under 5, halt the rise in diabetes and overweight in adults, halt the rise in overweight in children and adolescents, and eliminate industrially-processed trans fats from the food supply. A framework for countries to reach these goals is provided.

Categories:	Transnational Obesity Strategies/Policy/Recommendations or Action Plan
Year(s):	2020-2030
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	World Health Organization
Find out more:	iris.who.int
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Strategy on nutrition for the Eastern Mediterranean Region, 2020–2030. Cairo: WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; 2019. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO

Trans-fat policy

In January 2020, Saudi Arabia became the first country in the Eastern Mediterranean Region and the 14th country in the world to implement a best-practice TFA policy. The SFDA started with a regulation for mandatory labelling of TFA, which was passed in June 2015 and came into effect in 2016. In November 2015, a regulation was passed for a TFA limit of 2% in oils and fats, and 5% in other food products. These TFA limits were approved by the GCC Standardization Organization (GSO) and became available for other GCC Member States to adopt in 2015.¹⁰ The limit took effect in Saudi Arabia in November 2017. In January 2020, Saudi Arabia implemented a second phase of its TFA policy, banning PHO.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan Taxation/Subsidies on Food or Beverages or law relating to public health
Year(s):	2020 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Saudi Food and Drug Authority
Find out more:	extranet.who.int
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Countdown to 2023: WHO report on global trans-fat elimination 2020. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO

Twenty-Four-Hour Movement Practice Guidelines for Saudi Arabia

These guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations for the Saudi population on physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep duration. There are specific recommendations for infants, toddlers, children and adolescents, adults, and older adults.

Categories:	Evidence of Physical Activity Guidelines/Policy
Year(s):	2020 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Public Health Authority
Linked document:	Download linked document

Sports Boulevard Project - Riyadh

The Sports Boulevard was built in Riyadh in 2019, aiming to encourage healthy living by creating a space for exercise and sports.

Categories:	Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign Evidence of Physical Activity Guidelines/Policy
Year(s):	2019 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Vision 2030
Find out more:	www.vision2030.gov.sa

Front of Pack Nutritional Labeling (SFDA.FD 42/2018)

The Saudi Food & Drug Authority recommended the traffic light system standard to be used as Front of Pack Nutrition Labeling in 2018. The system is adapted from the UK traffic light system, and uses the UK's thresholds for fat, saturated fat, total sugars, and salt but only on a 100 g/mL basis. Following feedback from local industry and trading partners, SFDA decided to make this FOPNL scheme voluntary initially. It is due to become mandatory in 2021.

Categories:	Labelling Regulation/Guidelines
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Saudi Food & Drug Authority
References:	Al-Jawaldeh, A., Rayner, M., Julia, C., Elmadfa, I., Hammerich, A. and McColl, K., 2020. Improving nutrition information in the eastern Mediterranean region: implementation of front-of-pack nutrition labelling. <i>Nutrients</i> , 12(2), p.330. https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/12/2/330/htm .

Nutritional Labeling (SFDA.FD 2233-2018)

This regulation recommends procedures for placing nutritional information on the food products label. The regulation applies to all prepackaged food products, except for fresh foods such as fruits, vegetables, meat and fish.

Categories:	Labelling Regulation/Guidelines
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Saudi Food & Drug Authority
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/node/41534 Please note the GINA website has been replaced by the GIFNA database and the GINA link will no longer work. You will find this document by searching this new database: https://gifna.who.int/

SFDA.FD 59/2018 Maximum Guideline Limits for Salt in Food Product

This standard is concerned with the maximum guideline limits for salt in certain food products.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Saudi Food and Drug Authority
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en/node/41537 Please note the GINA website has been replaced by the GIFNA database and the GINA link will no longer work. You will find this document by searching this new database: https://gifna.who.int/

Excise Tax (Soft drinks and energy drinks)

The Saudi Government have introduced a tax on high sugar drinks. The excise tax rates imposed by the law are a 100% tax rate on energy drinks and a 50% tax rate on carbonated drinks (including soft drinks, carbonated water, and juice).

Categories:	Taxation/Subsidies on Food or Beverages or law relating to public health
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	General authority of Zakat and tax
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	General authority of Zakat and tax. Commodities Subject to Excise Tax. Kingdom of Saudi Arabia; Riyadh.

