

Ellen Blaak



**PhD Professor in Physiology of fat metabolism.
Department of Human Biology NUTRIM School for Metabolism,
Toxicology and Nutrition. Maastricht University**

Career Ellen Blaak studied Human Nutrition at the Agricultural University of Wageningen where she graduated in 1989. She did her PhD research on 'The sympathetic nervous system and human energy metabolism in relation to obesity' at Maastricht University and graduated cum laude in 1993. After a short stay abroad at the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, she obtained a grant from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research for a 3 year post doc position at Maastricht University with the research proposal ' Defects in sympathetically mediated fat utilization in the etiology of abdominal obesity-associated Diabetes Mellitus'. In august 1999 she became assistant professor and later in 2001 she received an ASPASIA grant from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research and became Associate Professor. Since February 2007, she is professor on Physiology of fat metabolism at the Department of Human Biology at Maastricht University. Presently, her research focuses on disturbances in fatty acid metabolism in the etiology of obesity, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes mellitus (>150 publ). She is a member of the Advisory board of the Dutch Diabetes research Foundation, and the TOP grant evaluation committee of the Netherland Organisation of Scientific Research.

Fields of Expertise Disturbances in fatty acid metabolism in the etiology of obesity, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes mellitus. Impact of Lifestyle, diet, physical activity and pharmacological intervention.

Qualifications – Agricultural University Wageningen, study: Human Nutrition Main orientation: Physiology, Biochemistry and Nutrition, 1989 – PhD project at Department of Human Biology, Maastricht University. Title thesis: The sympathetic nervous system and human energy metabolism in relation to obesity (Cum Laude graduation), 1993

Tim Benton



**Prof Tim Benton is the “Champion”
for the UK’s Global Food Security
(GFS) programme, leading, facilitating
and coordinating its activities.**

GFS is a partnership of the UK’s main public funders of research in food security, including the research councils and government departments (including environment, farming and rural affairs, international development, health and business, innovation and skills). The role of GFS is to ensure that strategically important research in this area is undertaken, and to add value to research via interdisciplinary collaboration, alignment and engagement of different communities of stakeholders. He is also a

leading researcher, based at the University of Leeds, on agri-environment interactions and finding ways to make agricultural production more sustainable.



CBE FMedSci (born 1951, Durban, South Africa) is an English biologist who made his contribution to the biology of ageing by proposing the concept of Disposable soma.

He is currently a researcher and Associate Dean for Ageing in Newcastle University and he headed the Institute for Ageing and Health in its school of clinical medical sciences. He is the author of *Time of Our Lives: The Science of Human Aging* (1999), *The End of Age: Why Everything About Aging Is Changing* (2001), and co-author of *Chance, Development, and Aging* (2000, together with Caleb E. Finch). In 2001 he gave the annual Reith Lectures.[1]

Kirkwood was appointed Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 2009 New Year Honours

Research Interests:

Evolution and genetics of ageing.

Starting in 1977, we suggested that a major contribution to understanding ageing can be achieved by linking the evolutionary and physiological approaches in a concept called the disposable soma theory. This predicts that: ageing is due to evolved limitations in investments in somatic maintenance and repair, due to competing priorities of reproduction; ageing therefore results from the accumulation during life of damage in cells and tissues; multiple mechanisms contribute to ageing (since there are multiple forms of somatic maintenance, all of which are subject to the same optimality process); the principal genes determining longevity and rate of senescence are genes specifying the levels of maintenance functions (e.g. DNA repair genes, antioxidant enzymes, stress proteins); the ageing process is intrinsically stochastic, but that longevity is programmed, on the average, through the settings of genes of the type just considered; maximum life span is not clock-driven but malleable, e.g. through modifying exposure to damage or enhancing somatic maintenance functions.

We currently use these ideas to explore life history evolution (eg evolution of menopause) and the optimal allocation of metabolic resources in varying environments (eg life extension through rodent calorie-restriction). Such models are important for understanding the genetic architecture of the life history and have major relevance for genome research on longevity. Recently, with Rudi Westendorp (University of Leiden), we reported in *Nature* the first evidence for a trade-off between human longevity and fertility. In collaboration with Ruth Mace (University College London) we are examining evolutionary models of the human life history using an extensive data set collected in West Africa.

In genome studies on human ageing, we pioneered novel approaches to the analysis of gene polymorphisms affecting human longevity in collaboration with Francois Schachter and Daniel Cohen (Centre d'Etude du Polymorphisme Humain), and we are now developing detailed models of genetic and non-genetic factors affecting human longevity. Emerging from the disposable soma theory, there is a growing recognition that the development of the senescent phenotype is strongly affected by intrinsic stochastic factors (chance), as well as by genes and environment. A major synthesis of this new perspective has recently been developed in collaboration with Caleb Finch (University of Southern California).



Professor Pekka Puska was the Director General of the National Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland (THL) 2009–2013. He continues his affiliation with THL

THL is a comprehensive national institute for public health and welfare under Ministry of Health in Finland. It employs some 1300 persons and covers a broad range of health and welfare issues from disease prevention, nutrition, lifestyles and environment, infectious disease control and national vaccination programmes to health and social services, health and welfare monitoring and statistics. THL has major national service functions, various surveillance tasks, high level research and numerous international activities.

