

# Ban junk food adverts that cause obesity, experts urge

dren now obese. A coalition of Royal Colleges and health charities said junk food advertisements should be banned altogether at peak times as well as during children's viewing.

The study, by the Obesity Health Alliance, found that junk food brands in the UK spend 27 times more on advertising than the Government does on healthy eating promotions.

In total £143million was spent by just 18 companies promoting crisp, confectionery and sugary drinks,

dwarfing the £5million the Government's Change4Life healthy eating campaign spends.

Cadbury's Dairy Milk tops the spending chart, with more than £12million, followed by Coca-Cola and Galaxy.

The calls for an advertising crackdown came as figures from the World Obesity Federation show the UK spends £14billion annually treating illness caused by excess weight, such as heart and liver disease, and diabetes.

Forecasts suggest this could rise to £22.7billion by 2025, with 34 per cent of adults obese, compared with levels today of 27 per cent.

Globally, the report shows the US has the biggest bill for treating obesity-related illnesses, at £240billion. Germany is second with £23.6billion. Britain comes third.

Prof Ian Caterson, the federation's president, said the scale of the epidemic was "truly alarming".

A report by the World Health Or-

ganisation today calls for restrictions on the promotion of junk foods, and more taxes on sugary foods.

It follows UK plans to introduce a sugar tax on fizzy drinks, to be introduced next year.

Prof Fiona Bull, a member of the World Health Organisation working group, said: "We need to turn our concern into action.

"The response so far has been insufficient, inadequate and not at scale."

The report calls for restrictions to

the marketing of unhealthy foods. Prof Bull said: "We are surrounded by environments that market unhealthy, high-fat, high-sugar, high-calorie food. That's what's on the television, that's what's promoted at bus stops, and that's what children are seeing all day, every day.

"The promotion and the price and the specials, the two-for-ones, the super-sizing - these are the problems that drive obesity and over-consumption."