

Role reversal: Linking a reproductive pathway to obesity

June 17 2014

People and mice with mutations in a specific signaling pathway, known as kisspeptin, suffer reproductive effects such as delayed puberty and infertility. Research of this pathway has focused on its role in reproduction, but a June 17 study in the *Journal of Clinical Investigation* looked at its effects on metabolism.

Alexander Kauffman and colleagues at the University of California San Diego found that lack of the kisspeptin pathway in female mice promotes excess weight gain. Mice became overweight as the result of a reduced metabolism and decreased energy, but not as a result of increased [food consumption](#).

In her Commentary "Fatness and fertility: which direction?", Stephanie Seminara of Massachusetts General Hospital commends the identification of a link between kisspeptin and metabolism.

The results of this study have potential to translate into approaches to treat human obesity.

More information: Impaired kisspeptin signaling decreases metabolism and promotes glucose intolerance and obesity, *Journal of Clinical Investigation*, 2014. [DOI: 10.1172/JCI71075](https://doi.org/10.1172/JCI71075).

Provided by Journal of Clinical Investigation

Citation: Role reversal: Linking a reproductive pathway to obesity (2014, June 17) retrieved 5 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-06-role-reversal-linking-reproductive-pathway.html>

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