

World scientists gather in Montréal to discuss Obesity, heart disease and other ailments of modern times

Montréal, February 13, 2014 – Why are obesity, diabetes and heart disease among the leading causes of mortality in our society? How can promoting a healthy lifestyle turn back that tide? How can genomic research help us better understand the specific role prevention plays when it comes to health?

On February 13 and 14, 2014, internationally renowned scientists will be asking and answering those questions at the Montréal Science Centre during the International Symposium on Genomics and Personalized Preventive Health.

Hosted by Génome Québec, in partnership with the Grand défi Pierre Lavoie (GDPL), the Symposium will help foster scientific insight into the importance and influence of a healthy lifestyle on human health.

From science to collective action

For Pierre Lavoie, the partnership with Génome Québec has meant adding an important scientific component to his organization's mandate. "My team and I are pleased to be able to count on Génome Québec's involvement in providing us with scientific backing for our initiatives. It's the first time science has been so intimately connected with collective action in this area. It is also one more opportunity for Québec to showcase its leadership in the field of health and healthy living. We are hoping that the outcome of the Symposium will launch a promising project for society as a whole."

Génome Québec has harnessed its skills and network of scientific experts to organize the very first scientific program aimed at demonstrating that healthy lifestyle choices are keys to better health. Génome Québec President and CEO Marc LePage explains: "We hope that the conclusions stemming from the Symposium will lead to a major research project – perhaps even an international consortium – on prevention and healthy lifestyle choices. The knowledge we have gained in terms of analyzing and understanding the human genome allows us to conduct genomic research in the area of prevention, not only those of care and treatment."

A unique opportunity to meet world experts

Dr. Frank Hu, a professor of nutrition and epidemiology at Harvard School of Public Health and a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, will be among the eminent experts taking part in the panels. His research focuses on the connection between obesity and the increased risk of developing heart disease, diabetes and cancer. He also studies diet, exercise, sedentary behaviour and genes as some of the risk factors associated with obesity.

Dr. Robert H. Lustig is a professor of pediatrics in the Division of Endocrinology and a member of the Health Policy Studies at University of California in San Francisco (UCSF). He is a top-ranking neuroendocrinologist and his clinical work focuses on the role of the nervous system in regulating the energy balance. He studies, among other subjects, the interaction between variations in nutritional environment and defects in hormone signals, more specifically how fructose and lack of fibre are behind metabolic syndrome.

[To learn more about the guest speakers and themes of the Symposium, visit the Website.](#)

About Génome Québec

Since May 2000, Génome Québec has been the driving force behind the development of genomics in Québec. By supporting over 80 projects and 800 teams of researchers and managing the operations of the McGill University and Génome Québec Innovation Centre, Génome Québec is helping to accelerate the discovery of new applications for genomics in strategic areas, such as human health, forestry, the environment and agrifood.

The funds invested by Génome Québec are provided by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, the Government of Canada, through Genome Canada, and private partners.

For more information, visit www.genomequebec.com.

About the Grand défi Pierre Lavoie

Since November 2008, the Grand défi Pierre Lavoie has been hitting Québec's roads every year with an ambitious goal: to create the largest health-related happening ever organized in this province and, possibly, in the rest of the country. An initiative of the not-for-profit organization Go le Grand défi, this unique and unifying event is aimed at developing healthy life habits in young people, 6 to 12 years old, and their families, by motivating them to get active, eat well and stay in school.

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