

TEDMED: Is the obesity crisis a disguise for a deeper problem?

April 22 2013



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(HealthDay)—Rather than the cause in-and-of-itself, obesity may be a symptom of something far more insidious that is causing obesity-related chronic health concerns, according to a nutrition researcher who presented at TEDMED 2013, held from April 16 to 19 in Washington, D.C.

Peter Attia, M.D., founder and president of the [Nutrition Science Initiative](#) based in San Diego, took to the stage to discuss his research focus within the obesity crisis ("Is the '[Obesity Crisis](#)' Just a Disguise for a Deeper Problem?"). His premise is that we do not yet have a clear

scientific basis for nutritional recommendations for optimal health. He hypothesizes that, rather than [excess weight](#) causing [insulin resistance](#), it could be that the root is insulin pathology, which then leads to the excess weight.

Attia offers that current public policy regarding nutritional recommendations is based on less than optimal data. He aims to change that by taking a novel approach to tackling the critical questions with a high degree of scientific rigor. His research is focused on rigorously testing how dietary constituents can influence body weight, and the mechanisms underlying those effects. The first question he proposes to address is: "What factors drive the body to accumulate excess fat?" Attia explains that, while the conventional wisdom is that obesity is an [energy balance disorder](#) caused merely by the consumption of more calories than are expended, nuances that contradict this conventional wisdom have not yet been scientifically explored to the level he proposes.

"What if we've been wrong?" posed Attia during his stage presentation. "Are we blaming the victims?"

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Citation: TEDMED: Is the obesity crisis a disguise for a deeper problem? (2013, April 22)
retrieved 20 April 2024 from
<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-04-tedmed-obesity-crisis-disguise-deeper.html>

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