

Dr. David Lau, MD, PhD, FRCPC
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Dr. Lau is a practicing endocrinologist who specializes in diabetes, obesity and lipid disorders. He is also the founding President of Obesity Canada, a not-for-profit organization aimed at improving the health of Canadians by reducing the occurrence of obesity through research, education and service.

Dr. Lau is a graduate of the University of Toronto and trained in internal medicine and endocrinology at Harvard Medical School and the University of Toronto. Dr. Lau was Head, Division of Endocrinology and Metabolism, at the University of Ottawa and the Ottawa Hospital from 1990 to 1999.

Dr. Lau's current basic research interests include fat cell biology in health and obesity, development of insulin resistance in obesity and diabetes, and cellular mechanisms of diabetic vascular complications. He is also involved in population health and clinical research programs in diabetes and obesity, and lipid disorders in children and adults.

Dr. Lau has published over 100 scientific papers in peer-reviewed medical journals, periodicals, and books. He is currently Editor-in-chief of the Canadian Journal of Diabetes and Associate Editor of the journal Adipocytes, and formerly Associate Editor of the Obesity journal. He also serves as external reviewer for a number of leading peer-reviewed journals and granting agencies (Can. Institutes for Health Research Res. And Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada). He lectures widely to practicing physicians and

health professionals across the country and has received teaching awards for undergraduate medical students. He is also actively involved in giving public lectures and forums on diabetes, lipids and obesity.

Dr. Lau has also served as an expert panel member on the WHO-International Obesity Task Force, the 1998, 2003 and 2008 Canadian Diabetes association Clinical Practice Guidelines for the diagnosis and management of diabetes, and the 2003 Health Canada Guidelines for Body Weight Classification. Dr. Lau was a member of the expert panel committee on the 2008 CDA CPG update and principal author of the chapter entitled "Management of obesity in diabetes." Dr. Lau was an expert panel member of the 2009 Canadian Cardiovascular Society Canadian Guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of dyslipidemia and prevention of cardiovascular disease in the adult.

Dr. Lau guided and chaired the Obesity Canada Clinical Practice Guidelines Steering Committee and Expert Panel. The evidence-based CPG on the management and prevention of obesity in adults and children was published as a supplement in the Can. Med. Assoc. Journal in April 2007.

Dr. Lau was honoured with the 2008 Physician Scientist Lecture Award by the Canadian Lipoprotein Conference. In 2004, Dr. Lau was honoured as the top 20 notable Calgarians, and top 50 Albertans for his contributions to improve the health of Albertans and exemplary leadership in shaping Alberta's future.

Keynote Address

By

Dr. David C.W. Lau

Obesity – The Common Soil of Chronic Diseases

Obesity is reaching epidemic proportions globally in both adults and children. A majority of adult Canadians are overweight or obese. Childhood obesity is one of the most serious and pressing health threats globally. One in four Canadian children between the ages 2-6 years is overweight, and one in 10 adolescents is obese. Obesity, notably abdominal obesity, is now widely accepted as an independent risk factor for type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease, both of which are associated with reduced life expectancy.

Overweight and obese individuals are predisposed to a variety of other co-morbidities, including hypertension, sleep apnea/sleep-disordered breathing, fatty liver disease, certain forms of cancers, and musculoskeletal abnormalities leading to mobility issues. Importantly obesity has become one of the most prevalent health issues resulting in absenteeism and presenteeism at the work place. Obesity can be considered as a common soil for many chronic diseases. A concerted effort is required by health professionals, policy makers, and the private sector to manage and prevent this most prevalent public and chronic health issue.

This presentation will review the genetic, environmental and societal factors driving the obesity epidemic, and practical solutions to improve the health and quality of life of overweight and obese people.