



Obesity News

Number 193, 27 November 2014

Obesity News has links to recently published news stories relating to obesity prevention from a variety of online sources.

New Zealand

NZ – Sugary drinks

[Sugary drinks focus of Pacific health research](#)

Auckland University's Dr Gerhard Sundborn has won a two-year \$300,000 award from the Health Research Council to research Pasifika solutions to reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in Pasifika youth.

Source: Scoop, 26 Nov 2014

[Sugary drinks 'real concern' for health](#)

Sir Peter Gluckman told Radio New Zealand's Kim Hill he thinks sugary drinks are a real concern and agrees with banning them from schools. However, he stopped short of recommending a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages: "I think that the issue of whether fiscal measures are needed to reduce the intake is something that's a real - something that has to be thought about."

Source: Radio NZ, 1 Nov 2014

[Healthy drinks definitely not a fizzer at gala](#)

Last year Hampden St School in Nelson sold 500 cans of soft drink at its annual twilight gala. At this year's gala it provided healthier options, removing 18kg of sugar. The stall went well, selling an estimated \$1000 worth of drinks.

Source: Nelson Mail, 22 Nov 2014

[Lots of hot air in our sports drinks](#)

A review in the British Medical Journal found published evidence backing up sports industry claims of performance and recovery improvements is woeful or non-existent. A Christchurch nutritionist says water is the best solution for anyone exercising for less than 90 minutes.

In: British Medical Journal,

Source: Stuff, 4 Nov 2014

[Sugar tax no fix for obesity - Minister](#)

Health Minister, Jonathan Coleman, is signalling a bigger focus on sport and childhood obesity over the next three years.

Source: RadioNZ, updated 7 Nov 2014

NZ – Gareth’s World makes its contribution to Diabetes Awareness Week

[Which food company is killing us the quickest?](#)

Gareth Morgan urges us to vote for the [Munch Awards](#), which include the worst kid’s food product and worst kid’s food marketing campaign. He blogs about products in these categories and comes up with a surprising contender.

Source: Gareth’s World, 13 Nov 2014

[Whiteboard Friday - Diabetes: Tax payers will pay a fortune for people's poor diet](#)

Geoff Simmons runs us through a crash course on cause and effects of diabetes and the impact that this will have on taxpayers. The short version is that this preventable illness is going to cost us big bucks!

Source: Gareth’s World, YouTube, 13 Nov 2014

[You'll be shocked at how easy it is to overdose on sugar by eating fake food](#)

Diabetes nurse Tessa Clarke shows us how much sugar is in commonly eaten packaged food in a day, and suggests alternatives.

Source: Gareth’s World, YouTube

[Tim Tams are a fat bomb. What happens inside your body when you eat them.](#)

Nutritionist Ben Warren explains what he considers to be the worst food in the supermarket and the impact that has on your body.

Source: Gareth’s World, YouTube, 11 Nov 2014

NZ – Other

[Health campaigners call for treaty to tackle poor diets](#)

NZ's Boyd Swinburn, Cliona Ni Mhurchu, and Stefanie Vandevijvere are among 350 health experts calling for a binding treaty to tackle diet-related ill health in a letter to the heads of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Source: Food Navigator, 17 Nov 2014

[Obesity to become biggest health risk](#)

By 2016, obesity is expected to overtake tobacco as the leading risk to health.

Source: Radio NZ, 12 Nov 2014

[Best and worst in kids' food industry - awards](#)

The "goodies" and "baddies" of the kids' food industry have been named in the annual Munch Food Awards. McDonald's won the Worst Kids Food Marketing Campaign for its Happy Meals.

Source: NZ Herald, 25 Nov 2014

[Dairy deal keeps pupils off lollies](#)

In a student-led initiative, pupils at Hamilton's Rhode St school are working with nearby dairies to stop kids turning up to school with lollies and sugary drinks. Six months into the agreement, principal Shane Ngatai is noticing big changes.

Source: Stuff, 14 Nov 2014

[Government's marshmallow test](#)

Boyd Swinburn comments on a previous Listener article. He points to NZ's successes in controlling guns and tobacco – and its failures with obesity and alcohol abuse.

"There are enormous commercial profits being made in exploiting human vulnerabilities and the "marshmallow test" for government is whether they succumb to the pressure of those commercial interests or whether they take the tougher choice and exert some environmental controls in society's greater interest."

Source: Letter, NZ Listener, 22 Nov 2014

[Opinions on banning food advertising to children](#)

The Health Promotion Agency surveyed parents and caregivers on how much they generally support or oppose a ban on food advertising at times when children watch TV. One of the 4 key points is: "Just over a third of parents/caregivers strongly support (12.1%) or support (25.7%) a ban on TV food advertising to children. One quarter oppose (24.0%) or strongly oppose (1.4%) a ban while the remaining (35.6%) neither support nor oppose it.

[In:](#) Opinions on banning food advertising to children. In Fact, 3 (13) Oct 2014

Source: Health Promotion Agency, 5 Nov 2014

[\\$800,000 to review 'sin tax'](#)

University of Waikato's economics professor John Gibson is leading a team looking into whether a "sin tax" would bring down consumption of fizzy drink and cigarettes.

