

MEDIA RELEASE

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A tasty start to our 'Tap Into Water' campaign

An assortment of naturally-flavoured water will be available to sample at the launch of Nelson Marlborough Health's *Tap Into Water* campaign.

The freebies will be offered alongside a 'sugar cube pyramid' demonstrating how much sugar is in commonly-bought soft drinks and fruit juices, at a Nelson Market stall this Saturday. Visitors to the stall will also be encouraged to upload selfies of 'drinking water in cool places' to the Tap Into Water Facebook page.

The campaign is being by Nelson Marlborough Health's public health service as one of many oral health initiatives underway across the organisation.

It aims to raise awareness about water being the healthiest drink. The campaign organisers will work with 'Top of the South' schools, sport and recreation organisations and businesses to promote water as the first choice.

"Water is the best drink available and it promotes health and wellbeing. On the other hand, junk drinks like soft drinks, diet drinks and fruit juice can rot teeth and contribute wider health problems like obesity," says Nelson Marlborough Health Principal Dental Officer Dr Rob Beaglehole.

"We will take a positive message to our schools, businesses and sport organisations and promote the simple, yet powerful fact that water is the best choice whether you're young or old," Dr Beaglehole says.

Every year Nelson Marlborough Health surgically removes teeth from approximately 250 children under general anaesthesia. According to Dr Beaglehole, junk drinks are a major contributing factor to this. "These drinks cause tooth decay and wider health issues and result in unnecessary pain and suffering. We strongly encourage people to tap into water instead", he says.

Nelson Marlborough Health recently introduced a new healthy beverages policy and now supplies only water and milk drinks in its hospital cafes.

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