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Meaningful measures of metabolic and appetite perturbations in dementia prevention, diagnosis and care**Artemissia-Phoebe Nifli**
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The increasing prevalence of dementia worldwide and the development of diagnostic tools paved the way for a more thorough investigation of the course of the disease. Due to the same reasons, the transition to the final stages has been delayed for a great fraction of subjects, while the latent character of cognitive impairment has been established, as amyloid beta and tau deposits may accumulate for decades before the onset of symptoms. Therefore, it was speculated that other factors could incite or precipitate the progression of dementia. Recent findings support the interference of metabolic impairment, yet, it is not clear how the differentiation of metabolic markers in middle age or early stage would later promote cognitive deterioration. On the other hand, weight and appetite disturbances are vast and easily quantifiable late in the trajectory of the disease. It seems possible for the non-cognitive signs to synchronize with cognitive impairment, and for hormones, oxidative capacity, mal-absorption and muscle wasting to synchronize with the ongoing depositions in the mature brain. Although it is premature to incorporate all these changes to decision-making, the cross-talk among chemosensory experience, food preferences and nutritional habits, glucose and lipid metabolism and peripheral and central neurodegeneration indicates the need for a comprehensive approach. It is also encouraging that even in late-stage dementia patients, the limited pharmacotherapy, as well as the non-pharmacological interventions may substantially improve metabolic and appetite perturbations, in spite of cognitive decline.

Biography

Artemissia-Phoebe Nifli is Specialized in Neurosciences and Experimental Endocrinology at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Crete and worked as a Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard University. Besides her intermittent academic duties, she is a Principal Investigator at TRC-Thessaly, studying the biochemical and behavioral denominators of human nutrition. She has presented her work in 72 conferences and published more than 26 papers in peer-reviewed journals. She is also Member of the Reviewer Board of several acclaimed scientific journals, while she is a long-time Member of Alzheimer Hellas.

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