



Unhealthy food tax gets the nod from Australians

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MOST Australians (71%) would be in favour of a tax on unhealthy foods if the money was used to subsidise healthier options, a survey of attitudes to obesity prevention policies has found.

Some 69% were also in favour of a similar tax levied on soft drinks, while 84% support kilojoule disclosure on chain restaurant menus.

The survey of 1511 adults

was carried out by the Cancer Council Victoria and the Obesity Policy Coalition Victoria. The respondents – mostly women (81%) – were the main grocery buyers in their homes.

“It is noteworthy that public approval of a tax on unhealthy foods or soft drink is already similar or stronger than was the public approval of tobacco taxation policies at the time they were implemented,” the study authors said.

Parents were significantly more likely than people without children to support a tax.

The majority of respondents (83%) were in favour of a ban on advertising of unhealthy food at times when children watch TV, while 71% supported restrictions on sponsorship of children’s sporting activities by unhealthy brands.

A total ban on advertising unhealthy foods on free-to-air television was the least sup-

ported initiative at 56%.

“Although policy changes may be met with some initial resistance, particularly from the food and advertising industries, this study indicates that Australians are aware of the need to make changes and are generally supportive of them,” they said.

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