Source: Stuff, 6 Nov 2014

[Katherine Rich and unmanaged conflicts of interest \(replay, 5 mins\)](#)

Green Party Health spokesperson, Kevin Hague addressed Parliament about his concerns that Katherine Rich is failing to manage her conflicts of interest between the food and grocery council and the Health Promotion Agency.

Source: NZ Parliament, General Debate part 8, You Tube, 6 Nov 2014

[Game is 'one big advertisement'](#)

A board game marketed at Kiwis aged 12 and up quizzes players on almost 200 well-known Kiwi brands - including junk food. Marketing lecturer Dr Leah Watkins describes the game as "just another example of building brand familiarity".

Source: NZ Herald, 9 Nov 2014

[Sir Peter Gluckman: Obesity and health \(replay, 30 min\)](#)

Professor Gluckman talks to Kim Hill about about obesity and health.

Source: Radio NZ, 1 Nov 2014

Australia

[Australia: Sanitarium rolls out Health Star Rating](#)

Weet-Bix and Up&Go will be the first Sanitarium products to arrive on shelves with front of pack Health Star labelling. Up&Go, which scored four and a half stars will roll out its new labelling this month, and Weet-Bix, which was awarded five stars, will do so in December - with more products set to roll out until mid-2015.

Source: Food Magazine, 21 Nov 2014

[McDonald's breaks promise again by giving fast food vouchers to children](#)

McDonald's has again broken its promise to refrain from marketing junk food to children by giving free Happy Meal vouchers to Queensland kids playing basketball.

Source: Obesity Policy Coalition, 11 Nov 2014

[Hamburgled! Calorie police stop McDonald's kids sport award](#)

McDonald's has scrapped its "Team Spirit Award" food vouchers for sporting groups after a parent complained it was "peddling junk food to kids". The Obesity Policy Coalition took the case to the Advertising Standards Board which determined McDonald's was in breach of the Quick Service Restaurant initiative for responsible advertising to children.

Source: Sunshine Coast Daily, 12 Nov 2014

[Drink 13kg of sugar for a basketball: Coca-Cola slammed for 'rewards' schemes](#)

Young netballers are required to consume 15 kilograms of sugar in sports drinks to get a set of seven netball bibs in a Coca-Cola promotion shamed by a Cancer Council Parents' Jury. Health groups say the "sponsorship" associates a healthy activity like sport with the unhealthy consumption of sugar laden soft drinks.

Source: News.com, 22 Nov 2014

[Damon Gameau goes Super-Size on the sweet stuff in sugar experiment](#)

Australian TV actor and filmmaker Damon Gameau stars in a documentary, 'That Sugar Film' which will air in Australian cinemas in early 2015. In the film he exists on "healthy" low-fat food with high sugar content for 60 days' – with severe health consequences. The film is a hard hitting reminder to be wary of hidden sugars in packaged foods that are marketed as 'healthy'.

[That sugar film – official trailer](#)

Source: Herald Sun, 20 Nov 2014

[Australia: Junk food risks slow learning](#)

Schools in Western Australia are concerned that too many students have so much junk food and energy drinks during the day that they interfere with their learning. The Education Department is backing a push by a Senior High School to ban students taking junk foods to the school.

Source: The West/Yahoo, 21 Nov 2014

[Australia: Cigarettes and junk food dominate supermarket sales growth](#)

One in every five dollars spent at supermarkets goes on cigarettes or junk food, according to confidential industry data.

Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 22 Nov 2014

United Kingdom

[UK: Council bans new takeaways near schools and parks](#)

New planning rules which would ban new takeaways from opening near schools or parks have been approved by Bradford Council.

Source: Telegraph & Argus, 6 Nov 2014

[UK: Eight things we could do to halt the rise of obesity](#)

Children's Food Campaign argues it is time politicians stepped in and used their powers to put promote public health. They should toughen up planning policies, close marketing loopholes, introduce a sugary drinks tax, make streets healthier, introduce healthy havens where children congregate out of school hours etc.

Source: Environmental Health, 5 Nov 2014

[Obesity epidemic sees children as young as seven with diabetes](#)

UK doctors are reporting a surge in cases of type 2 diabetes in the under 18s and more than 83 children below the age of nine have been diagnosed with the condition.

Source: Daily Mail, 22 Nov 2014

United States

US: Sugar and Sugary drinks

[US: Berkeley passes first in the nation soda tax](#)

Berkeley has become the first city in the US to pass a sugar-sweetened beverage tax in an effort to combat childhood obesity and diabetes. The measure will tax distributors of sweet beverages in Berkeley one-cent per ounce.

Source: Richmond Confidential, 5 Nov 2014

[US: How Berkeley took on the might of Big Soda and won](#)

Source: The Guardian, 15 Nov 2014

[US: San Francisco voters defeat proposed tax on sugary drinks](#)

A proposed soda tax of two cents per ounce was defeated in San Francisco although it won a solid majority (55%). It failed only because of a strategic decision by the measure's backers to specify how they intended to spend the revenue on public health, which in turn necessitated a two-thirds super-majority under California's voting rules.

