

QC ordinance lists banned junk foods, drinks in schools

SCHOOL canteens in public and private elementary and high schools including preparatory schools in Quezon City will be strictly monitored daily to ensure they are not selling junk food and sugary drinks.

City Health Department chief Dr. Verdes P. Linga has released a list of allowed and prohibited foods to be sold in public and private schools in compliance with the QC Anti-junk food and sugary drinks ordinance (City Ordinance 2579-2017).

Linga said each school's principal must appoint a focal person who will monitor daily the compliance of their school canteen with the ordinance.

The daily menus should always be posted in front of the canteen while advertisements or promotions of junk foods and sugary drink products should not be allowed.

Under the ordinance, canteens in public and private elementary and high schools, as well as preparatory schools, and stores within 100 meters from school premises should only sell nutritious food that are included in the list.

Linga said junk foods and sugary drinks could cause non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and hypertension.

"Dumarami na ang datos na nagsasabing ang dia-



betes at hypertension ay nagsisimula na sa murang edad. Kung hindi natin ito gagawan ng aksyon, magkakaroon tayo ng siyudad na ang mga bata ratin o mamamayan ay maagang magkakasakit at hindi maging productive," Linga said.

The following are foods allowed to be sold in schools canteens and stores near the schools:

Milled, brown rice and iron-fortified rice, fried rice, corn (boiled), oatmeal, whole wheat bread, pandesal, biscuits (no filling), bread buns, breadstick, breads like "pinaputok, monay, or any unfilled bread", plain cupcakes (no filling), plain cornflakes, unflavored popcorn, empanada, pancake (no syrup), cheese waffles, sandwiches (cheese, egg, tuna, chicken filling, peanut butter), boiled root crops such as cassava (kamoteng kahoy), sweet potato (kamote), yam (gabi), taro, arrow root (uraro), boiled saging na saba/corn or nilagang mais, maiz, binatog, suman sa ibos, puto (with cheese), bibingka, kakanin (kutsinta, sapin sapin, biko, palitaw, nilupak), squash maja, maja blanca (cornstarch), ginataang bilo-bilo with sago, ginataang malagkit with or without corn/ munggo, saba con yelo, sotanghon with vegetables, pasta, pancit canton/miki with vegetables, lomi, arroz caldo/lugaw/goto/champorado, macaroni soup/sopas with vegetables, misua with meatballs, pritong lumintang togue/ubod, stir-fried vegetable fishes, shellfish, small shrimps, lean meat, chicken without skin, nuts, boiled/fried egg, green leafy and yellow vegetables, fresh fruits, potable water, unflavored water, unsweetened milk/fresh buko juices, and 100% fresh fruit juices.

On the other hand, school canteens are not allowed to sell:

Food that are not indigenous/not made of natural products, fortified food such as "sistrya" and instant noodles, low nutritional content/high in calories (above 40 kcal per 100 g (solids), 20 kcal per 100 ml (liquid), high salt (above 120mg/100g); high fat (above 3 g per 100 g (solids), 1.5 g per 100 ml (liquids), boiled quail eggs, pre-packed snack foods (chips, chicharon), processed foods (hotdogs, sausage, burger patties, chicken nuggets, tocino, tapa, corned beef, bacon, longganisa), jelly/ice crushes/slushes/ice cream/ice drops/ice candies, cakes/donuts/bicho-bicho/sweet biscuits and pastries/breadpan, chocolate/hard chewy candies/chewing gums/marshmallows/lollipops/yemas, deep-fried foods such as French fries/shingaling/fishballs/kikiam/tokneneng/squidballs/calamares/chicken skin/banana and camote cue/maruya/pilipit/karioka/turon, soft drinks/colas/any liquid substances with carbon-based alcoholic drinks, sports water, vitamin waters, cultured milk, sports/energy/electrolyte/chocolate drinks, flavored mineral water, sweetened milk/water/iced tea, yogurt, lemonade (and other "ades"), powdered/fruit juice drinks, palamig (shakes, fruit punches), caffeinated drinks, any processed fruit/vegetable juice with added sugar or more than 20 grams or four teaspoons per serving.

The ordinance also prohibits the use of hotdogs and meat loafs as ingredients in student meals. Condiments such as toyo and patis should not be made available on dining tables.

Food with too much oil is also prohibited. Cooking methods should only require little or no fat oil such as steaming, boiling, sautéing, pan frying, and baking.

Visible fat and skin of the meat should be removed before cooking the meal. Salt and other condiments in foods should be reduced. Using artificial flavors should also be avoided.

In 2013, the Department of Education issued Division Order No. 65 series of 2013, reiterating the prohibition on sale, distribution and bringing of junk foods and carbonated drinks at school canteens.

Dory Martinez