

News briefs

Kellogg's revamps its Coco Pops recipe

The amount of sugar in Coco Pops breakfast cereal has been further reduced by 40%. The revamped recipe, which also has 10% less salt, now has 17g of sugar per 100g rather than 30g. Levels were already cut by 14% this year. It puts the brand ahead of Government's goal of 20% less sugar in cereal and snacks by 2020. Kellogg's said it took three-and-a-half years to reformulate the recipe. Professor Graham MacGregor, chair of Action on Sugar, said: 'We hope Kellogg's will reformulate all of their cereals and set an example for all other food manufacturers. We need mandatory sugar-reduction targets with strict penalties for those who don't comply.'

Poor mental health at work 'widespread'

Poor mental health affects half of all employees, according to a survey of 44,000 people carried out by the mental health charity Mind. Only half of those who had experienced problems with stress, anxiety or low mood had talked to their employer about it. Fear, shame and job insecurity are some of the reasons people may choose to hide their worries. Mind says around 300,000 people lose their job each year due to a mental health problem. The charity - along with The Royal Foundation, Heads Together and 11 other organisations - has created an online resource for employers and employees with information, advice, resources and training that workplaces can use to improve wellbeing. The resource can be found here.

Onwards for Coca-Cola, downwards for dental health?

Drinks giant Coca-Cola has agreed its biggest UK sponsorship deal by becoming Premier League football's seventh and final commercial partner. It will become the official soft drink partner of the league, joining other sponsors Barclays, Carling, Cadbury, Nike, Tag Heuer and EA Sports. The three-and-a-half-year agreement starts in January 2019. The financial details have not been revealed. Coca-Cola also sponsors the football World Cup and the Olympic Games. The company, which employs 3,500 people in the UK, also owns Schweppes, Fanta, Sprite, and Oasis among others.

GOVERNMENT TO BAN ENERGY DRINK SALES TO CHILDREN IN ENGLAND

A ban on sales of energy drinks to children in England is to be introduced amid growing concern about the impact that the high-caffeine, high-sugar drinks are having on young people's health. A consultation on how to implement the proposed ban has been unveiled, with Downing Street indicating that the principal question to be determined is whether the purchasing restrictions will apply at the age of 16 or 18. A Downing Street source added that introducing a ban was all but certain, saying: 'It's a question not of whether we do it, but how.'

The principal justification for the ban is the high level of caffeine in the energy drinks which has been linked to health

problems for children, including head and stomach aches, as well as hyperactivity and sleep problems.

A 250ml can of Red Bull contains about 80mg of caffeine, roughly the same as a similarly sized cup of coffee, but three times the level of Coca-Cola. Monster Energy, which is often sold in larger cans of 500ml, contains 160mg of caffeine. Energy drinks often also have higher levels of sugar than soft drinks. According to government figures, sugared energy drinks have 60% more calories and 65% more sugar than normal soft drinks and sugar is one of the largest causes of obesity.



Promote honey rather than antibiotics for coughs

Doctors are to be told to promote honey and over-the-counter remedies as the go-to treatment for coughs rather than antibiotics. They will be told not to offer the drugs in most cases and to instead encourage patients to use self-care products, under new draft guidance from Public Health England (PHE) and the National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (Nice). Patients are instead advised to try honey or

cough medicines containing pelargonium, guaifenesin or dextromethorphan, which have been shown to have some benefit for cough symptoms, before contacting their doctor. Antibiotics may be necessary to treat coughs in patients with pre-existing conditions such as lung disease, immunosuppression or cystic fibrosis, or those at risk of further complications, the guidance states.

SCHOOL CHILDREN TO BE TAUGHT ABOUT HEALTHY EATING

School children are to be taught how to cut down on biscuits and sugary drinks in a new drive to tackle spiralling childhood obesity, the Sun reports. Education Secretary Damian Hinds has unveiled a new compulsory health education programme that will warn against food and drink with high calorie and sugar content. For the first time schools will be required to dedicate part of their school day to teach about the "benefits of healthy eating and keeping fit". The proposals will become mandatory for schools to teach from September 2020.

NHS to be franchised around the globe

It's been reported by the Daily Telegraph that the NHS is to be exported across the world as part of efforts to boost investment in Britain post-Brexit. Hospitals and health watchdogs are to be encouraged to set up franchises in dozens of countries, with profits ploughed into supporting the health service. Officials hope to turn the UK's national health service into a global brand, in the same way that the BBC gains significant income from its commercial BBC Worldwide arm.