

Background

Most of the major illnesses which affect Jamaican are caused by unhealthy lifestyle practices.

In Jamaica, in 2017:

- more than half the population was overweight,
- one third had high blood pressure,
- 10% of Jamaicans had diabetes, and
- 17% had high cholesterol.



A healthy lifestyle - healthy eating, active living and regular health checks - is important in preventing and reducing illness, especially diseases like diabetes and hypertension (NCDs).

• It also plays a major role in helping to maintain a healthy weight.

Restaurants, including fast food chains, are an important source of meals for Jamaicans.

The initiative will help patrons to select better options in their favourite restaurants, if they want to do so.

What is the **Better For You** initiative?

Better For You was initiated by the Ministry of Health and Wellness

- Part of the Minister's Wellness Agenda:
 - to support positive behaviour changes, and
 - to help Jamaicans to achieve and maintain healthy lifestyles.

Restaurants (including fast food chains) in Jamaica can voluntarily participate. It was launched on May 17, 2021.

Purpose

To help patrons of the restaurants to identify the items on the menu that are better aligned to the Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Jamaica than the others.

 Logo incorporated into menu boards / menus for easy identification.







When you see the logo, it means that this item is a **better** choice in **this restaurant** because it aligns with the Food Based Dietary Guidelines (FBDGs) of Jamaica better than the other menu items do.

What are Food Based Dietary Guidelines?

Interprets vast scientific evidence about the relationship between health, dietary habits and foods

- Culturally appropriate Images
- Culturally appropriate language
- Each country can determine the foals of their FBDGs, e.g. to address their most prominent health issues
- Intended to help influence behaviour change
- May also support Government policy and programmes

Food Based Dietary Guidelines for Jamaica



- Eat a variety of foods from all the food groups daily
- Eat a variety of fruits daily
- Eat a variety of vegetables daily
- Include peas, beans and nuts in your daily meals
- Reduce intake of salty and processed foods
- Reduce intake of fats and oils
- Reduce intake of sugary foods and drinks
- Make physical activity a part of your daily routine.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Does it mean I should only buy the items which have the "better for you" logo beside them?

- The overall aim of the individual should be to eat a variety of nutritious foods daily in order to remain healthy.
- Increasing fruit and vegetable intake while reducing the amount salt, fat and added sugar daily.
- While it is up to you to moderate your dietary intake, if you do choose to consume fast foods, aim to make the best choice that you can.

How long will this initiative run for?

• Each restaurant can decide how long they want to participate. There is no set end date, as we work towards a healthier Jamaica.



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Is Better for You only in Jamaica?

• Similar healthy restaurant initiatives exist around the world with different names and logos. The **"Better For You"** name and logo is only used in Jamaica.

Will "Better for You" items help me lose weight if I only buy those?

• A lot of things influence weight loss, not just the type of food eaten e.g. how much, health conditions, physical activity level etc.

Will "Better for You" items help to manage disease if I only buy those?

• If you have a medical condition, it is best to get guidance from your doctor, nutritionist or dietitian.