



Obesity News

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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)

[TPPA leak proves foreign corporations can sue New Zealand](#)

Leaked documents show that under the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPPA), the investor state section under negotiation appears to go further than similar clauses in existing trade documents by providing for a special court which multinational corporations can use to sue countries for breaching the TPPA.

Source: Green Party, 26 Mar 2015

[Why we haven't talked about the TPPA](#)

An extensive opinion piece on the TPPA by Geoff Simons argues that free trade has its benefits, but goes too far when agreements infringe on a government's ability to adopt policies that protect and enhance the social well-being of its people.

Source: Gareth's World, 4 Mar 2015

[Rally blasts TPPA risks](#)

Protest marches against the TPPA were held in 22 cities and towns throughout NZ recently. Locals pondered the effect such an agreement could have on such things as food labelling, healthcare and the environment. Many centres have adopted a 12-point resolution expressing concern about the TPPA.

Source: Hawkes Bay Today, NZ Herald, 9 Mar 2015

Sugar

[Sugar hit is no GDP sweetener](#)

High sugar consumption is set to slash NZ's future economic growth by more than 20 percent over 20 years, a report from Morgan Stanley suggests. Public health experts such as Professors Tony Blakely and Boyd Swinburn comment.

[In:](#) Sustainable economics: The bitter aftertaste of sugar.

Source: RadioNZ, 26 Mar 2015

[How taxing soft drink can help stop obesity related illness – Whiteboard Friday](#)

Geoff Simmons argues for a fizzy drink tax: “We’ve seen the impact of taxation on cigarette smoking, and we are seeing the positive impact that junk food taxes has in Mexico. Such a policy is doable, and would have a positive impact on our health.”

Source: Gareth’s World, 20 Mar 2015

[Kiwis told eating less sugar will be sweet](#)

WHO recommend people reduce their daily intake of free sugars to less than 10% of their total energy intake. A further reduction to below 5% or roughly 25 grams (6 teaspoons) per day would provide additional health benefits, it says. Public health specialist Dr Simon Thornley and Professor Boyd Swinburn comment.

[In:](#) WHO guidelines – Sugars intake for adults and children

Source: NZ Herald, 7 Mar 2015

[Heart Foundation’s Tick programme re-introducing sugar criteria](#)

The Heart Foundation is embracing the latest WHO recommendations and re-introducing a sugar criterion into relevant categories of its Tick programme.

Source: Heart Foundation, 19 March 2015

[Bittersweet: One man’s mission to get rid of our sweet tooth](#)

Dr Rob Beaglehole is raising awareness about the impact of sugar on our health and why DHBs, councils and schools need to get on board.

Source: TVNZ, Sunday, 8 Mar 2015

[Predictable Attack on Dental Expert for Highlighting Sugar](#)

The Association of Salaried Medical Specialists strongly defends Dr Rob Beaglehole following the attack by Cameron Slater on Whale Oil blog.

Source: Association of Salaried Medical Specialists, Scoop, 9 Mar 2015

[Damon Gameau: sugar surfeit](#)

After spending 60 days consuming products marketed as healthy, Australian author and filmmaker Damon Gameau discovered his intake of sugar was equivalent to 40 teaspoons a day. He talked to Kim Hill about the impact of the experiment on his health and his mission to change people’s eating habits.

Source: Radio NZ, 4 Apr 2015

[That Sugar Film](#)

Damon Gameau’s ‘That Sugar Film’ screens in NZ film festivals during April and May.

NZ – Policy

[Govt takes aim at childhood obesity](#)

The government has now launched Healthy Families NZ. Boyd Swinburn says the programme shows "real promise" but was not enough on its own. Nick Wilson echoes Swinburn's comments.

Source: DomPost / Stuff, 17 Apr 2015

[Sugar taxes needed too - Swinburn](#)

The Government will need more than just its new programme to tackle obesity to truly address the epidemic, a professor of population nutrition says.

[Listen to Boyd Swinburn on Morning Report](#) (5 mins)

[Listen to Health Minister Jonathan Coleman on Morning Report](#) (2 mins)

Source: Radio NZ, 17 Apr 2015

[Labour says anti obesity campaign too little too late](#)

It's taken the government a long time to wake up to the fact that something needs to be done about obesity, Labour says. One of the first things it did after coming in seven years ago was to dump two successful programmes - the healthy-eating, healthy-action programme and guidelines around healthy food in schools.

Source: 3 News, 18 Apr 2015

[Obesity target on the cards for NZ - but would it work?](#)

Health Minister Jonathan Coleman is looking at introducing a Health Target to control child obesity but says it's too early to say what shape or form an obesity target would take or how it would work.

