Cover: The Venus of Willendorf, a limestone figurine that is ~11 cm high and dated 22,000–24,000 BC, was found in 1908 by the archaeologist Josef Szombathy near the town of Willendorf in Austria, and is now displayed in the Naturhistorisches Museum in Vienna. It is the most famous of a series of Upper Paleolithic Venus figurines found in middle Europe. Often described as mother goodness or as an amulet of fertility, it has also been heralded as the first example of obesity in human evolutionary history. Although it is unlikely that any human being who endured the fast and famines of the Paleolithic age would have had the chance to become obese, the figurine’s enigmatic nature and round shape perfectly represent the mystery of why we are ‘The obese species’.

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RESEARCH ARTICLES

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Kerstin Stemmer, Diego Perez-Tilve, Gayathri Ananthakrishnan, Anja Bort, Randy J. Seeley, Matthias H. Tschöp, Daniel R. Dietrich and Paul T. Pfluger

636 Accelerated renal disease is associated with the development of metabolic syndrome in a glucolipotoxic mouse model
Cristina Martínez-García, Adriana Izquierdo, Vidya Velagapudi, Yurena Vivas, Ismael Velasco, Mark Campbell, Keith Burling, Fernando Cava, Manuel Ros, Matej Orešič, Antonio Vidal-Puig and Gema Medina-Gomez

649 Obese mice exhibit an altered behavioural and inflammatory response to lipopolysaccharide
Catherine B. Lawrence, David Brough and Elysse M. Knight

660 Elaidyl-sulfamide, an oleylethanolamide-modelled PPARα agonist, reduces body weight gain and plasma cholesterol in rats
Juan Manuel Decara, Miguel Romero-Cuevas, Patricia Rivera, Manuel Macias-González, Margarita Vida, Francisco J. Pavón, Antonia Serrano, Carolina Cano, Nieves Fresno, Ruth Pérez-Fernández, Fernando Rodríguez de Fonseca and Juan Suárez

671 A rodent model of rapid-onset diabetes induced by glucocorticoids and high-fat feeding
Yaniv Shpilberg, Jacqueline L. Beaudry, Anna D’Souza, Jonathan E. Campbell, Ashley Peckett and Michael C. Riddell

RESEARCH REPORTS

681 Fasting hyperglycemia in the Goto-Kakizaki rat is dependent on corticosterone: a confounding variable in rodent models of type 2 diabetes
Sara A. Beddow and Varman T. Samuel

686 High-fat-diet exposure induces IgG accumulation in hypothalamic microglia
Chun-Xia Yi, Matthias H. Tschöp, Stephen C. Woods and Susanna M. Hofmann

691 Postnatal maternal separation modifies the response to an obesogenic diet in adulthood in rats
Laura Paternain, Eva Martisova, Fermín I. Milagro, María J. Ramírez, J. Alfredo Martínez and Javier Campión

698 Altered inflammation, paraoxonase-1 activity and HDL physicochemical properties in obese humans with and without Prader-Willi syndrome
Gianna Ferretti, Tiziana Bacchetti, Simona Masciangelo, Graziano Grugni and Virginia Bicchiéga