

FDA asks schools to scrap junk food

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Under the “Safe and Nutritious Food” initiative, the FDA has issued letters to schools and colleges to ban foods with high fat, sugar and salt from their canteens and create healthier menus. (Photo: Representational/Pixabay)

Mumbai: The state Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will take action against school and college canteens in the event they fail to implement the changes in menu prescribed by it.

Under the “Safe and Nutritious Food” initiative, the FDA has issued letters to schools and colleges to ban foods with high fat, sugar and salt from their canteens and create healthier menus.

The FDA and the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) Thursday urged all those involved in the food ecosystem of the state’s schools and colleges to scrap junk food from their menus and encourage a healthier way of eating.

Food and Drug Administration commissioner Dr Pallavi Darade said, “Obesity is a growing concern and leads to a lot of problems related to health during adolescence. My only concern is providing safe and nutritious food in the state’s school and college canteens.”

“Earlier too, we have issued a circular to all college and school canteens to provide nutritious food,” she said.

Dr Darade emphasised that it is the need of the hour to bring about these modifications expeditiously. “We have outlined July to December as the implementation period, following which, we will conduct surprise visits to review the acquiescence and checklist maintenance, and impose penalties if they are not found to be in order,” she said.

She added that the FDA officers will be readily available for any assistance in implementing the guidelines.

Meanwhile, Indian Dietetics Association national president Dr Jagmeet Madan said, “It’s a good way to send out a message to principals, professors, canteen managers, caterers and other stakeholders to create a more wholesome menu for students.”