

NCD Risk Factors and Regulatory Decision-making

Canada's experience

Nora Lee

PAHO Regulatory Capacity Initiative

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Outline

- Canada's approach to NCDs
- Regulatory Decision-making
 - Health Canada's Decision-Making Framework and NCDs
- Examples of initiatives in Canada
- Trans fat reduction case
- Conclusions



Canada's Approach to NCDs

NCDs are a great concern for the government of Canada. **Three out of five Canadians** aged 20 and older have an NCD

The approach focuses on the common risk factors that underlie major NCDs

- We are investing **\$20 million each year** in innovative **multisectoral partnerships** among governments, businesses and not-for-profit organizations which promote healthy living and active lifestyles to help prevent NCDs
- Our information is helping Canadians make healthier food choices.
- Our research investments are the fuel for innovation
- And finally our international partners help all of us learn from each other's successes



Choosing a Risk Management Strategy

Health Canada's Decision-making Framework

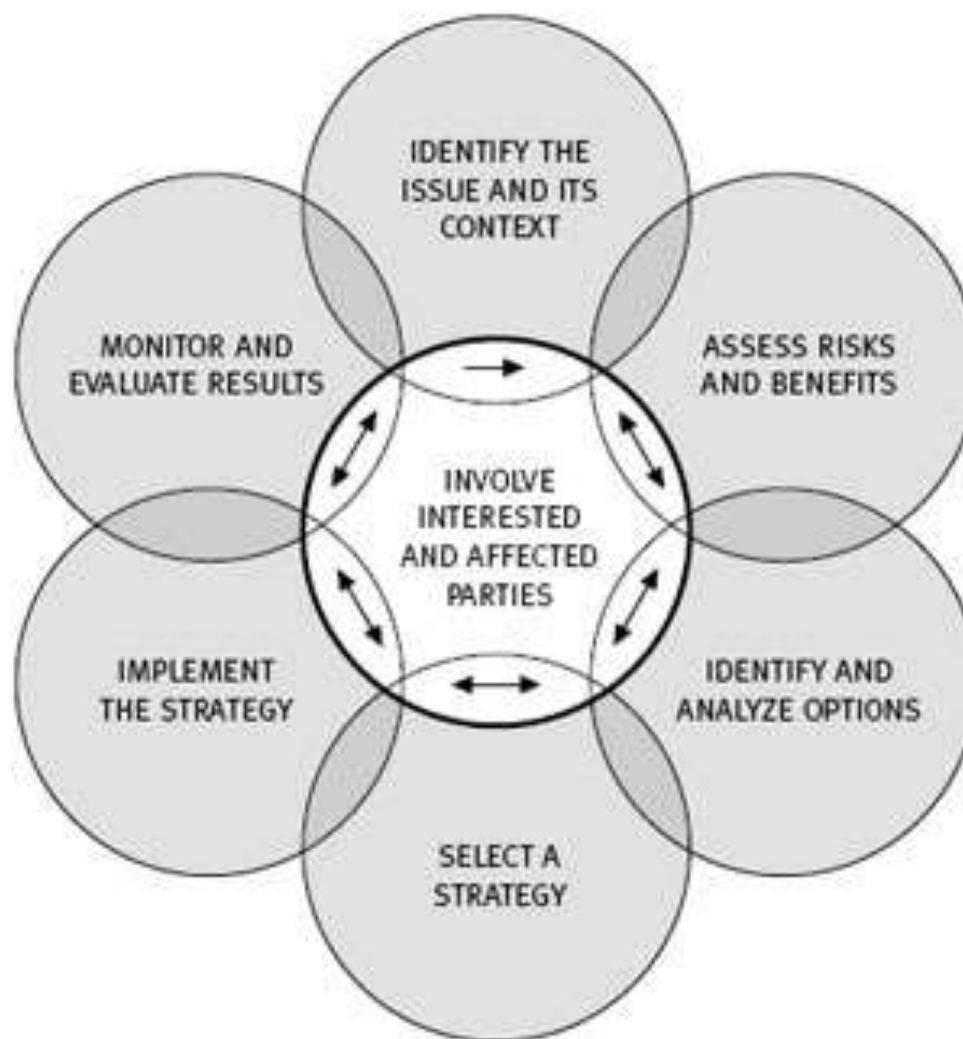
Defines and describes the risk assessment and risk management process in a structured way

Helps deal with challenges in a consistent, comprehensive and coordinated fashion for improved effectiveness in decision-making across the range of health protection issues

[Health Canada Decision-Making Framework for Identifying, Assessing, and Managing Health Risks, 2000](http://hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/pubs/hpfb-dgpsa/risk-risques_tc-tm-eng.php)
http://hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/pubs/hpfb-dgpsa/risk-risques_tc-tm-eng.php



