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FSSAI to limit trans-fats in edible vegetable oils

THE Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is in the process of notifying the limits of trans-fat in all edible vegetable oil and fats to be not more than 2 per cent by weight in a phase

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BENGALURU:THE Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is in the process of notifying the limits of trans-fat in all edible vegetable oil and fats to be not more than 2 per cent by weight in a phased manner by 2022.Heart Care Foundation of India (HCFI) had written to the Prime Minister, health minister, and law minister to ban trans fats in all restaurants, cafes, hotels, and grocery items in India.

In a response to HCF, FSSAI, in a letter, said, “The Food Safety and Standards Regulations, 2011, prescribe that the trans-fat shall not be more than 5 per cent by weight in some types of vegetable fats. The FSSAI is in the process of notifying the limits of trans-fat in all edible vegetable oils and fats to be not more than 2 per cent by weight in a phased manner by 2022.”

Recently, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) banned artificial trans fats from American restaurants and grocery store food items. Dr K K Aggarwal, former president of the Indian Medical Association, and president of HCF said, “Trans fats are chemically made by adding hydrogen to vegetable oil. It increases the shelf life of packaged foods, and restaurants like to use it as oil for deep frying because it doesn’t need to be changed as often as other oils.”

“The FDA’s move should be replicated in India as well. Trans fats boost LDL (bad cholesterol) as much as saturated fats and also lower protective HDL (good cholesterol). Apart from this, they rev-up inflammation and increase formation of blood clots inside blood vessels,” he added.Foods rich in trans fats tend to be high in added sugar and calories. Over time, these can pave way for weight gain and even Type II diabetes, not to mention heart problems.