

Cuttings from the media

MEDIA LITE

A new source of antidiabetes drugs: The platypus

Researchers in Australia have identified a novel form of glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1), a gut hormone that stimulates insulin release, in the venom of the duck-billed platypus. This form of the hormone is resistant to degradation by dipeptidyl peptidase-4, and the discovery could pave the way to novel antidiabetes drugs similar to the GLP-1 receptor agonists that are currently available.

In addition to the version of GLP-1 found both in the human gut and in the guts of monotremes (mammals that include the platypus and the echidna), the longer-lasting form is found in a powerful venom produced by the platypus during mating season to fend off competing males.

"The function in venom has most likely triggered the evolution of a stable form of GLP-1 in monotremes," said Briony Forbes, Associate Professor at Flinders University and co-lead author of the study. "Excitingly, stable GLP-1 molecules are highly desirable as potential type 2 diabetes treatments." However, Professor Forbes was quick to point out that any resulting treatment would be a long way off.

BBC News
30 November 2016



British children among the least active in the world

Damning research by the Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance, a network of researchers and health workers, has revealed that British children are among the least active in the world. Overall, England and Wales were both scored D⁻, the third worst grade in the rankings, while Scotland was joint worst, with a grade of F.

Dr Steven Mann, Research Director at UK Active, said that "Movement has been stripped out of modern living, meaning Generation Inactive are driven to school and fed a staple diet of sofa play and screen time, while being starved of outdoor activities." His organisation is calling for Ofsted to rate schools on children's fitness.

The Telegraph
20 November 2016

Obesity and diabetes by middle age tied to heart failure later on

People who reach middle age without developing high blood pressure, diabetes or obesity may have a lower risk of heart failure later in life, according to a study published in the *Journal of the American College of Cardiology: Heart Failure*.

Over 516 537 person-years of follow-up, compared to people with all three of these risk factors, adults who had none of them by age 45 were 73% less likely to develop heart failure over the rest of their lifetime. They lived on average an additional 3–15 years free of heart failure than those with one or more risk factors. Controlling these risk factors when young appears to pay dividends in later life.

Reuters
30 November 2016

Ten-minute walks after meals improve glycaemic control in type 2 diabetes

Taking a 10-minute stroll after each meal could help people with type 2 diabetes control their condition, according to research published in *Diabetologia*. People who walked after each meal had lower postprandial blood glucose levels than those who walked for 30 minutes per day independent of meal times.

The improvement was most striking after the evening meal, when the most carbohydrate was consumed and sedentary behaviours were highest, with a 22% relative reduction in the area under the blood glucose curve in the post-meal walking group.

Mail Online
18 October 2016

Ban on advertising unhealthy food in all children's media

The Committee of Advertising Practice has announced tough new rules banning the advertising of food and drink products high in fat, salt or sugar in children's media. The rules will apply across all non-broadcast media, including print, cinema and, crucially, online and social media, bringing them in line with television rules.

The rules come in response to concerns about childhood obesity and shifting media habits amongst young people, with research from Ofcom showing that children aged 5–15 years spend around 15 hours per week online. The rules, which will apply to all media targeted at under-16s, will come into effect on 1 July 2017.

Diabetes UK
8 December 2016