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By: Marianne Betts
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Call for taxes on junk food and ad bans because ...

We're running to fat

Marianne Betts

AUSTRALIA has the most rapidly growing obesity rate among developed nations, according to an international report released yesterday.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development report found obesity rates in Australia had been increasing faster than any other advanced

nation for the past 20 years.

The report, which analysed 33 countries, found one in two people were overweight in Australia and the proportion was expected to rise a further 15 per cent in the next 10 years.

Australian experts called on the Government to tackle the problem.

WHO collaborating centre for obesity prevention director Prof Boyd Swinburn said

the Government needed to ban junk food advertising and label food with traffic lights: green for those low in fat, salt and sugar, and red for those that were high.

Obesity Policy Coalition adviser Jane Martin called for taxes on junk food and subsidies on healthy foods to make healthy choices easy.

Obesity threatens health by increasing rates of heart dis-

ease and cancer.

The report named the US the "fattest" country, with two thirds of the population overweight or obese. Two thirds of Britain's population was overweight.

By contrast, three out of 10 people in Japan, South Korea and Switzerland were overweight or obese and fewer than one in 10 were obese.