

Nutrition and Physical Activity



Knowledge Bulletin

Issue 2 ♦ July 15, 2020

Welcome to the fortnightly Nutrition and Physical Activity Bulletin (which replaces the HIIRC Weight Management website). The Bulletin has a New Zealand focus and provides links to new research, evaluations, guidance, resources and upcoming events on the topics of nutrition, physical activity, obesity, sport and recreation in relation to health and wellbeing. Key international literature and guidance from similar jurisdictions is also featured.

You can forward this newsletter to others who may be interested in receiving it. They can register and subscribe [here](#). You can also access other recent issues of the digest [here](#).

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If you have any queries and if you would like to submit content for inclusion in the NPA Knowledge Bulletin, please email npa@researchnz.com

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If your organisation has a subscription, you may be able to use the icon under the full text links in PubMed to access the full article

Diet and nutrition

[Comparisons of diets](#)

The New Zealand Nutrition Foundation investigates the evidence-base for a number of popular diets purporting to support weight loss and providing claims of various health benefits.

Summary of Diets

Most of the diets outlined are just different ways of limiting calories. While there is some evidence of short-term benefits, in most cases, a lot of trendy or fad diets have no sound science to back them up.

Diets that promote rapid weight loss should raise a red flag. Healthy sustainable weight loss is definitely a case of 'slow and steady wins the race'. If you do want to lose weight, or just get healthier take a look at what you are eating and focus on having a well-balanced diet making good healthy food choices as much as you can.

The best diet is one you can stick to. If you ever want to start any diet, it is best to discuss with either a [Dietitian](#) or a [Nutritionist](#), and your Doctor to see if the diet is safe for you to follow.

[Historical and Global Perspectives on Grains and Whole Grains within Dietary Guidelines](#)

The Australian Cereals and Grains Association's paper describes the development of the Australian dietary recommendations for grain consumption and compares this with recommendations from countries globally.

They also make recommendations on how to increase whole grain consumption using a multi-stakeholder approach.

Physical activity, sport and recreation

[A Conceptual Framework for Modelling Safe Walking and Cycling Routes to High Schools](#)

This Auckland University study describes the barriers and facilitators influencing teenagers' engagement in active transport to and from school.

The researchers present a conceptual framework with which to model the development of safe walking and cycle routes to high schools.

[How do we support walking prescriptions for type 2 diabetes management? Facilitators and barriers following a 3-month prescription](#)

This research, published in New Zealand's College of General Practitioners' *Journal of Primary Healthcare*, assesses the facilitators and barriers to the adherence to a physical activity (walking) prescription given to people with type 2 diabetes.

The researchers conclude that healthcare professionals are in the best position to overcome barriers to adherence by providing practical advice, such as encouraging engagement with others to support their activity and offering alternative ideas for adhering to the walking prescription, such as carrying this out within the home environment, if exercising in public is off-putting.



[Evaluation of the process and outcomes of the Global Matrix 3.0 of physical activity grades for children and youth](#)

The Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance (AHKGA) Global Matrix 3.0 initiative provides report cards for children's participation in physical activity.

This evaluation assesses its implementation process and outcomes and provides recommendations for the optimisation of the initiative moving forward.

The key finding was that, although satisfaction rates were high, there is room for improvement for assessment tools that could be adapted to better suit the cultural context of the community, but remain globally comparable.

Obesity and weight management

[Later bedtimes fine for pre-schoolers if they get enough sleep](#)

In new research, led by Dr Melissa Roy from Otago University, parents of preschoolers can rest assured that, as long as their children get the 10-11 hours of recommended sleep, they are unlikely to develop obesity.

“However, it is known that children who sleep longer are less likely to be overweight,” she says.

“Our research helps confirm more sleep is beneficial for young children, but putting them to bed earlier is only helpful if it means they sleep longer.”

[Correlation between epicardial adipose tissue and body mass index in New Zealand ethnic populations](#)

This article, in the latest issue of the *New Zealand Medical Journal*, discusses the association between obesity and the increased risk of non-communicable diseases, especially amongst ethnic populations, as they are disproportionately affected.

[Taxation of unprocessed sugar or sugar-added foods for reducing their consumption and preventing obesity or other adverse health outcomes](#)

This *Cochrane Systematic Review* looks at the impact the intervention of taxing sugar-laden food and beverages has on reducing the prevalence of overweight and obesity amongst the populations in which such policies are implemented.

While the authors report that consumption appears to drop, concrete evidence is lacking as to whether this is due to taxation per se, or a result of other influences, such as health promotion.

