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Brain and Food Motivation, Choice, and Eating Behavior

Guest Editors:

Dr. Maria Scherma

Department of Biomedical Sciences, Division of Neuroscience and Clinical Pharmacology, University of Cagliari, 09042 Monserrato, Italy

Prof. Dr. Paola Fadda

Department of Biomedical Sciences, Division of Neuroscience and Clinical Pharmacology, University of Cagliari, 09042 Monserrato, Italy

Dr. Fabrizio Sanna

Department of Biomedical Sciences, Section of Neuroscience and Clinical Pharmacology, University of Cagliari, 09100 Cagliari, Italy

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Message from the Guest Editors

Eating involves a broad array of behaviors and is essential to the survival, growth, and reproduction of each organism. It can be distinguished in metabolic and motivational (i.e., appetitive and rewarding) components. Most people know when, how much, and what to eat, while others find eating very difficult to control. During the past half-century, eating disorders, in their various diversified and complex forms (i.e., anorexia nervosa and binge eating disorders), as well as overweight/obesity and other diet-related disorders, have assumed the entity of a real social emergency due to the deleterious effects that they exert on the physical and mental health of the affected individuals. Although research in this field has increased dramatically, there is still a need to broaden the knowledge both on the neurobiological correlates of “normative” eating behavior and concerning the etiology that underlies these disorders. A growing body of evidence highlights the crucial role of an altered reward/motivation function in response to food (and the associated cues) in subjects with a deranged eating behavior.



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Editors-in-Chief

Prof. Dr. Lluís Serra-Majem

1. Centro de Investigación Biomédica en Red Fisiopatología de la Obesidad y la Nutrición (CIBEROBN), Institute of Health Carlos III, 28029 Madrid, Spain
2. Research Institute of Biomedical and Health Sciences (IUIBS), University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 35001 Las Palmas, Spain
3. Preventive Medicine Service, Centro Hospitalario Universitario Insular Materno Infantil (CHUIMI), Canarian Health Service, 35016 Las Palmas, Spain

Prof. Dr. Maria Luz Fernandez

Department of Nutritional Sciences, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269, USA

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Nutrients Editorial Office
MDPI, Grosspeteranlage 5
4052 Basel, Switzerland

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