

United Arab Emirates

Policies, Interventions and Actions



National Nutrition Strategy 2030

The National Nutrition Strategy 2030 seeks to establish sustainable nutritional systems and provide safe and supportive environments for nutrition to all age groups. It has several targets including developing sustainable and flexible food systems for healthy diets and providing health systems and comprehensive coverage of basic nutrition measures. The obesity-related targets are to half the rate of obesity in children and adults.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan
Year(s):	2022-2030
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Ministry of Health and Prevention
Find out more:	u.ae

SEHHI Healthy Menus initiative

The SEHHI Healthy Menus initiative displays the SEHHI logo on healthy menus in restaurants and food establishments. Foods with SEHHI logo are lower in fat, lower in sugar and salt content and higher in fiber than other foods of the same type. The initiative is part of the broader SEHHI programme that is led by the Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre.

Categories:	Labelling Regulation/Guidelines
Year(s):	2022 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre
Find out more:	www.adphc.gov.ae
Linked document:	Download linked document

EMEL

The game " EMEL " serves the health and cultural aspect of children in terms of raising their awareness of healthy eating and its impact on health using an entertainment method with the aim of reducing obesity in children and adolescents. (NB. Access to specific details on programme in English are limited)

Categories:	Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign
Year(s):	2021 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Department of Physical Education at the United Arab Emirates University
Find out more:	foodmatterslive.com

National Nutrition Guidelines

Unified national reference on food and nutrition education in the UAE's community and health institutions

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan
Year(s):	2020 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Ministry of Health and Prevention
Find out more:	u.ae

Mandatory standard for food in schools

The United Arab Emirates' Ministry of Education has banned nine food categories, including potato chips and chocolate, from being sold at school canteens across the Emirates.

Categories:	Evidence of School Food Regulations
Year(s):	2019 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Ministry of Education
References:	https://tribune.com.pk/story/1894323/potato-chips-chocolate-banned-uae-schools (Accessed 25.01.22)

Nutritional labeling of pre-packed products as traffic light colours

The provision of front of package information remains voluntary, but if provided it must meet the requirements.

Categories:	Labelling Regulation/Guidelines
Year(s):	2019 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Emirates Authority for Standardization & Metrology
Linked document:	Download linked document

United Arab Emirates Dietary Guideline

The Ministry of Health and Prevention developed the Guidelines based on the results of the National Health Survey 2018. Burj Khalifa is a famous major landmark so it was chosen to represent the graphic of UAE Dietary Guidelines.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan
Year(s):	2019 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Ministry of Health and Prevention
Linked document:	Download linked document

Clinical Practice Recommendations for the Management of Obesity in the United Arab Emirates

Clinical Practice Recommendations for the Management of Obesity in the United Arab Emirates

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults
Organisation:	Abusnana S, et al.
Find out more:	www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Abusnana S, Fargaly M, Alfardan SH, Al Hammadi FH, Bashier A, Kaddaha G, McGowan B, Nawar R, Sadiya A. Clinical Practice Recommendations for the Management of Obesity in the United Arab Emirates. <i>Obes Facts</i> . 2018;11(5):413-428. doi: 10.1159/000491796. Epub 2018 Oct 30. PMID: 30372696; PMCID: PMC6257093.

DOH Service Requirements for the Weight Management Program for Overweight and Obese Children

This document sets out the service specifications, including clinical care and the scope of practice for the provision of the Department of Health's (DOH) Weight Management Program for Overweight and Obese children.

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Department of Health - Abu Dhabi
Linked document:	Download linked document

DOH Standard for Obesity and Weight Diagnosis, Pharmacological and Surgical Management Interventions

This Standard aims to ensure the delivery of safe quality clinical care for obesity and weight management patients.

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Department of Health - Abu Dhabi
Linked document:	Download linked document

Standards for Bariatric Surgery Health Regulation Department 2018

Standards for Bariatric Surgery in Dubai.

Categories (partial):	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2018 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Government of Dubai and Dubai Health Authority.
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Government of Dubai and Dubai Health Authority. Standards for Bariatric Surgery Health Regulation Department. (2018).

Excise tax on tobacco products, energy drinks and sweetened and carbonated drinks

UAE Government introduced an excise tax on tobacco products, energy drinks and carbonated drinks in 2017. From the 1 December 2019, the excise tax was extended to electronic smoking devices and tools, liquids used in such devices and tools and sweetened drinks. The rate of excise tax is 50 per cent on carbonated drinks and any product with added sugar or other sweeteners. The rate is 100 per cent on everything else, including energy drinks.

