



Obesity News

Number 196, 26 Feb 2015

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

New Zealand

NZ – Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA)

[NZ leads Lancet call for TPPA transparency and health check](#)

New Zealand and Australian health advocates are leading an international call for public release and wide discussion of the text of the secret Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA). The deal threatens the ability of governments worldwide to provide affordable health care and to put in place health and environmental laws that protect public health and mitigate health inequity.

[In:](#) Lancet, 14 Feb 2015

Source: University of Otago, Scoop, 13 Feb 2015

[Health leaders raise TTP concerns](#)

New Zealand health advocates have joined with their international colleagues to raise major concerns about the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA) in leading medical journal The Lancet. They say TPPA would effectively prevent governments from enacting health policies for fear of being sued.

[In:](#) Lancet, 14 Feb 2015

Source: Stuff, 13 Feb 2015

[Nurses support the call for TPPA transparency, health check](#)

Source: New Zealand Nurses Organisation, Scoop, 13 Feb 2015

[TPPA a threat to one of the best health systems in the world](#)

Source: Public Health Association, 12 Feb 2015

[Protect our climate and health, not multinational profits](#)

Source: Ora Taiao New Zealand Climate and Health Council, Scoop, 13 Feb 2015

[Join the TPPA nationwide day of action on Saturday 7 March](#)

“TPPA officials met in New York in late January to prepare the ground for TPPA. Ministers are due to meet from 13-15 March 2015 – somewhere. The only things that can stop them are: no deal between the US and Japan on agriculture; or action from us.” There are also several meetings around the country before the [National Day of Action planned for Saturday 7 March](#). Tell the government TPPA? No Deal.
Source: NZ Not for Sale, 12 Feb 2015

[TPPA The end game](#)

Professor Jane Kelsey will provide an update on Wednesday 4 March at 5:30pm at Connolly Hall, Guildford Terrace, Wellington.

[Register for Jane Kelsey's talk](#)

Source: Press release, Fabian Society,

Sugar

[Councillors Back Sugar-free Stance as Role Model to Community](#)

A bid to discourage the growing consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks has moved another stage further today, winning the support of the Marlborough District Council's community and finance committee. If the policy is formally adopted by a meeting of the full Council later this month it would be the second council in the country to take such a stand.

Source: Marlborough District Council, 4 Feb 2015

[Health Board sugary drinks ban hailed](#)

Newly elected Palmerston North mayor Grant Smith supports banning sugary drinks at sporting events: "...encouraging any contractors or anybody running events on our behalf that they use non- or low-sugar drinks [is likely on the cards]," Smith told the Manawatu Standard recently – (see above article)

Source: Manawatu Standard / Stuff, 3 Feb 2015

NZ - Other

[Kids continue to leave home hungry](#)

Campbell Live compared whether children in a decile 10 and decile 2 high school had breakfast and/or lunch. The results in the decile 2 school were disturbing – some children had neither breakfast nor lunch.

[Video](#): Lunchbox differences in decile 1 and decile 10 schools

Source: TV3, 24 Feb 2015

[Lack of exercise may cause 12.7% of all deaths in NZ](#)

Physical activity should be designed back into Kiwis' everyday lives through changes to transport policy, urban and building design, and through measures as simple as employers installing standing desks and having walking meetings.

Source: New Zealand College of Public Health Medicine, 26 Feb 2015

[The inspirational Yendarra school](#)

Yendarra School, a Decile 1 primary school in Otara, has been making changes to its food and beverage environment since 2006. This has resulted in significant weight loss among pupils – and a lot of other striking improvements in behaviour, attendance, health and learning achievements. Since then a powerful ripple effect has seen teachers, families and the wider community also making positive changes to their food and lifestyle habits – and also losing weight. The first step was to make the school “water only”.

Source: That Sugar Film, 19 Feb 2015

[The wider economic and social costs of obesity](#)

A government-commissioned report reviewed the literature on the non-health impacts of obesity and considered how the findings might apply to New Zealand. It found the economic and social costs of obesity multi-faceted and substantial.

[In](#): Fact sheet

Source: Social Policy Evaluation and Research Unit, 12 Feb 2015

[Obesity linked to cycle of poverty](#)

Obese people are more likely to be stuck in a "vicious cycle" of poverty because they perform poorly in school and miss out on jobs, researchers say. Professor Jim Mann comments.