NCD Country Profiles 2018 (Obesity Targets)

The profiles also provide data on the key metabolic risk factors, namely raised blood pressure, raised blood glucose and obesity and National Targets on Obesity (as of 2017)

Categories:	Evidence of Obesity Target
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	World Health Organisation
References:	Noncommunicable diseases country profiles 2018. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

Official introduction of the physical education program for girls' schools (for the first time)

Physical activity classes can be held in schools as of 2017/18; this aims to improve health, fitness and well-being among girls and women.

Categories:	Evidence of Physical Activity Guidelines/Policy
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Niños
Organisation:	Ministry of Education
Find out more:	www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	[Described in] Al-Hazzaa, H.M, and Al Marzooqi, M.A. 2018. Descriptive Analysis of Physical Activity Initiatives for Health Promotion in Saudi Arabia. <i>Frontiers in public Health</i> . 6(329). DOI: 10.3389/fpubh.2018.00329.

RASHAKA Initiative

The Ministry of Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, launched the RASHAKA Initiative in 2017, aiming to promote healthy living in schools by improving dietary habits, increasing physical activity, and increasing awareness of obesity risks.

Categories:	Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign
Categories (partial):	Evidence of National Obesity Strategy/Policy or Action plan Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan Evidence of Physical Activity Guidelines/Policy
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Niños
Organisation:	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education
References:	Al Eid, A., Alahmed, Z., Al-Omary, S. and Alharbi, S. (2017). RASHAKA Program: A collaborative initiative between Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education to control childhood obesity in Saudi Arabia. <i>Saudi Journal of Obesity</i> , [online] 5(1), p.22. doi: https://doi.org/10.4103/sjo.sjo_5_17 [Accessed 20.06.2025]

Saudi Arabia is walking

A twitter-based, mass participation campaign to make walking an everyday habit for more people, ultimately aiming to reduce the prevalence of chronic disease associated with physical inactivity. Over 50 walking groups around the country have joined the initiative.

Categories:	Evidence of Physical Activity Guidelines/Policy Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	MashiSaudi
Find out more:	twitter.com
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Saudi Arabia is Walking Initiative (2018). Available online at: https://twitter.com/MashiSaudi?lang=ar [Described in] - Al-Hazzaa, H.M, and Al Marzooqi, M.A. 2018. Descriptive Analysis of Physical Activity Initiatives for Health Promotion in Saudi Arabia. <i>Frontiers in public Health</i> . 6(329). DOI: 10.3389/fpubh.2018.00329.

Vision 2030

Aims to promote a healthy lifestyle, increase physical activity and reduce obesity.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan Evidence of Physical Activity Guidelines/Policy
Categories (partial):	Evidence of National Obesity Strategy/Policy or Action plan
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Find out more:	vision2030.gov.sa
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.2017. [Available from: https://vision2030.gov.sa/sites/default/files/report/Saudi_Vision2030_EN_2017.pdf]. Last Accessed 23rd January 2019.

Saudi Guidelines on the Prevention and Management of Obesity

Guidelines adapted from Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network and other international guidelines for prevention and management overweight and obesity. Covers preventive and curative aspects of overweight and obesity and could be implemented at primary, secondary, and tertiary care levels in Saudi Arabia.

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2016
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Ministry of Health
Linked document:	Download linked document

The Saudi clinical practice guideline for the management of overweight and obesity in adults 2016

Guidelines including recommendations for the non-pharmacological, pharmacological, and surgical management of overweight and obese adults, research priorities regarding lifestyle interventions and economic analysis of drug therapy within the Saudi context, and long term benefits and harms of bariatric surgery.

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2015 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos
Organisation:	Alfadda, A. et al.
Find out more:	www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Alfadda, A. et al. 2016. The Saudi clinical practice guideline for the management of overweight and obesity in adults. Saudi Medical Journal. 37(10). pp.1151-62.

KSA National strategy for diet and Physical activity 2014-2025

Strategy aims to promote health and specifically reduce obesity rates, increase fruit and vegetable consumption, reduce physical inactivity, and stabilise hyperlipidaemia and diabetes.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/F Evidence of Physical Activity
Year(s):	
Target age group:	
Organisation:	Kingdom of Sa
Find out more:	
Linked document:	Download
References:	Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. KSA National strategy for diet and Physical activity 2014-2025 https://extranet.who.int/ncdccc/Data/SAU_B11_KSA%20NATIONAL%20STRATEGY%20FOR%20DIET%20AND%20PHYSICAL%20ACTIVITY%202014-2025.pdf]. Last Accessed 23

National Executive Plan for NCDs (2014 – 2025)

National plan to protect Saudi community from NCDs and its complications.

