

Board of Directors

Scientific Director:

Prof. Dr. Tilman Grune

Administrative Director:

Dr. Birgit Schröder-Smeibidl

www.dife.de

Information

Facts 2016

Personnel: approx. 330
Total budget: 22.7 million euros
External funding: 6.0 million euros
Legal form: foundation of public law

Education and training at DIfE

Scientific training

The institute makes a special effort to support its junior scientists. In addition, DIfE supervises bachelor and master theses, and offers a comprehensively structured graduate training for doctoral students to complement the scientific and experimental training in the individual departments. Young researchers have the possibility to participate in workshops of the Potsdam Graduate School of the University of Potsdam and in advanced training courses of the FU (*Freie Universität*) Berlin.

Occupational training

DIfE offers apprenticeship training in four different occupations. School graduates, preferably with *Abitur* (university entrance qualification), can train to become biological laboratory technicians, animal keepers (for research or hospital facilities), IT system electronics technicians, or office managers. Depending on the occupation, training takes three to three and a half years. Interested persons should contact the personnel department at: jobs@dife.de.

„Theoria cum praxi“
Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz

Science for the benefit and
well-being of mankind

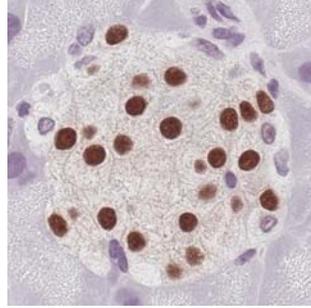
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DIFE in brief

The German Institute of Human Nutrition Potsdam-Rehbruecke (DIFE) investigates the causes of nutrition-linked diseases in order to develop new strategies for prevention, treatment, and dietary recommendations. To achieve this, DIFE researchers cooperate in using a wide interdisciplinary spectrum of scientific, medical, and epidemiological methods.

Research focus

The research of DIFE scientists mainly focuses on:

- the causes and effects of the metabolic syndrome, a combination of adiposity, hypertension, insulin resistance, and disorders of lipid metabolism,
- the role of nutrition in healthy aging, as well as
- the biological basis of food choice and nutritional behavior.

Departments at a glance

Molecular Toxicology

Scientists of the department are studying the damage to protein molecules in cells and tissues. These investigations focus on how (aging) cells deal with macromolecules that have undergone oxidative damage and modification, and on the effects of nutrition on these processes.

Experimental Diabetology

The department is studying the molecular and genetic mechanisms involved in the development of insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Goals are to gain insight into the role of susceptibility genes for type 2 diabetes and adiposity and thus to develop new therapeutic approaches.

Clinical Nutrition

With the help of clinical studies, the department investigates the mechanisms causing metabolic diseases such as diabetes and atherosclerosis, which arise from the interaction of nutrition and individual health status. The objective is to develop a basis for concepts of personalized nutrition that may contribute to the prevention or treatment of such diseases.

Molecular Epidemiology

The department is evaluating the associations between diet, lifestyle, biochemical and genetic markers and the incidence of type 2 diabetes. Based on data from the Potsdam EPIC* Study and in cooperation with partners of the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD) the department has optimized the German Diabetes Risk Score which originally was developed by DIFE.

Epidemiology

Research of the department is focusing on nutritional and lifestyle factors and their interrelations with metabolic status and risk of (age-related) disease or mortality. The data sources include long-term data from the EPIC* Study and detailed examinations of its study participants. This data source will be supplemented with data from the German National Cohort in the future.

Gastrointestinal Microbiology

The department is studying the interactions between nutrition and intestinal bacteria in relation to their impact on the development of diseases such as cancer, obesity, or chronic inflammatory diseases of the intestine. Another research topic relates to the degradation of dietary constituents by intestinal bacteria and the effect of the resulting metabolites on the host.

Molecular Genetics

Scientists of the department are studying the molecular and cellular mechanisms of the sense of taste, the transmission of gustatory stimuli to the brain, the genetic variability of gustatory perception, and the influence of these parameters on nutritional behavior.

Adipocyte Development and Nutrition

The department investigates the developmental mechanisms that direct the formation of brown and white adipocytes (fat cells). It aims to examine aging-related changes in adipose tissue homeostasis.

Sections and Junior Research Groups

DIFE has various sections and junior research groups that are engaged, for example, in research on the physiology of energy metabolism, the interplay of nutrients and hormonal regulation of signaling cascades in the brain, or the psychophysiological basis of taste perception.

*EPIC: European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition

For further information on research projects or the German Diabetes Risk Score see: www.dife.de