

Indonesia bans marketing of condensed milk

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Parents often give condensed milk to infants as a cheaper alternative to formula milk. It appears the practice has been encouraged by commercials showing mothers serving the product to their children.

The Food and Drug Monitoring Agency (BPOM) in a circular letter dated May 22 called on all producers and distributors to refrain from these deceptive marketing strategies. The directive also bans showing the ads to kids below the age of five or using the product in TV programs for children.

Condensed milk producers and distributors have six months to comply with the ban. Recent studies by Unicef, Asean and WHO concluded that one in eight Indonesian children is overweight, with a major contributing factor being the consumption of dense processed foods, including condensed milk.

More than 50 percent of sweetened condensed milk is just sugar, and 100 grams of it account for 18 percent of the recommended daily intake of carbohydrates.