Categories:	Evidence of NCD strategy
Year(s):	2014-2025
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Find out more:	extranet.who.int
Linked document:	Download linked document

Regulations of Health Conditions for School Canteens

Nutrition standards for school canteens have been mandatory since 2014, and were updated in 2024. Currently banned food items include sugary drinks, chips, ice cream, chocolate-covered biscuits, and croissants, among others. (Articles in English and document in Arabic linked below)

Categories:	Evidence of School Food Regulations
Year(s):	2014 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Niños
Organisation:	Ministry of Education
Find out more:	www.leaders-mena.com
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Alsiwat, A., Kitsaras, G., Glenney, A.-M., Alayadi, H. and Goodwin, M. (2025). Public Primary School Compliance with School Canteen Policy in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: A Cross-Sectional Study. <i>Nutrients</i> , [online] 17(5), p.854. doi: https://doi.org/10.3390/nu17050854 [Accessed 20.06.25]

Gulf Technical Regulation: Labeling of prepackaged food stuffs

Gulf Cooperation Council countries namely adopted the standards GSO (09/2013) Amd 2016 and GSO (150-2/2013) for labeling of pre-packaged foods and shelf life. According to this GCC-wide standard, prepackaged food product labels should be in Arabic or include an Arabic language translation of the label. Producers and retailers are also mandated to provide a list of the nutrient content of pre-packaged food products, even in the absence of a nutrition or health claim.

Categories:	Labelling Regulation/Guidelines
Year(s):	2013 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adultos y niños
Organisation:	Gulf Cooperation Council
Find out more:	www.gso.org.sa
Linked document:	Download linked document

Dietary Guidelines for Saudis

Saudi Dietary Guidelines under the logo of (The Healthy Food Palm) was designed aiming to educate citizens, about what to eat and how much to eat (quality and quantity of food items) that suit his daily servings needs from different food groups, beside that, all age groups should practice physical activities, which prevent from diet related diseases among members of the community such as obesity, diabetes_x000D__x000D_ mellitus, hypertension, nutritional anemia and vitamins decencies....etc

Categories:

Year(s):

Target age group:

Organisation:

Find out more:

References:

National Campaign Against Overweight and Obesity

This campaign consists of a series of programmes and tools to help people reduce weight.

Categories:

Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign

Categories (partial):

Evidence of National Obesity Strategy/Policy or Action plan

Year(s):

2012 (ongoing)

Target age group:

Adultos y niños

Organisation:

Ministry of Health

Find out more:

www.moh.gov.sa

Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing to Children Pledge

The Responsible Food and Beverage Marketing to Children Pledge, initially adopted in the GCC in 2010, is a voluntary commitment by the signatory companies to conduct responsible food and beverage marketing to children. The pledge informs and benchmarks how food and beverage products are marketed in a responsible way to children under the age of 12 in the region. In 2016 the pledge was enhanced by applying a set of nutrition criteria to define 'better for you options'. The pledge was endorsed by the Advertising Business Group in 2018.

Categories:	Industry/Government regulations - voluntary /pledges
Categories (partial):	Evidence of Marketing Guidelines/Policy
Year(s):	2010 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Niños
References:	https://campaignme.com/global-food-beverage-companies-in-the-gcc-achieve-100-commitment-to-restrict-marketing-to-children/

GNPR 2016-17 (q7) Breastfeeding promotion and/or counselling

WHO Global Nutrition Policy Review 2016-2017 reported the evidence of breastfeeding promotion and/or counselling (q7)

Categories:	Evidence of Breastfeeding promotion or related activity
Target age group:	Adultos
Organisation:	Ministry of Health (information provided by the GINA program)
Find out more:	extranet.who.int
References:	Information provided with kind permission of WHO Global database on the Implementation of Nutrition Action (GINA): https://extranet.who.int/nutrition/gina/en Please note the GINA website has been replaced by the GIFNA database and the GINA link will no longer work. You will find this document by searching this new database: https://gifna.who.int/

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