Source: TVNZ, 14 Apr 2015

[Govt out of step with PM's own science advisor on childhood obesity](#)

The Government's hands-off approach to childhood obesity is out of step with the Prime Minister's Chief Science Advisor (Gluckman) who, in another role, recommends a ban on the marketing of junk food to kids, a ban on junk food at schools, and has given the thumbs up to a tax on fizzy drinks, the Green Party says.

[In:](#) WHO Interim Report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity.

Source: Green Party, 20 Mar 2015

[Are we tackling obesity the wrong way?](#)

Are we better to tackle obesity through surgery or healthy eating? A bariatric surgeon sees the need for many more operations. FOE's Dr Robyn Toomath and Claire Turnbull from Healthy Food Guide, emphasise changing our obesogenic environment to help prevent obesity. But Health Minister Jonathan Coleman shows little desire to regulate.

Source: TV3 Sunday, 15 March 2015 (37:40 – 56 mins through)

NZ – Other

[Majority of packaged food unhealthy](#)

Fewer than half of all packaged foods available in NZ and Australia in 2012 met nutritional criteria to carry health claims, according to recently published research from the University of Auckland. The study's authors say the findings of so few healthy choices among our staples is a concern for a nation battling obesity issues and they want a health star rating system introduced.

[In:](#) Public Health Nutrition, Online Apr 2015

Sources: NIHI /Scoop, 13 Apr 2015

[Fight Obesity: “Teach food literacy in schools” says charity](#)

The Garden to Table Trust is urging the Government to invest in the development of gardening and cooking food skills to fight obesity in NZ.

Source: Garden to Table Trust/Scoop, 13 Apr 2015

[Burger King bins toys – far enough?](#)

Burger King's decision to scrap television advertising to children and toys with its kids' meals is a step in the right direction but not a recipe for beating child obesity, say experts including FOE's Dr Robyn Toomath and Associate Professor Louise Signal, from Otago University.

[Listen to the audio replay](#)

Source: RadioNZ, 17 Apr 2015

[Sell soap for health, says Valerie Adams](#)

Shot put star Valerie Adams is backing a push for parents to sell soap for school fundraisers rather than chocolate.

Stuff.co.nz

[The burgeoning cost of cancer in NZ – study](#)

The cost of treating cancer in the NZ public health sector is more than \$800 million, according to University of Otago research. Study co-author, Associate Professor Nick Wilson, says it makes sense to introduce preventive measures that target NZ's obesity epidemic because it would lower the cancer burden and help curb the country's burgeoning healthcare bill.

Source: University of Otago, 14 Apr 2015

[Active New Zealand Survey 2013-2014](#)

SportNZ has published its fifth Active NZ survey looking at when and where adults are engaging in sport and recreation, as participants and volunteers.

Source: Sport New Zealand, 16 March 2015

Local initiatives to reduce the availability of junk foods and drinks are occurring with encouraging frequency. See, for example:

[Ban on sale of sugary drinks at MDHB starts on 7 April](#) (MidCentral Health)

[Sugary drinks banned By Southern DHB](#) (Otago Daily Times)

[Healthy food push at Te Matatini](#) (RadioNZ)

[Fast food ban proposed for Christchurch's new sports hub](#) (The Press)

[Chips get the chop: no deep frying at new Taita community centre](#) (Hutt City Council)

[Wellington hospitals crack down on junk food, fizzy drinks](#) (Dominion Post)

[Junk food crackdown in Wairarapa hospital](#) (Wairarapa Times)

Australia

Australia – TTPA

[Leaked TPP investment chapter shows risks to Australia's health](#)

The latest part of the TPP to be leaked is its investment chapter. And like almost everything we know about the secretive negotiations for the agreement, it provides plenty of cause for concern.

Source: The Conversation, 10 Apr 2015

[Health experts worried as Trans Pacific Partnership negotiations conclude](#)

Eight health and community organisations have written to Trade Minister Andrew Robb expressing "grave concerns" about the latest leaked draft chapter of the nearly concluded Trans Pacific Partnership trade agreement. They want safeguards that prevent corporations from making claims against governments over policies like tobacco plain packaging, limits on alcohol advertising and food labelling requirements. The draft appears to allow these sorts of policies to be challenged. Sydney Morning Herald, 7 Apr 2015

[Trans-Pacific Partnership could prevent clearer food labelling – health advocates](#)

Under the free trade deal, a foreign company could sue the government if sales dropped after labelling was introduced, says the Public Health Association. The investor state dispute settlement provision grants foreign companies the right to sue signatory governments for interfering with business. A similar clause in a Hong Kong treaty has allowed Philip Morris International to take legal action against Australia over the plain packaging tobacco laws.

Source: The Guardian, 27 Feb 2015

[Negotiating healthy trade in Australia: Health impact assessment of the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement](#)

University researchers have made a health impact assessment of the proposed TPPA and finds medicine affordability and public health policies are at risk.

