



Australian and New Zealand Obesity Society Annual Scientific Conference



ORAL ABSTRACTS

1

Invited talk: Sugar in our beverage supply: Patterns, consequences, policy options



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We have become increasingly aware of the role of added sugar, particularly in beverages, as a major driver of increased weight gain and other NCSs. This critical knowledge linked with our high sweetness preference (developed over millennia as a survival mechanism) has allowed the modern food industry to utilise this preference to make caloric sweeteners (CS) omnipresent in our beverage (mainly SSB's) and food supply, particularly in the last half century. First we review the increasing role of CS in our global food supply. For example, 68% of packaged foods and beverages in the USA contain CS, 7% include both caloric and low-calorie sweeteners (LCS), and a few % are made with LCS only. Increasingly our beverage supply has beverages with both types of sweeteners. We review global patterns, with some focus on the Australian-New Zealand region. The added CS come from hundreds of different versions of sugar and its glucose and fructose subcomponents, all of which have the same equal adverse health effect. It has only been

in the past 2–3 decades that we have understood for beverages with calories that consumption is not associated with compensatory declines in food intake and this mismatch in our preferences; the modern food sectors push to market these caloric beverages has been responsible for increased risk of a wide range of health problems. Recent meta-analyses are on the health impact of CS in both food and beverages, particularly beverages, are reviewed. Two major unsettled issues related to the role of 100% fruit juice and LCSs are reviewed. The major program and policy options being utilised or under active consideration are reviewed. We must find ways to change our culture of eating and drinking and the relative cost and dominance of CS beverages in our diets.

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2

Invited talk: Epigenetics and obesity



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The notion that environmental influences on phenotype can be mediated by detectable/measurable epigenetic marks is of interest to the biologist, the clinician and the broader community. These molecular epigenetic marks might be valuable as biomarkers of future disease,