Source: AP / Daily Republic, 5 Nov 2014

[US: Could Berkeley's soda tax be a model for tackling obesity across America?](#)

Supporters of 1¢ per ounce tax on sugary drinks say their ballot victory on Tuesday proves that Americans are ready to fight drinks industry lobbying to create a healthier society. They point to a growing body of research seems to support the idea of soda taxes, and to falling consumption rates in Mexico following the introduction of a soda tax late last year. They say methods being used by soda companies to discredit the soda tax are reminiscent of strategies used by tobacco companies when cigarettes began to be heavily regulated in the 1960s.

Source: The Guardian, 6 Nov 2014

[US: Sugary soda linked to cell aging](#)

Sugar-sweetened soda consumption might promote disease independently from its role in obesity, according to researchers who found in a new study that drinking sugary drinks was associated with cell aging.

In: American Journal of Public Health, 16 Oct 2014

Source: University of California, 16 Oct 2014

[US: Beverage Companies Still Target Kids with Marketing for Sugary Drink](#)

Beverage companies spent US\$866 million to advertise unhealthy drinks in 2013, and children and teens remained key target audiences for that advertising, according to a new report released today by the Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity.

[In](#) Sugary Drinks Facts Report, Yale Rudd Center, 19 Nov 2014

Source: Robert Wood Johnson news, 19 Nov 2014

[US: Dear beverage industry – Yes 12 year olds are children](#)

Big Beverage claims it does not target children, and adheres to its self-regulatory marketing guidelines - the Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative. However, under the guidelines, the day a child turns twelve, he or she is fair game for advertisers.

Source: Scientific American blog, 12 Nov 2014

[US: Researchers campaign against sugar with public health initiative](#)

Researchers at the University of California at San Francisco are setting up a project called Sugar Science, to spell out the health dangers of too much added sugar in our diets. Based on evidence from 8,000 studies and research papers, it found strong evidence that the consumption of too much added sugar overloads vital organs and contributes not just to Type 2 diabetes but also to heart disease and liver disease.

Source: Washington Post, 21 Nov 2014

US – Other

[US: How a national food policy could save millions of American lives](#)

This must-read op-ed by Michael Pollan, Mark Bittman and others lays out a proposed US national food policy. Supporters [can sign a petition](#) to the President.

Source: Washington Post, 7 Nov 2014

US: Use of psychology and behavioural economics to promote healthy eating

This paper discusses opportunities for improving the design of food policies and interventions by altering default options, providing the public with simple and meaningful nutrition information, carefully constructing the framing of public health messages, and designing food policies to minimize unintended consequences, such as compensation and substitution.

[In:](#) American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Online 17 Oct 2014

International

[Health campaigners call for treaty to tackle poor diets](#)

International health campaigners, including three New Zealanders, have called for a binding treaty to tackle diet-related ill health in a letter to the heads of the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

Source: Food Navigator, 17 Nov 2014

[Obesity now costs the world \\$2 trillion a year](#)

The global cost of obesity has risen to \$2 trillion annually, according to a [new report](#) - more than the combined costs of armed violence, war and terrorism. The report cautioned that no single solution would reverse the problem, instead calling for a “systemic, sustained portfolio of initiatives” to tackle the crisis, such as better nutritional label, healthier food at schools, advertising restrictions on fatty foods and beverages, and public health campaigns.

Source: Time, 20 Nov 2014

[Tobacco industry lobbyists want to join forces with fast food industry](#)

Forest, the pro-smoking group supported by the tobacco industry, is launching a new consumer rights campaign called Action on Consumer Choice (ACC) to encourage the alcohol and fast food industries to work with it to champion consumer rights.

[In:](#) BMJ, 3 Nov 2014

Source: Get the Tools.org.nz, 6 Nov 2014

[UN expert in cultural rights calls for greater control of commercial advertising](#)

The United Nations Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights delivered a ground-breaking report to the General Assembly recommending a ban on all marketing in schools and all advertising to kids under 12.

Source: UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 28 Oct 2014

[NOURISHING framework](#)

World Cancer Research Fund International has updated its NOURISHING policy database with more policy actions from around the world, including Latin American initiatives in nutrition labelling, offering healthy foods in school, restricting food advertising and improving the nutritional quality of the whole food supply. There are now 223 policy actions in the database.

Source: World Cancer Research Fund International,

[Poland to introduce junk food ban in schools from January 2015](#)

Government officials in Poland have confirmed they will ban on junk food in schools from January 2015. Products not permitted will include potato chips, soda, burgers and candy bars.

Source: Yahoo, 23 Oct 2014

[Canada: Student raises concerns about sugar association's presentation at school](#)

Sugar industry presenters visited a Toronto high school to promote "healthy sugary treats". When a student queried them about the dangers of sugar and the studies that backed up their claims, he was asked to stop asking questions. So he decided to [blog about being silenced by Big Sugar](#).

Source: Global News, 12 Nov 2014

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