



Aussies support fat tax

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health reporter

UNHEALTHY food and drinks should be taxed by at least 20 per cent to tackle the obesity crisis, an international review says.

It comes as a coalition of leading Victorian health bodies continues its push for a fat tax and subsidies on healthy foods.

More than 70 per cent of Australians support an increase in junk food prices and a decrease in healthy food prices, according to a survey by the Obesity Policy Coalition, which represents Cancer Council Victoria, VicHealth and Deakin University's Centre for Obesity Prevention.

In a review of evidence, the British experts say the 20 per cent tax should be combined with subsidies on healthy foods.

OPC senior adviser Jane Martin backed the two-pronged approach, but

said more evidence was needed to determine the optimal level of tax.

"There also needs to be a focus on low-income communities as they are the most affected group, and they have the poorest diets," she said.

Studies predict a 20 per cent tax on sugary drinks in the US would reduce obesity levels by 3.5 per cent, and a 17.5 per cent tax on unhealthy foods in the UK could cut up to 2700 heart disease deaths a year.

It comes as a study has revealed more than half of Australian parents are concerned about their kids not getting enough exercise.