Health Canada's DMF - Diagram



Policy Decision Making – Instrument Mix

- Modern policy development to control health risks from food considers the *range of instruments available*, the *potential role of partners who share responsibility*:
 - Governments, Industry, Consumers, Civil society
- Determining the best mix of instruments/tools includes assessment of
 - Effectiveness and likelihood of success
 - Feasibility of implementation
 - Economic impacts (costs and savings)
 - International benchmarks and experience



Range of Tools for Food Safety and Nutrition

- **Canada's food safety and nutrition policies rely on a range of risk management tools often used in combination to effectively manage risks:**
 - Acts and Regulations
 - Standards, guidelines
 - Technological solutions
 - Consumer Action
 - Industry self-regulation
 - Co-regulation
 - Information and education



Regulatory and Similar Actions on NCDs

Federal level

- Mandatory nutrition labelling:
 - Intended to help consumers choose, and encourage availability of, foods that lower risk of NCDs
 - Education on the use of the Nutrition Facts table
- Controls on nutrient content claims and health claims
- Voluntary targets or benchmark levels for trans fat and sodium
- Subsidize availability of healthier foods in remote communities, e.g. Nutrition North Canada
- Children's Fitness Tax Credit



Actions, cont'd

Provincial and territorial governments

- Control location, age of sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages and tobacco, limits on blood alcohol when driving
- Limit levels of negative nutrients (fat, trans fats, sodium, sugar) in foods sold in provincially run facilities
- Restaurant nutrition information in chains



Actions, cont'd

Municipalities

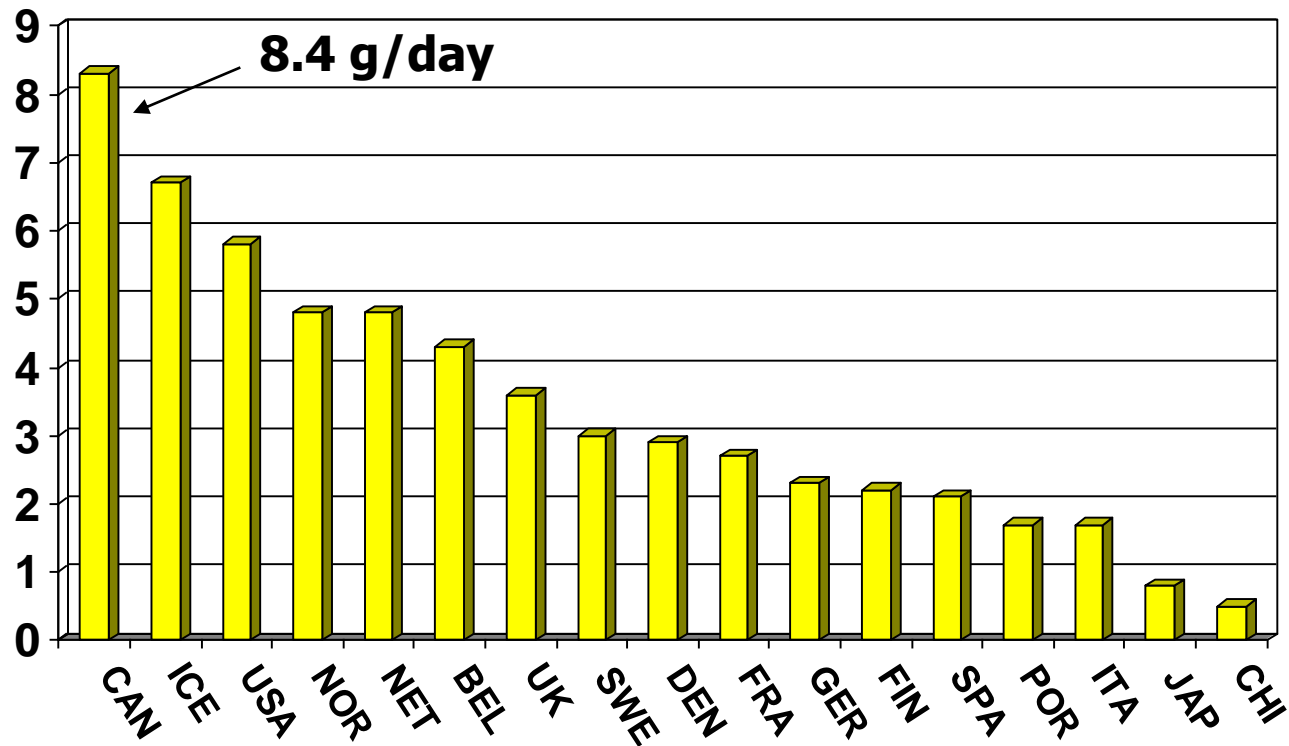
- Sunday street closures, parks and recreation facilities
- Promote farmer's markets
- Healthier choices in convenience stores
- Smoking bylaws