Source: Stuff, 24 Feb 2015

[Ties to liquor industry hamstring Health Promotion Agency, say critics](#)

In an opinion piece published in the New Zealand Medical Journal, health experts condemn the Health Promotion Agency for being compromised by industry and Government pressure. The author, Professor Kypros Kypri, is also concerned about former National MP Katherine Rich, chief executive of food and liquor interest group the Food and Grocery Council, sitting on the HPA board

Source: Dominion Post, Stuff, 20 Feb 2015

[New Zealand battles obesity epidemic as third fattest country in the world](#)

The Guardian looks at obesity in New Zealand. It's not a pretty sight.

Source: The Guardian, 19 Feb 2015

[Health Minister Jonathan Coleman eyes child obesity target](#)

Will child obesity control become the seventh ministerial Health Target? Prof Boyd Swinburn met the Health Minister recently to discuss a child obesity target.

Source: NZ Herald, 12 Feb 2015

[Parks and green spaces make healthier lives](#)

New Zealanders who live close to parks or green spaces are less likely to be overweight or suffer from obesity, a University of Canterbury research project found.

Source: University of Canterbury, 5 Feb 2015

Australia

Food marketing

[Australia: Parents' Jury bites back over McDonald's cash rebates for school orders](#)

"Cash rebates" are being offered to schools in regional Victoria that place lunch orders at McDonald's, a move slammed by a parent group as a cynical marketing ploy.

Source: The Age, 17 Feb 2015

[Australia: Put an end to McDonald's in schools - petition](#)

Parents Jury are taking a stand on McDonald's promotions in schools. They have started a petition asking McDonald's Australia to make a public commitment to stop any kind of promotions, vouchers or provision of school lunches in schools.

Source: Change.org

[Big food companies muscling in on lucrative school canteen industry](#)

Food companies are using school canteens to promote their products to young audiences. The Canteen Association says about three food companies approach the association every week hoping to strike a deal. "It is an important business. Some companies do it for brand recognition. If kids buy their products when they are young then they will probably continue buying it as adults."

Source: The Age, 1 Feb 2015

[Australia: Parents angry over AFL sponsorship deal with McDonald's](#)

The AFL announced that McDonald's will be the naming rights sponsor for the AFL 9s, a modified version of the game aimed primarily at children. The Parents Jury are not impressed: "parents think it's extremely socially irresponsible for sporting organisations to be partnering with junk food companies."

Source: SBS, 6 Feb 2015

Australia – Other

[Is the Dietitians Association of Australia in the Pocket of Big Food?](#)

Australia's dietetic profession, led by the Dietitians Association of Australia has a serious credibility problem due to its myriad links with the junk food industry. Michele Simon's new book lists the most troubling findings of her new report.

[In:](#) And Now a Word from Our Sponsors – Australian edition. Eat Drink Politics.

Source: Eat Drink Politics, 17 Feb 2015

[Preventing type 2 diabetes: scaling up to create a prevention system](#)

Highlights why national policies and programmes are urgently needed to help prevent type 2 diabetes in Australia. "We need to scale up our national effort and create a sustained prevention system for the next decade and beyond."

In: Medical Journal of Australia, 4 Feb 2015

United Kingdom

BMJ investigation of public health scientists' links to the sugar industry

An investigation by *The BMJ* has uncovered evidence of the extraordinary extent to which key public health experts are involved with the sugar industry and related companies responsible for many of the products blamed for the obesity crisis through research grants, consultancy fees, and other forms of funding. ([BMJ, 11 Feb](#))

[BMJ Investigation reveals extensive network of links between public health scientists and sugar industry](#)

Public health scientists and a government committee working on nutritional advice receive funding from the very companies whose products are widely held to be responsible for the obesity crisis, an investigation by The BMJ reveals.

