

# PAHO



## News release

### Adoption of front-of-pack nutrition warnings can help decrease obesity, cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes, and some cancers in the Americas

Study finds that the increased use of government-implemented warning labels can help in reducing poor-nutrition related diseases



**Reno, Nevada, 1 December 2022** – The adoption of best practice front-of-pack nutrition labeling in more countries of Americas can help reduce poor-nutrition related non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure and some cancers in the region, a [recent study](#) led by researchers at the University of Nevada, Reno and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) suggests.

The study, published today in the [Lancet Regional Health Americas](#), examined the evolution of these policies within the PAHO/World Health Organization Region of the Americas (AMRO).

Improvements to front-of-pack nutrition labeling (FOPNL) included larger warning labels, contrasted background for better noticeability, use of “excess” instead of “high in” to improve understanding, and adoption of PAHO’s nutrient profile model to better define nutrient thresholds. FOPNL systems aim to aid a population’s understanding of nutritional content in a product, reduce consumption of ultra-processed and processed food products high in fats, sugars and/or salt, and ultimately help consumers make healthier choices.

“The progress of front-of-pack nutrition warning labels in the Americas illustrates that the diffusion of best practices in the region have been shown to improve the nutritional quality of purchases and have been associated with improved diet quality, which in turn is associated with reduced risk of NCDs,” Dr. Eric Crosbie, co-author on the study and associate professor in the University’s School of Public Health, said.

In the Americas region, all 35 PAHO Member States have discussed FOPNL, 30 countries have formally introduced FOPNL, eleven have adopted FOPNL and seven (Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela) have implemented FOPNL.

“Front-of-pack nutrition labels have evolved in the Americas to provide the best options to populations,” Dr. Fabio Da Silva Gomes, co-author of the study and advisor of nutrition and physical activity at PAHO, said. “The accumulated lessons and evidence have driven countries to reach regulatory excellence by adopting octagonal warning labels along with PAHO’s nutrient profile model to protect and promote healthy eating and public health.”

The study found that improved FOPNL gradually expanded its presence in the Region, gaining momentum in the past few years and evolving to align with evidence and PAHO’s best-practice policies. Researchers recommended that governments still discussing and waiting to implement FOPNL should follow such practices to improve the uptake and impact of the policy to help reduce poor-

nutrition related NCDs in the Americas.

To read the full study, visit [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X\(22\)00217-4/fulltext](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanam/article/PIIS2667-193X(22)00217-4/fulltext). The study is also available in Spanish and Portuguese.

### **About the University of Nevada, Reno**

The University of Nevada, Reno, is a public research university that is committed to the promise of a future powered by knowledge. As a Nevada land-grant university founded in 1874, the University serves 21,000 students. The University is a comprehensive, doctoral university, classified as an R1 institution with very high research activity by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. Additionally, it has attained the prestigious “Carnegie Engaged” classification, reflecting its student and institutional impact on civic engagement and service, fostered by extensive community and statewide collaborations. More than \$800 million in advanced labs, residence halls and facilities has been invested on campus since 2009. It is home to the University of Nevada, Reno School of Medicine and Wolf Pack Athletics, maintains a statewide outreach mission and presence through programs such as the University of Nevada, Reno Extension, Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology, Small Business Development Center, Nevada Seismological Laboratory, and is part of the Nevada System of Higher Education. Through a commitment to world-improving research, student success and outreach benefiting the communities and businesses of Nevada, the University has impact across the state and around the world. For more information, visit [www.unr.edu](http://www.unr.edu).

### **About the Pan American Health Organization**

PAHO is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American System and also serves as Regional Office for the Americas of the World Health Organization (WHO), the specialized health agency of the United Nations System. PAHO works with countries throughout the region to improve and protect people's health, engaging in technical cooperation with its member countries to fight communicable and noncommunicable diseases and their causes, to strengthen health systems and to respond to emergencies and disasters. Through its work, PAHO promotes and supports the right of everyone to good health. To advance these goals, PAHO works in partnership with ministries of health and other government agencies, civil society organizations, other international agencies, universities, social security agencies, community groups and other partners. PAHO sets regional health priorities and mobilizes action to address health problems that respect no borders and that, in many cases, jeopardize the sustainability of health systems. For more information, visit <https://www.paho.org/en/who-we-are>.

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The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) works with the countries of the Americas to improve the health and quality of life of its population. Founded in 1902, it is the world's oldest international public health agency. It serves as the Regional Office of WHO for the Americas and is the specialized health agency of the Inter-American system.