

# Introduction to NuSI

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## About Us

The Nutrition Science Initiative (NuSI, or “new see”) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that facilitates and funds experimental research in nutrition with the goal of reducing the economic and social burden of obesity and obesity-related diseases. NuSI is founded on the premise that nutrition research for the past half century has failed to meet the scientific standards necessary to establish reliable knowledge on the relationship between diet and disease, and that this failure may be at least partly responsible for the current epidemics of obesity and diabetes in the United States and around the world. By addressing this issue with high-quality, rigorously-controlled experiments targeted at elucidating the diet-disease relationship, the leadership of NuSI believes that it can create strategies, nutritional guidance and policies that will successfully combat the rising tide of obesity and diabetes. NuSI was co-founded in February 2012 by Gary Taubes and Peter Attia, M.D. and is located in San Diego, CA. Funding for NuSI comes from the [Laura and John Arnold Foundation](#), private citizens, and like-minded organizations.

## The Problem

The last four decades have seen unprecedented increases in the prevalence and incidence of both obesity and diabetes. In the early 1970s, one in seven Americans were obese and 4 million were diabetic. Today one in three Americans are obese and over 20 million have diabetes. The cost of obesity alone on the health care system is now estimated at upward of \$150 billion annually.

These twin epidemics of obesity and diabetes have occurred coincident with the widespread promulgation of dietary guidelines and advice that are based in turn on two poorly tested assumptions: that healthy diets are low in fat and high in carbohydrates and that the fundamental cause of overweight and obesity is the overconsumption of food in relationship to physical activity.

Both of these assumptions are controversial and the existing research in nutrition has been inadequate to the task of determining whether or not they are correct. An alternative hypothesis that has gained increasing acceptance in the research community is that the macronutrient content of the diet – particularly the quantity and quality of the carbohydrates – plays the more critical role in both the accumulation of excess body fat and the chronic diseases that are associated with obesity.

NuSI was created to initiate and fund experimental studies that can unambiguously establish the mechanistic role of macronutrients in obesity and disease and so the fundamental nature of a healthy diet. We believe that these questions and problems are too important and too expensive

both to our quality of life and our economy to allow them to continue any further without rigorous and uncompromising inquiry.

### **Our Strategy**

NuSI has recruited a consortium of distinguished, independent scientists to design, oversee and carry out research that can unambiguously resolve the relationship between diet, obesity and chronic disease. While these researchers have divergent backgrounds and come with different perspectives on the cause of obesity, they all share in common the belief that nutritional science in its current state is inadequate; that better, more rigorous experiments must be done; and that nutritional guidance must be based on hard science, not popular opinion or consensus.

NuSI will fund the necessary experiments in collaboration with other traditional funding sources (e.g., the National Institutes of Health), and these experiments will then be carried out by researchers at institutions throughout the country and abroad. For those findings that might be contrary to conventional wisdom, NuSI will fund independent researchers to replicate, if possible, the results.

NuSI will work to assure that the results and implications of this research are fully understood by the research community as well as by public health and government organizations that disseminate dietary recommendations to the public and set policies that determine food access, availability and economics.

### **Our Hope**

In 1970, the prevalence of obesity in the United States was less than half what it is today; the prevalence of diabetes was a fourth the current rate. It is realistic to assume that these numbers can be achieved again, and that this can be accomplished by applying the best possible science to the outstanding questions of diet, obesity and disease.