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New Institute for Diabetes and Metabolic Health Debuts at UC San Diego

Expansive effort will encompass both research and treatment of major national health issue

The University of California San Diego School of Medicine has launched the Institute for Diabetes and Metabolic Health (IDMH), a new cross-disciplinary, collaborative effort to address one of the nation's leading public health threats.

“Diabetes and other metabolic disorders pose an immense, perhaps unprecedented, health threat to virtually everyone,” said Alan Saltiel, PhD, IDMH director and one of the nation's leaders in the study of metabolic disorders. “Tens of millions of Americans of all ages are already afflicted so the imperative is great to understand better these chronic, life-threatening conditions and find new ways to treat and prevent them.”



Alan Saltiel, PhD

UC San Diego and affiliated institutions have a long history of excellence in diabetes care and research. As a networked organization, Saltiel said the new IDMH will expand and further refine that tradition, with scientists and physicians at UC San Diego and at neighboring institutions, like the Salk Institute for Biological Studies and the La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology, integrating clinical and preclinical education and advancing care and research for the treatment and prevention of diabetes and associated disorders.

The IDMH will be comprised of four centers:

- **The Center for Clinical Diabetes Care** will be staffed by physicians, nurses, nutritionists and educators treating pediatric and adult diabetes and related complications, such as renal, cardiovascular, neurological, dermatological and eye disease.

- **The Center for Human Nutrition** will consist of active clinical researchers focused on nutrition and metabolic health, and on prevention or intervention of type 1 and 2 diabetes and obesity, a major driver of disease and a national epidemic unto itself. They will investigate the impact of diet and nutrients on healthy aging, metabolism and energy balance and conduct clinical trials of drugs and devices.
- **Type 1 Diabetes Research Center** will feature researchers at UC San Diego and neighboring institutions concentrating on the cure and prevention of type 1 diabetes. The focus will include stem cell biology, immunology and genetics.
- **Center for Integrative and Molecular Metabolism** will target type 2 diabetes and obesity, both with rising rates in every age group. It will include investigators from UC San Diego, the Salk Institute for Biological Studies and the La Jolla Institute for Allergy & Immunology, who will study topics like hormone secretion, metabolism control, feeding behaviors, circadian biology, genetics and the microbiome.

The centers will recruit new faculty and trainees, enlist collaborators across disciplines, organize symposia and broadly spur the development and progress of metabolic science and treatment.

“The need for the IDMH is urgent,” said David Brenner, MD, vice chancellor, UC San Diego Health Sciences and dean of UC San Diego School of Medicine. “Diabetes causes more than 250,000 deaths each year. It’s the leading cause of kidney failure, nerve damage and blindness, and a risk factor for asthma, arthritis, Alzheimer’s disease and cancer. The advances made at IDMH offer potential benefit to almost everybody.”

For more information, visit the IDMH website at IDMH.ucsd.edu

MEDIA CONTACT

Scott LaFee, 858-249-0456, slafee@ucsd.edu

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