

INFORMATION AND CONTACT

European Healthy Lifestyle Alliance (AISBL)
Rue de Trèves 59-61, B-1040 Brussels, Belgium

Tel.: 0032 (0) 2 512 37 22

E-mail: info@ehla-europe.eu

Website EHLA: www.ehla-europe.eu

Website ICCR: www.myhealthywaist.org

Chairman: Jean-Claude.Coubard@ehla-europe.eu



CHANGING POWERS

MANIFESTO



Eat well, drink well, move

EHLA

European Healthy Lifestyle Alliance

**CHANGING
LIFESTYLE**

ACTIVITY
INFORMATION
EAT WELL
DRINK WELL
MOVE
HEALTHY
EATING
LIFESTYLE
CHANGES
NUTRITION
MEDITERRANEAN DIET
DRINK
WATER
MEASURE
WAIST
PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY
FOOD LABELLING
RESEARCH
NUTRITION
PREVENTION
EDUCATION
CHILDHOOD
ACTIONS



International Chair on
Cardiometabolic Risk

ACTIONS

What **YOU** CAN DO



- Focus on better quality of food, small diet changes, etc., rather than on caloric restriction and weight loss. Quality beats quantity;
- Switch to a “Mediterranean type of diet”—it will reduce the risk of cardiovascular diseases by around 30%;
- Limit your intake of added sugar and salt;
- Drink water to hydrate yourself. Limit sugar-sweetened beverages;
- Perform at least 150 minutes of moderate physical activity per week and engage in regular exercise;
- Measure your waist circumference as a marker of abdominal obesity on top of your BMI. It is a vital sign that should be monitored. Waist loss is better than weight loss as a health outcome. Measure it!



What the **EUROPEAN UNION** CAN DO

- Promote the overall health benefits of regular physical activity, even in the absence of weight loss, in clinical practice, schools, workplaces, public place, etc.;
- Actively promote hydration with water;
- Regulate new food labelling that will highlight calories, added sugar and salt;
- Promote a EU-wide campaign focusing on nutritional quality and on healthy eating rather than on caloric restriction, and making hydration with water a component of nutritional quality;
- Actively implement the EU childhood obesity action plan;
- Promote both waist measurement and BMI, as a routine medical evaluation across the EU: Launch a “Measure it!” campaign;
- Include scientific facts in integrated policymaking;
- Design a study to collect standardised data on biological and behavioural risk factors across the EU;
- Promote the exchange of best practices in the EU;



- Open up existing European research programmes and launch new ones that will coherently focus on the fight against obesity;
- Increase the investment in prevention: only 3% of the health budget is currently dedicated to prevention;
- Introduce EU-wide taxes on soda and/or added sugar;
- Appoint EU “Healthy Lifestyle Ambassadors” and promote a EU Healthy Lifestyle Week;
- Establish an informal healthy lifestyle group (physical activity, nutrition) in the EP (e.g. a EP Diabesity Group).

Global concern

**1/3 OF ADULTS
ACROSS THE WORLD
ARE OVERWEIGHT
OR OBESE**

EUROPE POPULATION

**50%
OVERWEIGHT**  **20%
OBESE**

**OBESEITY INCURS
25%
HIGHER HEALTH
EXPENDITURES**  **700-800
BILLION EUR/YEAR OF
THE HEALTH BUDGETS
IN EUROPE**

**GOOD NEWS
75%**

OF THESE DISEASES CAN BE PREVENTED
WITH SIMPLE LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Conclusion

It is now recognised that our unhealthy lifestyle habits are largely responsible for the current epidemic of obesity and related costly chronic metabolic diseases. The time has come to take action and to recommend approaches and effective public health measures that will favour the adoption of healthy eating and drinking habits as well as the promotion of a physically active lifestyle. Together, we can improve the lifestyle habits of our population and promote a better health for all.

EHLA—who we are

The European Healthy Lifestyle Alliance (EHLA), an initiative of the International Chair on Cardiometabolic Risk (ICCR), is an international not-for-profit organisation based in Brussels, Belgium.

EHLA is established to provide European decision-makers with scientific evidence on the impact of obesity and related health risks and the need for lifestyle changes. We want to formulate actions and recommendations on what the EU and its citizens can do jointly to stop the abdominal obesity epidemic.

Introduction

The European Union (EU) is going through a period of institutional changes. The new European Parliament (EP) and European Commission are heading for a 5-year term that will impact the EU positions and policies on the road to 2020. Today's changes will define tomorrow's Europe agenda.

In recent years, the economic crisis management has been the main focus of the EU. Other priorities, such as public health issues, will now require Europe's full attention. Among these, obesity—a result of increasingly unhealthy behaviours—is threatening the lives of millions of Europeans and could become this century's number 1 epidemic. The European Healthy Lifestyle Alliance (EHLA) wants to contribute to Europe's agenda by putting lifestyle changes as a high priority.

EHLA urges the EU to join its efforts to reverse this crisis. To translate good intentions into action, each citizen can take 3 simple but important steps in the right direction: Eat well, drink well, move. We need to raise awareness, educate the population, promote the exchange of best practices, and coordinate policies. All parties concerned (decision-makers, health professionals, parents, school administrations, academics, etc.) can contribute to these efforts.

This Manifesto is about changes, lifestyle changes. Our lives are at stake. We count on your support to make Europe a healthier place. Together we can turn the tide: Eat well, drink well, move... and ACT!

The evidence

Over one third of adults across the world (1.46 billion people) are overweight or obese. More than 50% of the population in Europe is overweight, while more than 20% is obese. Obesity is becoming one of the leading causes of death and disability. Poor nutrition, overconsumption of foods and drinks with added sugar and lack of physical activity cause obesity, particularly abdominal obesity, which is a powerful risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes and cancer. Cardiovascular diseases cause 46 times the number of deaths and 11 times the disease burden caused by AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria combined. Chronic diseases account for 86% of deaths in Europe, most of them linked to a cluster of lifestyle risk factors. They represent 700-800 billion EUR/year of the health budgets in Europe. An obese person incurs 25% higher health expenditures than a person with normal weight.

The good news, however, is that with a combination of simple changes in our lifestyle, 75% of these diseases can be prevented.

This objective can be achieved if both the EU and YOU act now and undertake the following actions.