



دائرة الصحة
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DOH Guideline for Vending Machines and Retail Items in Health Care Facilities

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1. INTRODUCTION

As part of its initiatives to support a healthier community, the Abu Dhabi Public Health Center (ADCPH) established the Weqaya Healthy Food program in 2013. The Program aims to promote healthy eating within the community by encouraging food outlets to promote, prepare and sell nutritious meals. There are 26 specifications for using Weqaya logo for meals or individual food, including but not limited to calories, low fat, low salt, no trans-fat, low sugar and high fiber content. Such dishes will feature a special logo: a blue heart circled by a green circle, with the word Weqaya – which means ‘protection’ in English – inscribed in it.

In 2018, it was mandated that all Healthcare Facilities (HCFs) in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi serve 70% Weqaya approved-food while 30% can be non-Weqaya-approved food items. The scope of the mandate includes vending machine suppliers, selling retail items, outpatient food outlets and staff cafeterias.

The ADPHC has developed this document to guide HCFs on what would be Weqaya-acceptable retail items in vending machines, cafes and cafeterias. Items fulfilling all criteria of this guideline will be considered within the 70% while those fulfilling 1 to 3 of the criteria will be considered part of the 30%. The items not allowed should not be sold within HCFs. HCFs and supplier will need to have an approval from the ADPHC nutrition team of these items before selling them in vending machines or as retail items in their entity.

2. ABOUT THIS GUIDELINE

This Guideline is based on a review of several International Guidelines for Healthy Vending Machines and retail. In addition, members of the Community Health Division of the ADPHC and of the UAE University assisted in the development of this guideline.

3. PURPOSE

The guideline is designed to assist HCFs in choosing products that are acceptable for sale in on their premises whether in vending machines or retail in order to offer healthier snack options for visitors and staff.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1. This guideline can be used by all food outlets, food outlet suppliers and sub-contractors and manufacturers in healthcare facilities who are engaged in the implementation of Weqaya Healthy Food program in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi.
- 4.2. This guideline applies to food intended to be sold in healthcare facilities either as retail or in vending machines.



5. ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

Category	Definition
ADPHC	Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre
Added Sugars	Includes sugars that either added during the processing of foods, or packaged as such. They include sugars (free, mono- and disaccharides), sugars from syrups and honey, and sugars from concentrated fruit or vegetable juices in excess of what expected from the same volume of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice of the same type.
Carbohydrates	One of the three main classes of foods and a source of energy. They are mainly sugars and starches that the body breaks down into glucose (a simple sugar that the body can use to feed its cells).
Cholesterol	A fatty substance that is found in animal-based foods such as meats, poultry, egg yolks, and whole milk. The amount is expressed in milligrams per serving of stated size and may also be expressed as a percentage of the daily value per serving of stated.
Food	Any substance, whether processed, semi processed or raw, which is intended for human consumption, and includes drink, and any substance which has been used in the manufacture, preparation or treatment of “food” but does not include cosmetics or tobacco or substances used only as drugs.
Meal	Includes three components, the protein part of the meal, the carbohydrate such as pasta, rice and/or vegetables, and the sidings, which includes beverages, bread, and fat for bread, salad, salad dressing and fruit.
Monosodium Glutamate (MSG)	A flavor enhancer commonly added to Chinese food, canned vegetables, soups and processed meats- such as mortadella and hot dogs- and food.
Portion	Is the amount of a food an individual choose to eat at any one time.
Retail	The sale of goods to the public in relatively small quantities for use or consumption.
Saturated Fatty Acids	Fatty acids derived from both animal fats and plant oils. Rich sources of dietary saturated fatty acids include butter fat, meat fat, and tropical oils (palm oil, coconut oil, and palm kernel oil).
Salt	Means the salt equivalent content calculated using the formula: salt = sodium × 2.5.
Sweetener	A substance used to sweeten food or drink other than sugar.



70 % and 30% Non Weqaya approved items	70% of the items sold in vending machines and/or retail should fulfill ALL criteria of the Vending Machine Specifications. 30% of the items sold in vending machines and/or retail fulfills 1 to 3 criteria of the Vending Machine Specifications.
Total Fat	Means total lipids, and includes phospholipids.
Total Sugar	Means all monosaccharides and disaccharides present in food, but excludes polyols.
Trans Fatty Acids (TFAs)	A form of unsaturated fat associated with a number of negative health effects.
Vending machine	A machine that dispenses small articles such as food and drinks when money is inserted.
Weqaya Logo	Weqaya is an Arabic word that means prevention. The heart shape encircling the word Weqaya emphasizes that simple lifestyle preventive measures can decrease the cases and deaths related to Cardio Vascular Diseases.

6. ADPHC VENDING MACHINE GUIDELINE

A Healthy Vending Machine should **NOT** Include Food Items that are:

- High in Fat;
- High in Sodium;
- Highly Processed;
- High in Added Sugar;
- Low in Dietary Fiber.

