



The GO-DS21 project is a pioneering initiative that investigates the biological mechanisms linking obesity and intellectual disability in individuals with Down syndrome. The project focuses on understanding how metabolic disorders such as insulin resistance and diabetes contribute to cognitive impairments, aiming to develop innovative prevention and treatment strategies.

Key Findings



High Prevalence of Obesity and Metabolic Disorders

Individuals with Down syndrome are at a significantly higher risk of obesity, insulin resistance, liver disease, and type 2 diabetes, which can worsen cognitive function.



Genetic and Molecular Insights

Our research identifies key genetic factors influencing metabolism and neural function in Down syndrome.



Personalized Therapeutic Approaches

Novel interventions, including targeted lifestyle modifications and pharmacological therapies, are being explored.

Impact on Quality of Life

Addressing obesity-related health issues can significantly improve overall well-being, cognitive function, and social inclusion.



Evidence-based Clinical Guidance

Based on our results and in co-creation with families and individuals with Down syndrome, GO-DS21 has developed clinical guidance and recommendations to improve healthcare practices and interventions.

Policy Recommendations for the European Union



Integrate Metabolic Screening into EU Health Policies

Routine screening for obesity, insulin resistance, liver disease, and diabetes in individuals with Down syndrome should be implemented as part of European Reference Networks and funded through EU4Health programs.



Strengthen Research and Innovation

Increased funding through Horizon Europe and the European Innovation Council (EIC) should support research into metabolic dysfunction and its cognitive implications.



Expand Access to Preventive and Therapeutic Care

Structural Funds and the Recovery and Resilience Facility should be utilized to ensure access to specialized care, dietary support, and therapeutic interventions tailored to individuals with Down Syndrome.



Enhance Data Sharing and Cross-Border Collaboration

Strengthening data-sharing frameworks through the European Health Data Space (EHDS) will support better research outcomes and healthcare strategies across EU Member States.



www.go-ds21.eu

Conclusions

The GO-DS21 project underscores the urgent need for policy action to address the metabolic health challenges faced by individuals with Down syndrome. By integrating early screening, personalized interventions, and improved healthcare access, the European Union can take significant steps toward improving health outcomes and quality of life for this population. Investing in these initiatives is a critical step towards ensuring inclusivity, better health, and scientific advancement.



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