TRANS FAT INTAKE REDUCTION



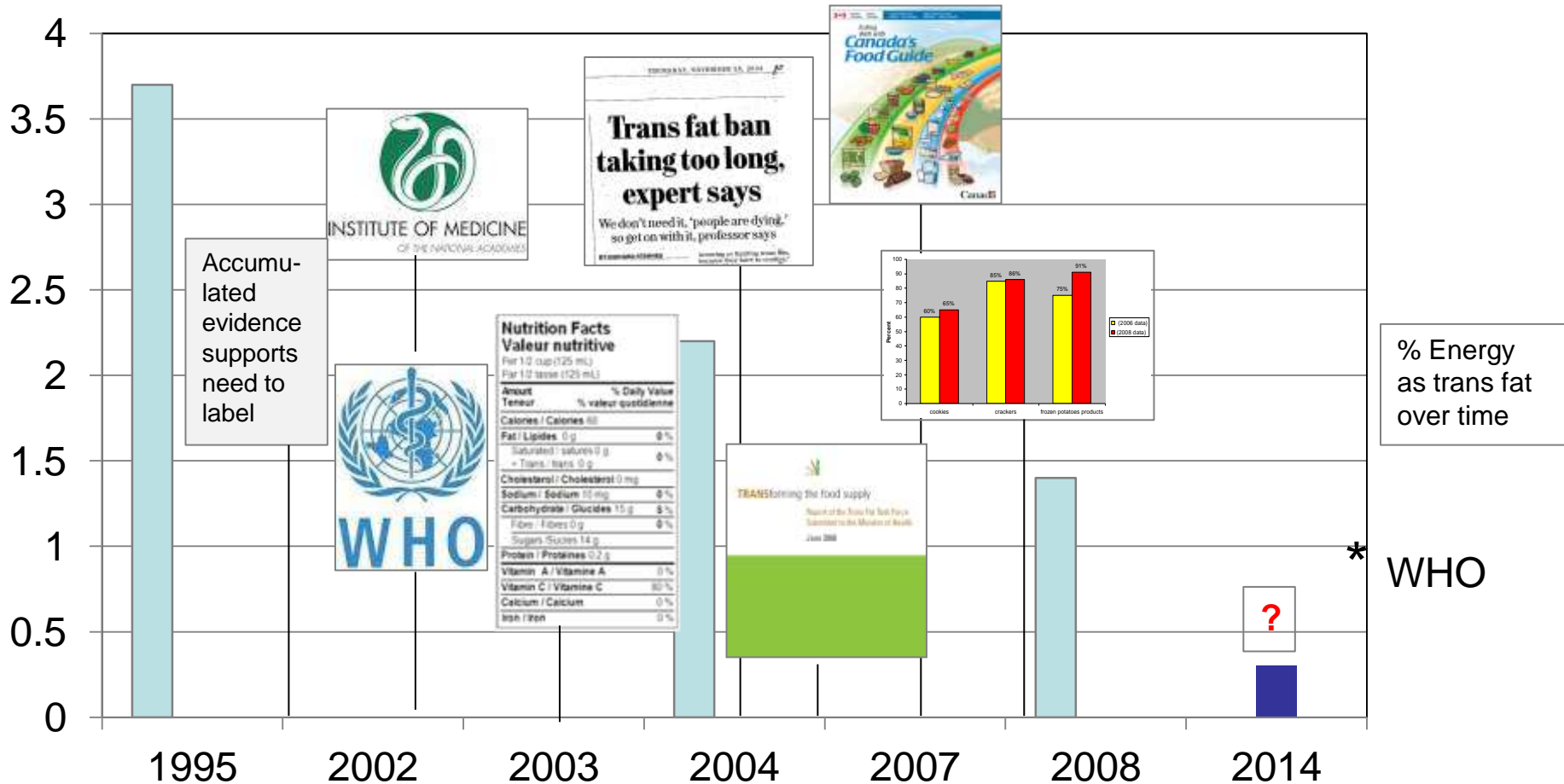
Trans fat in Canada vs. other countries (1995)



Hulshof et al. (1999); Zhou et al.(2003);
Ratnayake and Chen (1995)



Forces driving Trans fat reduction in Canada



Key factors in success in trans fat reduction

- Strong evidence of health hazard associated with the substance and mostly not inherent in foods
- Mandatory on Nutrition Label: visible marker
- Strong voices, widespread awareness and eventual consensus, including by food industry, that action was needed
- Availability of healthy, functional alternatives
- Strong government leadership, monitoring and follow-up



Conclusion

- A decision-making framework is very valuable as a guide for consistent, systematic, defensible, transparent approach
- Strong evidence base is fundamental
- Consultation in a transparent manner with all interested parties is key. Conflicts of interest must be known and managed.
- One size does not fit all – must adapt to the risk and the circumstances

