

Endocrinology, Diabetes, Obesity, and Metabolism

TUESDAY, MARCH 22, 2011 - WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30, 2011

Circadian Clock Research and Links With Weight Gain and Digestion

The Wall Street Journal mentions research from the lab of Mitchell Lazar, MD, PhD, director of the Institute for Diabetes, Obesity and Metabolism, in an article about circadian rhythms. The team recently found a clock-gene mechanism that reduces the production of fat in the liver at certain times of the day. Such findings suggest manipulating these clock genes could have implications for diabetes or fatty liver disease. *NIH Research Matters* also featured the study, in which Lazar's team discovered a molecular link between the body's biological clock and fat production in the liver. The finding may help explain why disrupting daily cycles, such as rotating shift work, increases the risk of diseases like obesity and diabetes. Liver cells undergo epigenetic modifications that vary with the time of day.

[Wall Street Journal article](#)
[NIH Research Matters article](#)

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 23, 2011

Far from Radiation, Potassium Iodide Pills in Demand

Those just-in-case pills health officials hand out to people living near nuclear power plants are in big demand, even in Southeast Pennsylvania--more than 6,000 miles away from the radiation leaks in Japan. Some people think of the potassium iodide as a cure-all, anti-radiation medicine, according to WHYY Radio. But Dr. Susan Mandel, MD, MPH, director of the Penn Thyroid Center, said the salt pills have a very specific use. "It literally feeds the thyroid, so it prevents the thyroid from taking up the damaging radioactive iodine. It doesn't protect against any of the other radioactivity that's being released, and it doesn't protect any other organ," Mandel said. "It doesn't protect against plutonium, cesium, all those other things."

[WHYY/NPR Local article](#)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 05, 2011

Philly Joins Bid to Combat Sugary Soda Consumption

Warnings about diabetes and obesity could start popping up on soda cans, if a petition sent to the FDA this week gains any traction, according to a WHYY Radio report. The Philadelphia Department of Health, along with numerous other organizations around the country, signed the letter urging the government to require health warnings on beverages with large amounts of sugar or other caloric sweeteners. Mark Schutta, MD, director of the Penn Rodebaugh Diabetes Center said he sees too many patients whose health problems stem from excessive soda consumption. "How's it going to hurt the overall health of the American population? The bottom line is, it's not. The only thing it can potentially hurt is the consumption of these drinks and the profit margin for soda manufacturers," he said. "In the quantities that people are consuming these drinks, it's just not something that's good for anyone's health."

[WHYY/NPR Local article](#)