



# NEWS RELEASE

Australian Divisions of General Practice Ltd.

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## GP's welcome McDonald's healthier fast food choices

Providing low fat options at fast food restaurants will help parents give their children a healthier diet, according to Australia's largest GP group, the Divisions of General Practice Network.

*94% of Australian GPs are members of a Division of General Practice.*

"Fast food can be a convenient option for many families," said Dr Rob Walters, Chair of the Australian Divisions of General Practice (ADGP).

"However, many parents are concerned about the nutritional profile of the foods sold in fast food restaurants.

"The rising rate of childhood obesity is one of the most serious health problems currently facing our community. As a GP I am very concerned about the number of young children I see who are displaying the risk factors and early signs of heart disease, Type 2 Diabetes and other diseases related to obesity.

"It's great to see McDonald's respond to the concerns raised by ADGP and other community groups about this serious health issue. I welcome their decision to provide more nutritious options, such as salads, veggie burgers, yoghurt and apples, in their restaurants.

"Nutritional labelling on these foods will assist parents, and others concerned about their health, to make informed decisions about the products they purchase.

"I also welcome the commitment from McDonald's to reduce advertising to children by 40%. ADGP has previously expressed concern about the large number of messages children receive from the media encouraging them to eat food with little nutritional value and has called for a ban on junk food advertising to children.

"This decision by McDonald's recognizes the powerful influence advertising has on young children and the responsibility that companies, such as McDonald's, have when promoting food to children.

"I hope that other fast food restaurants will also consider including healthy food alternatives in their regular menus and reducing their level of advertising to children.

"Childhood obesity is a complex issue which requires a comprehensive response from all sectors of the community, including governments, schools, parents, doctors and the relevant industry groups.

"ADGP will continue to work with key stakeholders, through programs such as the National Divisions Youth Alliance, to support GPs in promoting good health and nutrition to young people.

"By working together we can give all Australian children a healthy start in life," Dr Walters said.

*For comment:*

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