

AMA calls for tax on sugar drinks

07 January 2018 | News

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One-third of food intake comes from highly processed junk foods and beverages and half of Australian adults have a body weight that puts their health at risk.

The AMA also called for increased nutrition education and food literacy programs.

The AMA recommends the federal government continue food fortification programs by requiring manufacturers to add certain vitamins and minerals to foods or specific ingredients.

The push for a sugar tax has been led by the Obesity Policy Coalition. Obesity costed Australia an estimated \$8.6 billion in 2011-12 in direct and indirect costs such as GP services, hospital care, and absenteeism.

Researchers have suggested a tax on sugary drink combined with a subsidy on fruits and vegetables could save the health sector \$3.4 billion.