



**DZD**  
Deutsches Zentrum  
für Diabetesforschung

# DZD-NEWS 1/2015

## Dear Reader,

We are pleased to present to you the first DZD newsletter in 2015 after the successful evaluation of the DZD. We invite you to read more about our international activities such as the German-French Diabetes Academy and the EIT Health Consortium, the overview of DZD publications, DZD grants for innovative projects and the dialogue of the DZD with political decision makers.

Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. H.-U. Häring

Prof. Dr. M. Hrabě de Angelis

Prof. Dr. M. Roden

Prof. Dr. A. Schürmann

Prof. Dr. M. Solimena

Dr. A. Glaser

## Excellent Evaluation of the DZD

In November 2014 the DZD was evaluated by 12 international experts. As is apparent from the evaluation report, the DZD has done an excellent job in fulfilling the commission of the Federal Government to harness national capacities, competences and infrastructures in the field of diabetes research. The experts confirmed that the DZD has an outstanding international standard and were impressed by the structure of translational research that has been established, which in this form cannot be found in any other diabetes research center in the world.

The DZD wishes to express its gratitude to all who have contributed to the successful implementation of the research network – especially the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the states of the respective partner institutes for their financial support.



## Overview of Current DZD Publications:

As new feature in 2015, we present the current publications of the DZD on our website [www.dzd-ev.de/en](http://www.dzd-ev.de/en). The highlights and significance of the research results are shown in a brief, easy-to-read overview text. A link to the original publication is provided for those who want to obtain more in-depth information.



### What Influences the Release of Insulin?

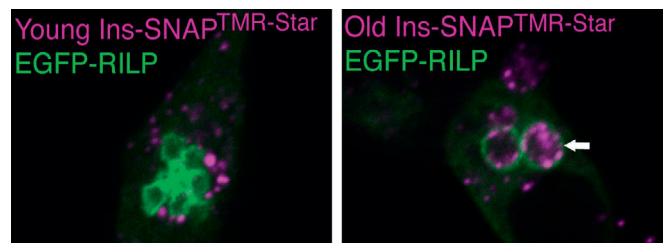
Insulin is stored in the beta cells of the pancreas in insulin granules. Now Professor Michele Solimena, Dr. Peter Hoboth and their team have found that

aged secretory granules display reduced competence for glucose-stimulated transport.

The data reveal a clear association between the age of secretory granules and their mobility and are therefore an important contribution to a better understanding of insulin secretion in healthy individuals and individuals with diabetes.

They could also aid in the development of new drugs to improve insulin secretion.

Source: PNAS, February 2015



### Dextromethorphan – An Active Ingredient with Anti-diabetic Properties

The active ingredient dextromethorphan is commonly found in cough-suppressant drugs. DZD-scientist Eckhard Lammert and his colleagues have now discovered that this substance also increases insulin secretion and lowers the blood glucose concentration.

Dextromethorphan binds to so-called N-methyl-D-aspartate (NMDA) receptors of the beta cell – the production site of insulin in the human body. As a result, insulin secretion is enhanced when more glucose is present in the blood. Thus, blood glucose levels are better controlled. Under experimental conditions, dextromethorphan also protects the beta cells from apoptosis, which may be of interest to patients with newly diagnosed type 1 diabetes. Long-term studies shall now elucidate the possible benefits of dextromethorphan for people with diabetes.

Source: Nature Medicine, March 2015

DZD-Partner

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### Kick-off Event of the German-French Diabetes Academy

One country by itself cannot solve the challenges of the rising incidence of diabetes throughout the world – this was the consensus of the participants of the first German-French Conference on Diabetes Research in December 2014 in the French Embassy in Berlin. Renowned scientists from both countries exchanged views at the kick-off meeting of the German-French Diabetes Academy of the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD) and INSERM / AVIESAN (Institute of Health and Medical Research / Alliance for Life Sciences and Health). The introductory panel discussion with representatives from politics and industry was moderated by Professor Günther Wess, scientific director of Helmholtz Zentrum München. Here the challenges of diabetes translational research, cooperation between industry and academic research institutions, and the policy framework conditions in both countries were discussed. In the subsequent plenary sessions German and French scientists presented highlights of their diabetes research.



### Visit of MP Monstadt to the DZD

Dietrich Monstadt, a member of the German Parliament (Bundestag), visited the German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD) in Munich. Monstadt, who has diabetes himself and serves on the Bundestag Health Committee, is a strong advocate for better prevention and therapy of this major widespread disease. The DZD board members Professor Martin Hrabě de Angelis and Professor Hans-Ulrich Häring informed Monstadt about research and successes in the DZD. The CDU Bundestag member and the DZD experts agreed that researchers and policymakers in government must work together with physicians, pharmacists, health insurance companies, industry and those affected by the disease to prevent the soaring diabetes epidemic.

### DZD at the Parliamentary Evening of the DZG

At the beginning of February 2015 the German Centers of Health Research presented their profile and achievements in Berlin. Among the guests invited to the event were political representatives in the fields of research, health and finances. The focus was on the structure and translational research in the health research centers. In the interactive part of the event, research highlights were displayed in graphics at tables for each center, and the guests had the opportunity to talk with the scientists in small groups. In the panel discussion it became clear that long-term, institutional funding is the prerequisite for attracting the best talents to the German Centers of Health Research also in the future.



Parliamentary State Secretary at the BMBF Thomas Rachel (center) with DZD representatives

### DZD Associated Partner in the EIT Health Consortium

The German Center for Diabetes Research (DZD) is an associated partner of the EIT Health Consortium “Healthy Living and Active Ageing”, which was successfully reviewed in November 2014. The aim of the international consortium is to enable a healthier and longer life for the European population through the development and establishment of innovative products and services. Among the partners of EIT Health are some of the most prestigious European universities and research institutions as well as technology and pharmaceutical companies.



[www.eit-health.eu](http://www.eit-health.eu)

### DZD Grants 2015 Awarded

Also in 2015, ten innovative collaboration projects shall be funded with 50,000 euros each. The selection was made in an independent review process by the Scientific Advisory Board.

#### Imprint

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