[Why are we weighting? Let’s start treating obesity](#)

In this Research Review podcast, Associate Professor Rinki Murphy (endocrinologist) discusses treating obesity – covering the role of diet, pharmacotherapy drugs and bariatric surgery.

The associated podcast – [What Can I Do If My Patient Asks Me About Help With Weight Loss?](#) is from a recent GPCME Rotorua presentation given by endocrinologist Dr Ole Schmiedel, who outlines a solution-focused approach to medical weight management, focusing on the improvement of obesity-related complications, rather than on weight itself. The aim of this session was to provide practical knowledge on how to approach weight management, with several individual cases provided as examples of the various approaches.

Health promotion

[The Living Streets Aotearoa Walking Awards](#)

The New Zealand Walking Awards celebrate and recognise New Zealand achievements for walkers by acknowledging innovative new facilities, highlighting national best practise and rewarding ongoing commitment to walking.

The awards are open to all - private companies and public organisations, not-for-profit groups, and community organisations or individuals.

Click the link above to view the full list of projects that received awards.

To watch the video of the awards, click [here](#)

[**Making space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community health workers in health promotion**](#)

This research looks into the impact the instatement of Aboriginal Health Workers in clinical settings has had on the Community Health Worker roles that were previously successful in promoting health and wellbeing at a localised level, by delivering evidence-based programmes in rural and remote communities.

The researchers conclude that, while these roles are both important, they should be operationalised in a complementary manner, to support Aboriginal health outcomes.

[**Language and framing as determinants of the predominance of behavioural health promotion: an Australian view**](#)

This paper looks at the language used in health promotion and how this influences population responses and reach.

The researchers argue that Australian health promotion focuses on promoting informational and/or behavioural strategies and sends out limited messages, rather framing health promotion as a multi-strategic/layered approach, by also incorporating policy and environmental changes, as recommended by the *Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion* (1986) and reinforced in 2016 by the *Shanghai Declaration*.

Non-communicable diseases

[**Performance of CVD risk equations for older patients assessed in general practice: a cohort study**](#)

This study assesses the risk-factors associated with preventable cardiovascular disease in an older cohort of New Zealanders.

[**Falling into a deep dark hole: Tongan people's perceptions of being at risk of developing type 2 diabetes**](#)

This research followed a Kakala and Talanga Tongan methodology, with an aim to provide a deeper understanding as to how the Tongan community in New Zealand perceive their personal risk of developing type 2 diabetes, so as to identify opportunities to better engage with the Tongan community.

The researchers found that prediabetes was poorly understood and that fear of the irreversibility of diabetes prevented many from making lifestyle changes. Tailored messaging and education will, therefore, be necessary to communicate effectively and develop preventative strategies that will be taken onboard.

[**Use of the prevented fraction for the population to determine deaths averted by existing prevalence of physical activity: a descriptive study**](#)

In this article, the researchers from the Universities of Cambridge and Edinburgh provide a positive slant on the usual perspective of harm associated with unhealthy lifestyles, by quantifying premature mortality rates that are globally averted by healthy levels of physical activity within populations.

Results are reported by WHO region, as well as World Bank income classification.

Tools and resources

[**Mafi Funaki-Tahifote, Manager, Pacific Health at the Heart Foundation**](#)

In this ANA profile, Mafi describes the Heart Foundation's [Pacific Heartbeat](#) workshops and professional development courses that are tailored to Pacific peoples.

[Mindfulness videos](#)

Health Navigator NZ provides a series of videos about how mindfulness can help on a range of topics, including parenting, eating and coping with stress.

[The importance of moving more: new database will help countries tackle obesity](#)

Prof Knut-Inge Klepp, [CO-CREATE](#) principal investigator and member of World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) International's [Policy Advisory Group](#), shares the story behind the new [MOVING database](#).

Over the past decades, overweight and obesity rates have been increasing worldwide, with 158 million children between the ages of five and 19 currently living with obesity; a number that is predicted to increase by 100 million in just five years, to [254 million by 2025](#). This increase has been occurring across very different countries, ages and socioeconomic groups, showing it is due to a change in society, not individuals.

Click the link above to read about the development and purpose of the Nourishing and MOVING databases.

News

[Time to clear the food swamp](#)

Boyd Swinburn, Auckland University Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, 11 June, 2020

Fast food operator KFC has backed down in the face of vocal opposition in Otara. Boyd Swinburn applauds a rare victory for the community.

