



Nurturing health through the pleasure of eating *the right choices from the start*



The winner of the first Danone International Prize for Alimentation (DIPA) is **Dr Sophie Nicklaus**, who receives the prestigious award in recognition of her outstanding research into children's healthy eating behaviour.

Dr Nicklaus leads a team of researchers at the French National Institute for Agricultural Research, based at the Centre for Taste and Feeding Behaviour in Dijon.

Her passion for the science of nutrition began as a young biologist and soon led to her fascination with food and the influences that shape our food preferences. Since then she has dedicated her career to studying children's eating behaviour and how it might be modified to steer children onto the right path to healthy eating throughout life.

The power of pleasure

Central to Dr Nicklaus' research is the understanding that it is not enough simply to help children identify which foods are healthy and encourage them to eat them. We must also take heed of other powerful factors that drive food choices - including social, psychological and cultural factors, collectively known as Alimentation.

Among these, one of the most influential is pleasure. Often overlooked in healthy eating strategies, pleasure is fundamental in driving food choices. Children learn to derive pleasure from healthy food through their early eating experiences - from being exposed to their taste, appearance and flavour, and from the positive experience of eating sociably with family and friends.

Getting it right from the start

Associating healthy foods with pleasure in the early years can positively influence food preferences that are then consistently carried through to adolescence and adult life, Dr Nicklaus' research has revealed. Getting it right from the start is therefore crucial and points to the need to develop ways to help parents make the most of this window of opportunity. Some recommendations could follow other findings from Dr Nicklaus's research, including:

- repeated exposure: children can learn to like healthy foods such as vegetables if they are repeatedly offered to them - it's worth offering a particular food up to ten times.



Dr Sophie NICKLAUS, winner of 2018 DIPA.
Research Director at INRA, Centre for Taste and Feeding Behaviour in Dijon, France.

- trying different textures: small children can cope with lumpy food or food in pieces earlier than most parents think - usually by the time they can sit up by themselves
- avoiding over-eating habits: over-eating can start very early on and can arise if parents fail to pick up signs that their infant has eaten enough.

Dr Nicklaus plans to use her DIPA to promote healthy eating by bridging the gap between research and everyday life. 'We need to empower parents and children to make healthy food choices for life,' she says.

“ We need to empower parents and children to make healthy food choices for life ”



2018 Award Lecture

Find out more about the DIPA at
www.danoneinstitute.org/

The first Danone International Prize for Alimentation (DIPA) has been awarded by the Danone Institute International and the French research organisation Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale. The 100,000 Euro prize recognises innovative research leading to strategies promoting sustainable healthy eating habits. It represents a far-reaching initiative to achieve marked improvements in global health.

Awarded every two years, the DIPA is open to talented mid-career researchers who lead a collaborative approach to Alimentation – the umbrella term for all factors influencing people's food choices, eating habits and food-related health. The study of Alimentation requires a multi-disciplinary input, including economic, social, psychological and cultural issues.

The Danone International Prize for Alimentation has been awarded for pioneering research leading to the promotion of sustainable healthy eating.

The DIPA aims to:

- advance understanding of Alimentation through cutting edge research,
- encourage and inspire pioneering approaches that integrate nutrition research into lifestyle, cultural and socio-economic aspects,
- boost collaboration between the different disciplines affecting nutrition, from anthropology to economics,
- support talented and highly motivated mid-career researchers whose work contributes to scientific excellence in the field of Alimentation.



The Danone Institute International (DII) is a not-for-profit organisation aiming to promote human health through developing and disseminating knowledge about the links between food and health, and to highlight the importance of nutrition in health.

The DII comprises a network of 14 Danone Institutes around the world and involves over 200 experts in this field of science.

Visit www.danoneinstitute.org/ for more information.



The French "Fondation pour la Recherche Médicale" aims to contribute to the development of pioneering and innovative French medical research, leading to medical advances for all. It is an independent organisation that operates through the generosity of its donors.

Find out more at www.frm.org/