

Why Square Hot Dogs Could Save Lives

The American Academy of Paediatrics has recommended that hot dogs be redesigned to make them, well, less sausage-shaped. Their round form makes them a perfect plug for a child's airway. Other high-risk foods highlighted by the academy included grapes, nuts, chunks of vegetables and items such as hard sweets, chewing gum and marshmallows.

The academy wants food manufacturers to put choking warning labels on their products, in the way that toy manufacturers are required to. They hope this will decrease the number of choking incidents.



According to Stephen Cadwallader, a food technical consultant, hot dogs could easily be redesigned in any number of ways: square, circular or “pretty much any shape you wanted. But then would it be a hot dog as we know and love it?”

But if there is no market for a flat hot dog, what is the answer? “I think people could just cut them into bits, that’s what we do for our two kids,” says Cadwallader.

The Guardian, 2010