Otara is already a food swamp, filled with junk food outlets and no supermarkets. KFC thought they would add to the swamp, by building a new outlet in Baird's Rd, even though their Papatoetoe outlet is only three minutes down the road.

The residents were outraged – they did not want another obesogenic food outlet in their community, which already has massive obesity and diabetes problems. Local Councillor, Efeso Collins, jumped in with very vocal support for his community. In the end, KFC quickly backed down, probably because of reputational risk, handing local democracy a rare victory.

“Disadvantaged communities are trying to lift the liveability of their neighbourhoods, and the Thriving Otara collective is a good example of this.”

Boyd Swinburn, University of Auckland

Click the link to read the full news article.

This article was first published by the New Zealand Herald, [KFC versus Otara battle a win for the community](#)

[Study reveals plant compound beats sugar cravings](#)

Massey University, 25 June, 2020

With millions of people around the world still confined to their homes due to COVID-19 lockdown restrictions, many have reported over-indulging in home-baking, snacks and sugary treats, potentially leading to increases in body weight.

But researchers at Massey University may have found a solution, by investigating a plant compound that showed a statistically significant reduction in sugar cravings.

Associate Professor Ajmol Ali of the School of Sport, Exercise and Nutrition was approached by Harley Pasternak, a celebrity personal trainer in the United States and co-founder of the company Sweet Kick, to commission a study on the efficacy of the Sweet Kick product.

Sweet Kick developed a mint product containing gymnemic acids from the plant *Gymnema sylvestre*, a perennial woody vine native to tropical Asia, China, the Arabian Peninsula, Africa and Australia. It has traditionally been used in Ayurvedic medicine and its name in Hindi is “sugar destroyer” for its ability to suppress taste responses to sweet compounds.

The study aimed to investigate the impact of taking the mint, which contains *Gymnema sylvestre*, on people’s desire and consumption of high-sugar sweet foods, as well as ratings of hunger and pleasantness of eating more high-sugar sweet foods. Sweet foods contain a lot of calories, taste good and may be difficult to stop eating once you’ve started, according to Professor Ali. “*Long term, mindless consumption of high sugar sweet foods may lead to obesity or developing Type 2 Diabetes.*”

Click the link to read the full news article.

Read the research paper, **Consuming *Gymnema sylvestre* Reduces the Desire for High-Sugar Sweet Foods**, here: <https://www.mdpi.com/2072-6643/12/4/1046>



Upcoming events

Many events are now either virtual, rescheduled for later dates or cancelled. If you have registered for upcoming events this year, please check their status.

FIZZ Summit 2020

Wellington, Wednesday 5 August, 2020

This year we focus our event on the NZ Beverage Guidance Panel's top-3 policy recommendations for sugary drinks.

- NZ schools to be free of sugary drinks
- A sugar tax in NZ
- Front of package sugar content labelling

Ministers and Health portfolio holders will be invited to receive a policy brief from students of Glenview School in Porirua, asking for sugary-drink free schools throughout NZ. Glenview School has been sugary-drink free for over twenty years. Politicians from all major parties are invited to present their views on the above policy recommendations.

This year's half-day event will run at Loaves and Fishes hall (Wellington Cathedral of St Paul), opposite Parliament in Wellington, Wednesday 5 August from 9am -12.30pm.

We will have speakers presenting the latest research relevant to the harm caused by sugary drinks, and we will discuss the things we can do to prevent that harm.

The guest list will be maintained at 100 guests. To request tickets, email symposium@fizz.org.nz

[16th World Congress on Public Health - ONLINE EVENT](#)

The World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA), Italian Society of Hygiene, Preventive Medicine and Public Health (SItI) and the European Public Health Association (EUPHA) are pleased to invite you to the 16th World Congress on Public Health - virtual conference, 12-17 October 2020.

To register, click [here](#)

[Lifestyle Medicine 2020](#) (Melbourne) – conference rescheduled on 4–6 December 2020, dependant on Coronavirus status.

Lifestyle Medicine 2020 will now be held 4-6 December 2020 at the same venue (Pullman Albert Park) in Melbourne.

We've confirmed that Dr Michael Mosley (UK), Coach Margaret Moore (US), and virtually all of our presenters will be there in December.

The international board certification exam will now be held on Thursday 3 December at the same venue.

The Leadership in Lifestyle Medicine Masterclass with Margaret Moore will also be held, as planned, on Thursday 3 December.

Click the link above to find out more and register (or, if you already have, to confirm that the rescheduled dates suit).