Source: BMJ, 12 Feb 2015

[UK: Obesity adviser rejects conflict of interest claim](#)

Professor Susan Jebb, the government's leading obesity adviser has strongly denied suggestions from a medical journal that her independence has been compromised by taking funding from the sugar and other food industries for research projects

Source: The Guardian, 11 Feb 2015

Links to investigation and accompanying series of articles in BMJ

[Sugar: spinning a web of influence](#)

[Sugar's web of influence 2: Biasing the science](#)

[Sugar's web of influence 3: Why the responsibility deal is a "dead duck" for sugar reduction](#)

[Sugar's web of influence 4: Mars and company: sweet heroes or villains?](#)

Media coverage of the BMJ investigation

[Row over sugar firms' links to scientists](#)

Source: BBC, 12 Feb 2015

[Is sugar industry influencing scientists?](#)

A new investigation by the BMJ has unearthed the extent of the sugar industry's involvement with public health research. Professor Jim Mann agrees there is no question the sugar industry puts money into research in New Zealand but doesn't know to what extent researchers are influenced.

Source: NZ Herald, 19 Feb 2015

[US: How the food industry shapes health research](#)

US researchers are grappling with the same conflicts, according to US experts.

Source: Huffington Post, 17 Feb 2015

UK – Food marketing

[UK: PR firm for the government's obesity campaign works for fast-food giants](#)

The anti-obesity drive by the Government is being overseen by a firm receiving millions of pounds to promote junk food. This will lead to renewed claims ministers are failing to address the crisis because they are too 'cosy' with the industry.

Source: Daily Mail, 23 Feb 2015

[UK: Healthy-eating adverts only affect 'educated' consumers, study suggests](#)

The likelihood of choosing fruit after viewing mock healthy-eating adverts was increased only among 'educated' participants, researchers found. Younger and less educated people were less likely to choose fruit after watching the ads.

Source: Food Navigator, 19 Feb 2015

[UK: Supermarket promotions boost sales of less healthy foods](#)

Supermarket price promotions are more likely to lead to an increase in their sales of less healthy foods than healthier choices in supermarkets, according to a study in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. However, the study of shopping patterns among almost 27,000 UK households found that supermarkets were no more likely to promote less healthy over healthier foods. Researchers believe this may be because products from less healthy food categories are often non-perishable, while those from healthier food categories – in particular fruit and vegetables – are perishable: stockpiling during promotion is more likely to happen in less healthy food categories.

Source: University of Cambridge, 11 Feb 2015

United States

New US Dietary guidelines

[US: How the nation's nutrition panel thinks you should be eating](#)

New recommendations for U.S. dietary guidelines just released say that cholesterol should not be a nutrient of special concern—but added that sugar and saturated fat are still worth worrying about.

[In:](#) Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee

Source: Time, 19 Feb 2015

[US: What to make of the new proposed dietary guidelines](#)

Quotes what a panel of experts has to say about the guidelines.

Source: Huffington Post, 21 Feb 2015

[US: Meat and soda industries prepare to fight new US dietary guidelines](#)

Lobbyists for the US meat and soda industries are rallying the troops after a government committee on healthy eating has recommended that Americans consume less red meat and sugary drinks, and more fruit and vegetables. They dismissed the report as "flawed" and "nonsensical".

Source: The Verge, 20 Feb 2015

[US: Eating more veggies: a recipe for sustainability](#)

Americans should consider the health of the planet as well as their waistlines when deciding what to eat, according to a panel of government experts. "...eating a diet higher in plant-based foods is not only beneficial for human health but makes for cleaner air and water."

Source: Environmental Working Group, 20 Feb 2015

[US: Behind new dietary guidelines, better science](#)

Source: NY Times, 23 Feb 2015

US – Sugar

[US: Federal panel's urgent call to reduce sugar in diet could set off lobbying fight](#)

Recommendations from an influential federal nutrition panel could set up the latest fight between snack lobbyists and food regulators, as government advisers say a "dramatic paradigm shift" is needed to curb obesity in the US.

Source: The Guardian, 19 Feb 2015

[US: Hospitals across the U.S. join exodus from sugary pop](#)

Seeking healthier options, hospitals in Minnesota and around the nation are gradually moving away from sugary drinks. Not everyone agrees.

Source: Star Tribune, 31 Jan 2015

US – Other

[US: Study finds strong genetic component to obesity](#)

A consortium has identified 97 gene regions associated with obesity.

Source: The Harvard Crimson, 19 Feb 2015

[US: Junk Diet Rewires Rat Brains](#)

High calorie and exceedingly pleasurable foods appear to change rat brain rewards circuitry, causing the rodents to continue to seek such fare.