The National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) was formed after a merger of the National Public Health Institute (KTL) and the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health (Stakes), and started its work in January 2009. Prior to his present position Professor Puska was the Director General of KTL and, before that, the Director for Noncommunicable Disease Prevention and Health Promotion at the World Health Organization Headquarters in Geneva.

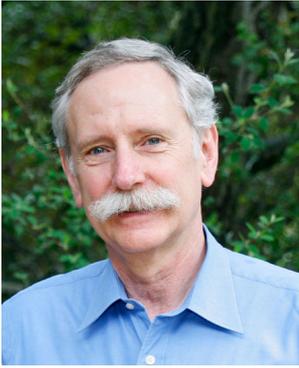
Professor Puska has, for most of his career, worked at the National Public Health Institute. He was, for 25 years, the Director and Principal Investigator of the North Karelia Project: prevention of cardiovascular diseases in North Karelia and later on in all Finland. Within 25 years, over 80% decline in annual heart disease mortality among the working age population and a dramatic general improvement in public health took place. The project is widely seen as a model for successful population based prevention of cardiovascular and other noncommunicable diseases (NCD).

At WHO, Pekka Puska directed the work on integrated prevention of NCD targeting the main risk factors (tobacco, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity) through health promotion, national programmes, policy measures and regional networks. Professor Puska's Department was the focal point of this work that culminated in adoption of the Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health by the World Health Assembly in 2004. Professor Puska has, internationally and domestically, served in a number of scientific, expert and public health functions, WHO's work, multinational projects, international conferences etc. He has over 500 scientific publications.

Domestically, Professor Puska has served among other things as the Chancellor of the University of Turku, Chair of the Finnish University Council, Member of Board of Academy of Finland, Chair of the National Nutrition Committee and President of National Union of Finnish Students. He has also served as a Member of the National Parliament of Finland.

Internationally, Professor Puska is the President of the International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI). Currently he also chairs the Independent FCTC Expert Group on Impact Assessment of the WHO FCTC. He has also served as the Chair of the Governing Council of the WHO International Agency for Cancer Research (IARC) and as the President of the World Heart Federation.

Professor Puska has M.D and M.Pol.Sc. degrees and PhD in epidemiology and public health. Among several honours are Honorary Doctorate at St. Andrew's University (Scotland) and Academician of Russian Academy of Natural Sciences. He has received, among other things, WHO's annual Health Education Award in 1990, WHO Tobacco Free World Award in 1999, the Nordic Award for Public Health in 2005, and the Rank Prize in 2008.



Dr. Walter Willett is Professor of Epidemiology and Nutrition and Chairman of the Department of Nutrition at Harvard School of Public Health and Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School.

Dr. Willett, an American, was born in Hart, Michigan and grew up in Madison, Wisconsin, studied food science at Michigan State University, and graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School before obtaining a Doctorate in Public Health from Harvard School of Public Health. Dr. Willett has focused much of his work over the last 35 years on the development of methods, using both questionnaire and biochemical approaches, to study the effects of diet on the occurrence of major diseases. He has applied these methods starting in 1980 in the Nurses' Health Studies I and II and the Health Professionals Follow-up Study. Together, these cohorts that include nearly 300,000 men and women with repeated dietary assessments are providing the most detailed information on the long-term health consequences of food choices.

Dr. Willett has published over 1,500 articles, primarily on lifestyle risk factors for heart disease and cancer, and has written the textbook, *Nutritional Epidemiology*, published by Oxford University Press. He also has four books for the general public, *Eat, Drink and Be Healthy: The Harvard Medical School Guide to Healthy Eating*, which has appeared on most major bestseller lists, *Eat, Drink, and Weigh Less*, co-authored with Mollie Katzen, *The Fertility Diet*, co-authored with Jorge Chavarro and Pat Skerrett and most recently *Thinfluence*, co-authored with Malissa Wood and Dan Childs. Dr. Willett is the most cited nutritionist internationally, and is among the five most cited persons in all fields of clinical science. He is a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and the recipient of many national and international awards for his research.



**Luis A. Moreno Aznar
Professor of Public Health
at the University of Zaragoza (Spain).**

He is also Visiting Professor of Excellence at the University of Sao Paulo (Brazil) and affiliated member at the Johns Hopkins Global Center on Childhood Obesity. He did his training as Medical Doctor and his PhD thesis at the University of Zaragoza. He studied Human Nutrition and Public and Community Health at the University of Nancy (France).

He has participated in several research projects supported by the Spanish Ministry of Health, and the European commission (HELENA, IDEFICS, EURRECCA, ENERGY, ToyBox and iFamily). He has published more than 350 papers in peer reviewed journals. He is the coordinator of the GENUD (Growth, Exercise, Nutrition and Development) research group, at the University of Zaragoza. He is a former member of the ESPGHAN Committee of Nutrition, current Vice-President of the Spanish Nutrition Society and President of the Danone Institut of Spain.