

ULTRA-PROCESSED FOOD LINKED TO HARM IN EVERY MAJOR HUMAN ORGAN, STUDY FINDS

World's largest scientific review warns consumption of UPFs poses seismic threat to global health and wellbeing

Source: https://www.theguardian.com/society/2025/nov/18/ultra-processed-food-linked-to-harm-in-every-major-human-organ-study-finds



Ultra-processed food (UPF) is linked to harm in every major organ system of the human body and poses a seismic threat to global health, according to the world's largest review.

UPF is also rapidly displacing fresh food in the diets of children and adults on every continent, and is associated with an increased risk of a dozen health conditions, including obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and depression.

The sharp rise in UPF intake worldwide is being spurred by profit-driven corporations using a range of aggressive tactics to drive consumption, skewer scientific debate and prevent regulation, the review of evidence suggests.

The findings, from a series of three papers published in the Lancet, come as millions of people increasingly consume UPF such as ready meals, cereals, protein bars, fizzy drinks and fast food.

In the UK and US, more than half the average diet now consists of UPF. For some, especially people who are younger, poorer or from disadvantaged areas, a diet comprising as much as 80% UPF is typical.

Evidence reviewed by 43 of the world's leading experts suggests that diets high in UPF are linked to overeating, poor nutritional quality and higher exposure to harmful chemicals and additives.

- According to the text, which health problems are linked to UPF?
- Why do many people, especially younger and poorer groups, eat so much UPF?
- According to the review, what drives the global rise in UPF consumption?
- What examples of UPF does the text mention?
- What role do corporations play in increasing UPF consumption?
- How is UPF replacing fresh food around the world?
- Why might UPF be attractive and convenient for many families today?
- Do you think most people understand the health risks of UPF? Why or why not?
- Is giving birds food in exchange for cleaning ethical, in your opinion?
- What responsibility do food corporations have in protecting public health?
- Is it realistic to expect people to reduce their UPF intake?
- What policies could countries introduce to help people choose healthier food?