Source: Health Impact Assessment blogspot, 3 Mar 2015

Sugar

[WHO new sugar guidelines – 6 teaspoons a day is the limit for better health](#)

The release of [WHO guidelines around sugar](#) has prompted a coalition of leading health organisations to call for a national strategy around obesity that includes policies to directly impact the amount of added sugars in Australians' diets.

Source: Obesity Policy Coalition, 6 Mar 2015

[Breakfast cereals up to one third sugar: health groups call for clear labelling](#)

Australian cereal manufacturers are potentially misleading consumers by promoting healthy sounding statements on their packaging despite sugar making up more than 35% of the ingredients of some popular brands, a recent survey has revealed.

Source: Obesity Policy Coalition, 17 Mar 2015

[Australia: Soft drink tax could improve the health of the nation](#)

An excise tax on sugar-sweetened drinks would be an effective way to improve the health of heavy consumers, new research shows.

[In](#): Health Economics, 11 Feb 2015

Source: Monash University, 2 Mar 2015

Australia – Other

[Australia: Health advocate demands cigarette-style health warnings on junk food](#)

The founder of a movement to get rid of unhealthy ads in sport says fast food outlets should be forced to put tobacco-style health warnings on their packaging.

Source: Daily Mail, 23 Mar 2015

[Australia: Just not right](#)

Consumer advocacy group Choice has launched a campaign calling on Kellogg's and 6 other food manufacturers to roll out the health star rating system on their products.

Source: Choice, 17 Mar 2015

[Greens push to ban 'unhealthy ads' from TV when kids are watching](#)

The Green party proposes to set enforceable, national standard times for child-friendly TV ads that would ban junk food, gambling and alcohol ads on commercial TV at popular watching times for children. Subscription children's TV channels would be banned from showing junk food, gambling and alcohol advertisements.

Source: Sydney Morning Herald, 12 Apr 2015

[ACT children can't escape junk food marketing, Heart Foundation says](#)

Children in the ACT cannot escape junk food marketing and messages about healthy foods are being "completely drowned out", according to the Heart Foundation. Their audit found 78 per cent of food marketed to children in the ACT was unhealthy.

Source: ABC, 11 Mar 2015

United Kingdom

UK election

[UK: Labour election manifesto promises curbs on unhealthy foods marketed to kids](#)

Labour's election manifesto says it will set limits on the amount of sugar, salt and fat in foods marketed to children should the party gain power in May's general election.

Source: Marketing, 13 Apr 2015

[UK: Tories repeat commitment to plain cigarette packaging and healthy eating](#)

The Conservative Party's manifesto repeats its promise to forge ahead with plain cigarette packaging legislation. Promoting healthier eating among children and "clear food information" are also high on its agenda.

Source: Marketing, 14 Apr 2015

[Liberal Democrat manifesto promises ban on pre-9pm junk food ads](#)

The LibDems' manifesto promises the party will restrict the broadcast of "junk food" advertising before 9pm ... and encourage the traffic light system for food products.

Source: Marketing, 13 Apr 2015

[UK: Jamie Oliver: Pro veges, no gum - what I'd do if I were PM](#)

Jamie Oliver has plenty of ideas on what Britain would look like if he were PM.

Source: The Independent / NZ Herald, 14 Apr 2015

UK – Other

[UK: Tax on sugary drinks could save NHS £15m a year, claims study](#)

The Children's Food Campaign says a tax on sugary drinks could save £300m over 20 years and reduce number of cases of type 2 diabetes by 50,000.

Source: The Guardian, 12 Mar 2015

[UK: The surprising benefit of being fat in middle age](#)

Being overweight or obese in middle age may have a protective effect against dementia over two decades.

[In: Lancet Diabetes and Endocrinology Journal, Online 9 Apr 1015](#)

Source: Washington Post/Stuff, 11 Apr 2015

[UK: The food industry's influence on research](#)

New Zealand's Associate Professor Jeremy Krebs defends the UK's Professor Susan Jebb against comments in a BMJ editorial that she has lacked independence because of food industry funding.

[In: Diabetes & Obesity Research Review, Issue 91, 2015 \(free subscription\)](#)

United States

US – TPPA

[US: Now we know why huge TPP trade deal is kept secret from the public](#)

A key section of the secret Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement has been leaked to the public. [The New York Times has a major story](#) on the contents of the leaked "Investment" chapter that includes investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) clauses. WikiLeaks has [the text and analysis](#).

Source: Huffington Post, 27 Mar 2015

US – Other

[US: The Navajo nation introduces the first junk food tax in the US](#)

The Navajo Nation has become the first place in the United States to impose a tax on junk food. The legislation was modelled on existing taxes on tobacco and alcohol, as well as other fat and sugar tax initiatives outside the US. The act follows a spring 2014 amendment that removed a 5% tribal sales tax on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Source: Civil Eats, 25 Mar 2015

[US: From soda bans to nutrient labelling: What really helps reduce obesity?](#)

Policies that ban or reduce the availability of unhealthy foods are the best ways to battle obesity, while nutrition information fails to deliver benefits, according to a new review of anti-obesity policies.