Source: Scientific American, 8 Feb 2015

[US: Gates Foundation ditches McDonald's, Coca-Cola](#)

The Gates Foundation has divested from McDonald's, Coca-Cola, and Exxon Mobil. It focuses on improving health in developing countries and doesn't invest in companies whose corporate activity it finds to be outstandingly bad.

Source: Bloomberg, 17 Feb 2015

[US: Overall childhood obesity in America hasn't declined](#)

While childhood obesity among children between two and five years old dropped 3.7% from 2010 to 2012, the rate increased 2.1% for children 12-19 during the same period. The overall childhood obesity rate, meanwhile, remained at a constant 16.9% from 2008 through 2012.

Source: Time, 9 Feb 2015

[US: Experts question value of current obesity treatments](#)

The mantra in obesity treatment is 'eat less and move more'. But a leading group of obesity experts question the belief that this is sufficient to treat obesity. They argue obesity is a chronic disease with largely biological causes that cannot be cured with just diet and exercise.

[In](#): The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology, Online, 11 Feb 2015

Source: The Lancet/Eureka Alerts, 11 Feb 2015

International

The Lancet Obesity Series

[Slow progress in tackling global obesity](#)

Global progress towards tackling obesity has been “unacceptably slow”, with only one in four countries implementing a policy on healthy eating by 2010, according to a new six-part series on obesity, just published in The Lancet. The key to meeting the World Health Organisation’s target to achieve no further increase in obesity rates by 2025 will be strengthening accountability systems to support government leadership, constraining the role of the food industry in the formation of public policy, and encouraging civil society to create a demand for healthy food environments says Obesity Series lead author, Professor Boyd Swinburn from the Auckland of University.

Source: University of Otago, Scoop, 18 Feb 2015

[Links to all papers in the Lancet Obesity Series](#)

Summary: Today’s food environments exploit people’s biological, psychological, social, and economic vulnerabilities, making it easier for them to eat unhealthy foods. This reinforces preferences and demands for foods of poor nutritional quality, furthering the unhealthy food environments. Regulatory actions from governments and increased efforts from industry and civil society will be necessary to break these vicious cycles. (All papers are available at this link.)

Source: The Lancet, 18 Feb 2015

[How can governments support healthy food preferences - infographic](#)

The food system is an interconnected network of producers, industry, and institutions. But at its heart is the individual. Policy can affect all parts of the network, influencing a cultural shift towards healthier food preferences.

The Lancet Infographic, 19 Feb 2015

[Obesity experts call for stricter rules on junk food ads targeted at children](#)

Papers published in Lancet medical journal insist politicians must press WHO to bring in code to prevent children being encouraged to make poor dietary choices.

Source: The Guardian, 18 Feb 2015

International - Other

[Call for a global convention to fight diet-related ill-health](#)

It really is time the world woke up to the price of unhealthy diets, say Consumers International and the World Obesity Federation. They are calling on the international community to develop a global convention to fight diet-related ill health, similar to the legal framework for tobacco control.

[Consumers International has more about the need for a treaty](#)

[Join the social media campaign '#Food Treaty Now'](#) on 15 March

Source: Consumers International, World Consumers Rights Day

[Canada: Economic impact of reducing physical inactivity and sedentary behaviour](#)

An analysis of the economic impact of getting 10 per cent of Canadians with suboptimal levels of physical activity to move more and reduce sedentary behaviour found that, by 2040, GDP would grow \$7.5 billion and health care costs would be reduced by \$2.6 billion.

Source: Alberta Center for Active Living, 4 Feb 2015

[Urbanisation pushing Samoa's obesity rates](#)

A report by the World Health Organisation last year ranked Samoa as having one of the highest rates of obesity in the world. The CEO of Samoa's Ministry of Health says urbanisation is a huge contributor to obesity rates in the country. People move to town where they have access to a lot of food, much of it unhealthy.

Source: Radio New Zealand, 17 Feb 2015

[World's diet has deteriorated](#)

A study on international eating habits has found the world's diet has deteriorated substantially over the past two decades. Poor countries in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, including India and China, were seeing the fastest increases in unhealthy food consumption driven by processed foods, high in sugar, fat and starch.

[In](#): The Lancet, vol 3, Mar 2015

Source: Radio NZ, 24 Feb 2015

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STOP OUR CHILDREN DEVELOPING TYPE 2 DIABETES

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