University of Birmingham

Panagiota Kaisari

Doctoral Researcher

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About

Title of PhD: Psychobiology of Appetite

Supervisors: Dr Suzanne Higgs, Dr Pia Rotshtein

I am interested in studying human appetite behavior and my PhD research particularly focuses on the role of attention and memory in eating behavior and food intake. Using a variety of experimental techniques, including functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI), genotyping, cognitive testing, behavioral measures of appetite, biological markers of hunger/appetite, measures of body composition and actual food intake I work on exploring deeply the mechanisms underpinning the individual susceptibility to disturbance of energy balance and I aim to connect genetic to behavioral factors that predispose individuals to obesity.

Qualifications

- BSc Nutrition and Dietetics
- MSc Clinical Nutrition

Biography

I studied Nutrition & Dietetics at Harokopio University of Athens, Greece and after my graduation in 2009 I started my Master studies at the same University, specializing in Clinical Nutrition. During my bachelor studies, and in the frame of my Bachelor thesis, I investigated the effect of coffee intake in the feeling of hunger and food intake in healthy males, under the supervision of Dr. Mary Yannakoulia. From 2009 to 2011, during my Master studies, I had been a research associate in the project ''Management of overweight and obesity in children'' which was undertaken in collaboration with the University of Athens Medical School and the Harokopio University (PIs: Prof. G. Chrousos, Dr. M. Yannakoulia). Also, from September of 2010 to June of 2012 I was the dietitian in charge of treating adolescents with eating disorders at the Center for Adolescent Medicine, at the Children's Hospital ''Aghia Sophia'' in Athens, which hosts the UNESCO Chair for ''Adolescent Health Care'' and it is a tertiary unit that serves adolescents aged 11-21 years from all over the country. In September of 2013 I started my PhD research at the University of Birmingham on the psychobiology of appetite under the supervision of Dr. Suzanne Higgs.

Research

I am interested in examining the physiological and psychological drivers of eating behaviour and the interaction of hedonic and homeostatic systems in appetite regulation. In specific, I am particularly interested in the role of learning, attention, memory and generally cognition in food choice, food intake, dietary control and the potential role of these factors in the development of disordered eating behaviors (i.e. anorexia nervosa, obesity). I am also interested in the application of this knowledge to the development of new therapeutic approaches to manage obesity and other disordered eating behaviors and interventions to promote health-related behaviours.

Other activities

Awards

2013 – 2017	Scholarship for doctoral studies awarded by the College of Life and Environmental Sciences, University of Birmingham, UK, as part of The Midlands Integrative Biosciences Training Partnership (MIBTP), a BBSRC funded doctoral training partnership between the University of Warwick, the University of Birmingham and the University of Leicester
2010	Award of Excellence Performance for Postgraduate Studies, Programme of Postgraduate Studies, Harokopio University, Athens, Greece
2009 – 2010	Scholarship for Postgraduate Studies awarded by the Aristidis Daskalopoulos Foundation (independent, non-profit organization)
10/2009	Travel grant for attending the 19th International Congress of Nutrition, Bangkok, Thailand, awarded by the Coca-Cola Company, following student competition

Professional memberships

- Association for the Study of Obesity (ASO)
- The Nutrition Society (NS)
- The British Feeding and Drinking Group (BFDG)
- Society for the Study of Ingestive Behaviour (SSIB)

Publications

Kaisari P, Yannakoulia M, Panagiotakos DB (2013). Eating frequency and overweight and obesity in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. **Pediatrics. (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23569087)** 131(5):958-67.

Gavrieli A, Yannakoulia M, Fragopoulou E, Margaritopoulos D, Chamberland JP, **Kaisari P**, Kavouras SA, Mantzoros CS (2011). Caffeinated coffee does not acutely affect energy intake, appetite, or inflammation but prevents serum cortisol concentrations from falling in healthy men. J Nutr. 141(4):703-707.

Presentations

Oral Presentations:

Kaisari P. Weight Gain: ''Detecting'' the cognitive factors that can predict weight gain. British Psychological Association Symposium on drivers of weight gain in adolescents, 24 October 2013, Leeds, UK

Kaisari P, Michalaki E, Magklis E, Papanikolaou K, Pervanidou P, Chrousos G, Yannakoulia M. Evaluation of a programme focusing in the maintenance of weight loss in overweight/obese children: a pilot study. 1st Panhellenic Congress in Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics & Adolescent Medicine, 2-4 March 2012, Athens, Greece

Gavrieli A, **Kaisari P**, Yannakoulia M, Margaritopoulos D, Fragopoulou E. The effect of caffeinated and decaffeinated coffee consumption on glucose levels and energy intake. 10th Hellenic Congress of Nutrition and Dietetics, 13-15 Nov 2009, Athens, Greece

Fappa E, Yannakoulia M, Tileli N, **Kaisari P**, Skoumas I, Pitsavos C, Stefanadis C. 5% reduction of body weight improves the metabolic profile of patients with metabolic syndrome. 3rd Symposium organized by the Hellenic Atherosclerosis Society, 2-3 Dec 2011, Athens, Greece

Poster Presentations:

Vlassopoulos A, **Kaisari P**,Karageorgou D, Klaoudatos G, Michalaki E, Maglis E, Manios Y. Review of the lifestyle changes programmes in subjects with impaired glucose tolerance. 3rd Hellenic Congress of Atherosclerosis, 3-6 Dec 2008, Athens, Greece

Karfopoulou E, **Kaisari P**,Gavrieli A, Yannakoulia M. The effect of coffee consumption in dietary energy intake. 4th Hellenic Congress of Atherosclerosis, 13-16 Oct 2010, Ioannina, Greece

Kaisari P, Michalaki E, Magklis E, Papanikolaou K, Pervanidou P, Chroussos G, Yannakoulia M. Evaluation of intervention aiming to the maintenance of lifestyle and body weight changes in overweight and obese children. 11th Hellenic Congress of Nutrition and Dietetics, 24-27 Nov 2011, Athens, Greece

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