6.1. Vending Machine Items Specifications:

Items that fulfill the 70% percent (i.e. Weqaya-approved) criteria and hence can be sold in vending machines and retail include the following:

6.1.1. Beverages (Per Package)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain or sparkling water (any size). • Unflavored milk (up to 250 ml) • Non-fat milk (up 250 ml) with no additives or flavors and milk substitutes (such as soy milk or almond milk). • 100% unsweetened fruit juice can be diluted with plain water or sparkling water (up to 250 ml). • Low-calorie beverage with a maximum of 60 calories (250 ml). 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Fat-free or low-fat plain milk, Laban, or yogurt ✓ Naturally-flavored water ✓ Smoothies (made with low-fat yogurt or other low-fat dairy alternatives and/or fruit/juice). ✓ Unsweetened tea or coffee.
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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calorie-free drink with a maximum of 10 - 25 calories (250 - 600 ml). | |
|---|--|

6.1.2. Snacks (Per Package)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calories: 250 calories or less • Sugar: 20% or less of total carbohydrates by weight, including naturally-occurring and added sugar. • Sodium: 350 - 200 mg or less. • Fat: 35% or less of total calories from total fat. • Saturated Fat: Less than 10% of total calories from saturated fat. • Trans Fat: no more than 1 grams of trans fat. 	<p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Unflavored or natural Popcorn (fat-free or low-fat). ✓ 100% whole grain cereal bars (e.g. granola bars), crackers, Rice cakes, soy crisps, pretzels, puffed snacks. ✓ Baked chips. ✓ Unsalted nuts or seeds. ✓ Dark chocolates (50% or above). ✓ Fruits and vegetables without added fat, sugar, or salt. ✓ Fat-free or low-fat plain yogurt. ✓ Fat-free or low-fat cheese or cottage cheese.
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6.1.3. Acceptable sweeteners: Some examples of sweeteners acceptable by the Emirates Authority for Standardization and metrology (ESMA) include Saccharin and its salts, Aspartame, Acesulfam potassium, Sucralose and Thaumatin.

6.1.4. Packed snacks with nutritional standards as follows: 250 calories or less;

6.1.4.1. 35% of calories from fat or less: 10g of fat or less;

6.1.4.2. 10% of calories from saturated fat or less: 3 g of saturated fat less;

6.1.4.3. No more than 1 g trans-fat;

6.1.4.4. 350 - 200 mg or less of sodium;

6.1.4.5. 35% of total weight from sugar or less: 20g of total sugar or less;

6.1.4.6. Nuts, seeds, cheese, fruits/vegetables, and combinations of these items (example, a fruit and nut mix) are exempt from all except the calorie and sodium requirements, if they do not contain added sugar, fat, or salt.

6.2. Items that fall within the 30% that do not fulfill the Weqaya approval criteria but can still be sold in vending machines:

6.2.1. Isotonic sports drinks;

6.2.2. Dark chocolate with flavor;

6.2.3. Flavored water;

6.2.4. Iced tea and coffee;

6.2.5. Yogurt with natural flavors;

6.2.6. Fruit juice and fruit nectar;

6.2.7. Energy/protein bars;

6.2.8. Breath mints and chewing gum (sugar free);



- 6.2.9. Pretzels, oat cookies, and crackers;
- 6.2.10. Pastries and croissants (Portion controlled);
- 6.2.11. Full fat dairy drink and cheeses.

6.3. Items that should not be sold in vending machines:

- 6.3.1. Soft drinks, sports drinks, except the isotonic sport drinks varieties mentioned previously, and energy drinks;
- 6.3.2. Chocolates, except dark chocolate, all kinds of sugar candy such as lollipops and Jelly;
- 6.3.3. Fried chips, all fried foods;
- 6.3.4. Items to which Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) compound has been added, Items that contain pork derivatives, alcohol (ethanol) or alcohol products;
- 6.3.5. Food items that contain any preservatives, colors or flavors made from chemicals.
- 6.3.6. Processed meats (such as sausages, mortadella, etc.).



7. REVIEWERS

Name of Reviewers	Organization
1. Dr. Omniyat Al Hajeri	Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, Community Health Division
2. Mariam Al Mansoori	Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, Community Health Division
3. Rawan Al Merhi	Abu Dhabi Public Health Centre, Community Health Division
4. Johaina Idriss, PhD RD	UAE University, Department of Nutrition and Health
5. Moa'th Bataineh, PhD	UAE University, Department of Nutrition and Health




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9. APPENDIX 1 BAKERY ITEMS AND DESSERT ALLOWED PORTIONS

BAKERY ITEM		MAXIMUM PORTION SIZE (G)	BAKERY ITEM		MAXIMUM PORTION SIZE (G)
	Biscuits, muesli bars, pikelets	≤ 40		Sausage rolls	≤ 100
	Slices, friands	≤ 80		Sponge puddings or crumbles	≤ 120
	Muffins, mini loaves	≤ 100		Jelly and pudding (portion size excludes fruit).	≤ 120
	Scones, cakes or desserts	≤ 120		Tray bakes, doughnuts	≤ 60
	Small pastries	≤ 65		Savory crackers, bread sticks (served with fruit, vegetables or dairy foods); portion size excludes fruit.	≤ 30 2-3 crackers
	Pies and quiches	≤ 180		Plain croissant	≤ 67



