Reading Summaries 5

# Module 14: Brownell NEJM

* Trans fats exist only in small amounts natural foods. Almost all current trans fats have been artifically added by manufacturers because it benefits them comercially. Adding trans fats:
  + Increases shelf life
  + Provides more stability during deep frying
  + Increases palatbility
* “The primary dietary source of artificial trans fat is partially hydrogenated oils, created by adding hydrogen to vegetable oils.”
* There is a US-wide movement towards the full ban of artificial trans fats in food, that began by allowing and increasingly smaller maximum of added trans fats in comerciallized food.
  + The FDA first addressed trans fats by requiring the disclosure of the trans-fat content of food on nutrition labels beginning in 2006.
  + The FDA wants to remove the “generally recognized as safe” (GRAS) label from partially hydrogenated oils, requiring product manufacturers to get approval from the FDA before marketing any product that contains these oils.
  + These regulations could act as precedent for removing the GRAS label from more common added ingredients, such as sugar and caffeine (below a certain limit).

# Module 15: Lancet exercise vs TV

* Sedentary activity has long been associated with increased risk of “several chronic conditions and mortality”. It is unclear whether physical activity causes no impact, attenuates this risk or outright eliminates it.
* This study performs a meta-analysis of multiple studies from many different databases and tries to conclude whether physical activity indeed reduces the risk associated with sedentary activity or not.
* The studies show that long time (> 3 hr/day) spent sitting, watching TV or other passive activities significantly increases risk of mortality, regardless of physical activity, unless the individual was in the top quartile of physical activity, in which case, that activity seem to offset all the negative consequences of sedentarism.