Categories:	Taxation/Subsidies on Food or Beverages or law relating to public health
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Government
Find out more:	u.ae
Linked document:	Download linked document

National Nutrition Strategy 2017-2021

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan
Year(s):	2017-2021
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Ministry of Health and Prevention
Linked document:	Download linked document

National Plan to Combat Childhood Obesity United Arab Emirates

The Plan first launched in 2017 was updated in 2022.

Categories:	Evidence of National Obesity Strategy/Policy or Action plan
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Ministry of Health and Prevention
Linked document:	Download linked document

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:	Adults and children
Organisation:	World Health Organisation
References:	Noncommunicable diseases country profiles 2018. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

Standard relating to trans-fatty acid elimination

In 2015, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) approved TFA limits of 2% of total fat in vegetable oils and soft spreadable margarines, and 5% of total fat in other foods. United Arab Emirates have implemented the regulation in 2017.

Categories:	Evidence of Nutritional or Health Strategy/ Guidelines/Policy/Action plan
Year(s):	2017 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Government
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Countdown to 2023: WHO report on global trans fat elimination 2021. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2021. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO.

The National Plan for Prevention and Response to Noncommunicable Diseases 2017--2021

Categories:	Evidence of NCD strategy
Year(s):	2017-2021
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Ministry of Health and Prevention
Linked document:	Download linked document

Obesity and Morbid Obesity management

A guideline outlining management of obesity and morbid obesity in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

Categories:	Evidence of Management/treatment guidelines
Year(s):	2016 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Daman
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Daman. 2016. Obesity and Morbid Obesity management. Available from: https://www.damanhealth.ae/Website/corporate/pdf/support/coverage-med/ObesityandMorbidObesitymanagement-V2.0_1.pdf . [Last Accessed 27/10/2020].

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:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Gulf Cooperation Council
Find out more:	www.gso.org.sa
Linked document:	Download linked document

Act Now

Campaign to fight childhood obesity by promoting lifestyle changes.

Categories:	Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign
Year(s):	2012 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Canadian Specialist Hospital (CSH)
Find out more:	www.facebook.com
References:	http://www.uaetoday.com/news_details.asp?newsid=39747

Active Life

Activelife is Daman's health and lifestyle program aimed at promoting outdoor activity, healthy living and wellness.

Categories:	Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign
Year(s):	2012 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Daman
Find out more:	www.facebook.com
Linked document:	Download linked document

Guide of Health and Nutritional Practices of School Canteens (Dubai)

These guidelines have been developed to improve the nutritional standard of food served or sold in schools. The proposed requirements for food supplied in schools aim to raise standards, make critical changes to schools meals, and help improve the health and nutrition of school children in Dubai.

Categories:	Evidence of School Food Regulations
Year(s):	2011 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Dubai Health Authority
Linked document:	Download linked document

Lifestyle Intervention for Weight Loss (LIFE-8)

An intervention aiming for 5% weight loss and reduction in fat mass, blood pressure, waist circumference (amongst other measures) by focusing on behaviour therapy and diet and physical activity modification.

Categories:	Evidence of Multidisciplinary Intervention
Year(s):	2011-2012
Target age group:	Adults and children
Organisation:	Lifestyle Clinic at Rashid Centre for Diabetes and Research, a tertiary care center of diabetes and obesity in Ajman, UAE
Find out more:	www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	Sadiya A, Abdi S, and Abusnana S.2016. Lifestyle Intervention for Weight Loss: a group-based program for Emiratis in Ajman, United Arab Emirates. Diabetes Metab Syndr Obes. 18(9). pp. 101-8.

School Canteen Guidelines of the Emirate of Abu Dhabi

The standards includes the food allowed to be sold inside the school.

Categories:	Evidence of School Food Regulations
Year(s):	2011 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	Abu Dhabi Education Council
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	https://gifna.who.int/countries/ARE/policies/63350 (Accessed 03.05.2024)

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:	Children
References:	https://campaignme.com/global-food-beverage-companies-in-the-gcc-achieve-100-commitment-to-restrict-marketing-to-children/

Fat Truth Campaign 2009

Aimed to increase awareness of childhood obesity and promote healthy lifestyles primarily focusing on schools

Categories:	Evidence of Community Interventions/Campaign
Year(s):	2009 (ongoing)
Target age group:	Children
Organisation:	UNICEF United Arab Emirates
Find out more:	www.unicef.org
Linked document:	Download linked document
References:	UNICEF United Arab Emirates. 2012. The Fat Truth: A partnership to raise awareness about childhood obesity in the United Arab Emirates. Available from: https://www.unicef.org/partners/Partnership_profile_2012_The_Fat_Truth_V2_approved.pdf . [Last accessed 23rd January 2019].

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:	Adults
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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