10. APPENDIX 2

RECOMMENDATION TO IMPROVE BAKED ITEMS AND DESSERTS

NUTRITIONAL GOALS		WAYS OF IMPLEMENTATION
1	Cooking & baking with less fat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace saturated fats like butter, margarine and shortening with olive oil. • Use filo pastry instead of puff pastry as filo contains no fat. • Whole milk can be substituted with skimmed milk, soy milk or fat free milk. • Cream can be replaced with plain yogurt or low-fat sour cream. • Consider swapping cream cheese frosting, for a higher protein frosting made from low-fat Greek yogurt. • Do not provide deep-fried food. • Some or all of the fat in a recipe can be replaced with an equal amount of pureed fruit such as prunes, peaches, pears, bananas, or applesauce. • Half the fat can be replaced by the same amount of applesauce. • Use cooking methods such as roasting, baking, or poaching that require little or no added fat.
2	Cooking & baking with less salt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the amount of salt and sodium containing condiments (i.e. garlic salt, seasoning salt, soy sauce, ketchup, mustard, gravies, pickles, sauerkraut). • Replacing salt with spices, natural herbs, potassium chloride, monosodium glutamate, nucleotides (inosinate and guanylate), other glutamate salts, umami taste, yeast extract and products resulting from the fermentation of wheat and soy. • Substituting salt with the addition of specific aromatic compounds (e.g., cheese flavour] can be used in order to compensate for the lack of added salt.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar can be substituted with natural sweeteners, agave syrup or honey. • Prevent using icing for pastries. • use no or minimal icing (eg, water icing). • Powdered icing sugar can be sprinkled on cakes instead of using icing. • Use less ready-made high sugar sauces such as sweet and sour or honey garlic sauce.



3	<p>Cooking & baking With less sugar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try flavouring foods with spices, herbs, lemon or vinegar, or sherry instead of sauce. • Try cutting down on the sugar, syrup, or molasses in your recipes. For example, instead of 1 cup (250 mL) of these, use $\frac{2}{3}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (150 or 175 mL). • Fruit puree used to lower the fat in a recipe will also help to sweeten your baked good. • Fresh berries or dried fruits (cherries, raisins, apricots) can add sweetness to a recipe when you have decreased the amount of sugar. • Reduce sugar by half in muffin, loaf, or cookie recipes. Some or all of the sugar you leave out can be replaced with a sugar substitute.
4	<p>Improving the nutritional content</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding supplementary ingredients like olive oil and mixed seeds to some bakery products to obtain vitamin B1 and E vitamins. These ingredients can improve the taste of bakery products, aiming to be an encouragement to consume healthier options. • Substitute refined grains/flour with whole-wheat flour (or rye flour, oats, bran, seeds). Since refined grains contain low amounts of vitamin B1 and vitamin E. • Include, in at least half of the selection of bakery items, some wholemeal flour, whole grains (eg, oats, bran, seeds) and/or fruit or vegetables (eg, fresh, frozen or dried). • Consider using filo pastry or bread cases as alternatives to pastry.



11. APPENDIX 3

BEVERAGES DEFINITIONS

TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Bottled water	Portable water, water with flavorings and minerals/vitamins. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Still water: noncarbonated, mineral, spring or table water, with or without added flavorings and vitamins/minerals. (ii) Carbonated water: mineral, spring or table water, low carbonated waters, naturally sparkling or sparkling by CO₂ injection. (iii) Flavored water: unsweetened water, with essence and/or aromatic substances.
Carbonates	Sweetened, beverages with carbon dioxide, syrups for home dilution and out-of-home carbonated soft drinks.
Juice	100% pure fruit or vegetable juice without ingredients, except permitted minerals and vitamins, with sweetening agents (less than 2%).
Nectars	Diluted fruit/vegetable juice and pulp, with sweetening agents, minerals and vitamins.
Still drinks	Flavored ready-to-drink, noncarbonated beverages, containing fruit or nonfruit favors or juice content (to25%).
Iced/ready-to-drink tea/coffee drinks	Tea-based or coffee-based drinks.
Sport drinks	Products described as “isotonic”, “hypertonic”, or “hypotonic”, still or carbonated, ready-to-drink, also fruit and nonfruit flavored drinks.
Energy drinks	Energy-enhancing drinks, mainly carbonated and containing taurine, guarana, glucose, caffeine, exotic herbs and substances, minerals and vitamins.



12. APPENDIX 3

FLAVORS AND SWEETENERS DOCUMENTS

هيئة التقييس لدول مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية
GCC STANDARDIZATION ORGANIZATION (GSO)



GSO 995/2015

المحليات المسموح باستخدامها في المواد الغذائية
Sweeteners Permitted In Food

ICS : 67.220



هيئة التقييس لدول مجلس التعاون لدول الخليج العربية

GCC STANDARDIZATION ORGANIZATION (GSO)



UAE.S GSO 707 :1997

المنكهات المسموح باستخدامها في المنتجات الغذائية

FLAVOURINGS PERMITTED FOR USE IN FOODSTUFFS

ICS: 67.220

1



Health Care Facilities checklist

Updated 2020



Weqaya Food Program