[In:](#) Obesity Reviews, Online 5 Mar 2015

Source: Food Navigator, 23 Mar 2015

[US: Children and Energy Drinks: Evidence of a growing public health crisis](#)

Emerging evidence shows that highly-caffeinated, often sugar-laden energy drinks can harm children and adolescents. It supports physicians' groups and policymakers calling for restrictions on marketing and sales of these drinks to children under 18.

[In:](#) Nutrition Reviews, April 2015

Source: Rudd Center, 24 Mar 2015

[Advertising for young children "looks promising" on a new YouTube app for kids](#)

A new YouTube app for kids makes targeting children more straightforward for online marketers.

Source: BizReport, 26 Feb 2015

[Consumer advocates petition to keep junk food advertising out of YouTube for Kids](#)

A coalition of children's and consumer advocacy groups has filed a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission charging that Google's new YouTube Kids app violates restrictions on marketing junk foods to kids.

Source: Food Politics, 9 Apr 2015

[US: How Lab Rats Are Changing Our View of Obesity](#)

Many researchers believe that a more complex mix of environmental exposures, lifestyle, genetics and the microbiome's makeup help explain the recent rise of obesity. Exposure to certain chemicals may play a part. Research on this is underway.

Source: Scientific American, 5 Mar 2015

International

International - WHO

[WHO calls on countries to reduce sugars intake among adults and children](#)

The World Health Organization recommends adults and children reduce their daily intake of free sugars to less than 10% of their total energy intake. A further reduction to below 5% would provide additional health benefits.

[In:](#) Guideline: Sugars intake for adults and children

Source: WHO, 4 Mar 2015

[How strong is the evidence behind WHO's sugars advice?](#)

The food industry has criticised the WHO's recommendation to reduce sugar intake for being backed by poor evidence. WHO experts respond.

Source: Food Navigator, 12 Mar 2015

[Using price policies to promote healthier diets](#)

A WHO publication provides information on the use of price policies to promote healthy diets and explores policy developments in Europe.

[In](#): Using price policies to promote healthier diets, WHO Europe, 2015

Source: WHO Europe, 23 Mar 2015

[WHO Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity releases discussion document](#)

The Interim Report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity (co-chaired by NZ's Peter Gluckman), is open for comment until June. It highlights the key issues and policy options for tackling childhood obesity and makes recommendations in two key areas - actions to prevent children and adolescents from developing obesity and actions for treating pre-existing obesity in children and adolescents.

[In](#): Interim Report of the Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity

Source: WHO website

[WHO calls for taxes and marketing restrictions to tackle child obesity](#)

The WHO's Commission on Ending Childhood Obesity has called for taxation and restricted marketing of unhealthy foods and drinks to children aged under 19 to help cut childhood obesity.

Source: Food Navigator, 23 Mar 2015

International – Other

[Hot Topic: Sugar-sweetened beverages](#)

Public Health Nutrition has a series of articles on sugar-sweetened beverages.

Source: Public Health Nutrition, May 2015

[France moves to ban free-refill culture of sugary drinks in bid to combat obesity](#)

The French National Assembly has voted to ban free-refills of sugar-filled drinks at shops and fast food chains.

Source: The Independent, 2 Apr 2015

[Finland leads the way on beating childhood obesity](#)

A Finnish town has managed to halve the rate of child obesity in 6 years with a wide range of initiatives, and is aiming to eliminate it completely.

Source: West, 27 Feb 2015

[The Netherlands: Amsterdam child obesity slashed 16% in two years](#)

Amsterdam's Healthy Weight campaign started in 2012, focusing on a broad range from projects in the fields of healthcare, school and sports to science.

Source: NL Times, 20 Mar 2015

[Amsterdam installs drinking water fountains in anti-obesity campaign](#)

Amsterdam City Council is placing 300 drinking water fountains around the capital in an effort to encourage children to drink water rather than sugary drinks.

Source: Dutch News, 20 Mar 2015

[Free Trade and Mexico's Junk Food Epidemic](#)

Transnational food companies are replacing local foods with cheap, processed junk foods, often with the direct support of governments. Free trade and investment agreements have been critical to their success. The case of Mexico provides a stark and horrific picture of the consequences for local people.

Source: Center for Research on Globalization, 2 Mar 2015

[Fiji: Health Ministry starts work on food rating system](#)

Fiji plans to use the Health Star Rating system for imported food.

Source: Fiji Village, 26 Mar 2015

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STOP OUR CHILDREN DEVELOPING TYPE 2 DIABETES

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