

**The Role of the Free Fatty Acid, Lauric Acid, in
Appetite Regulation and its Potential as an Appetite-
Suppressant**

**A thesis submitted by
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Table of contents

List of abbreviations	xi
Thesis summary	xii
Statement of originality	xvi
Dedication.....	xvii
Acknowledgements	xviii
Publications arising from thesis	xxi
Other publications	xxiii

Chapter 1: Nutrient-regulation of appetite and gastrointestinal function

1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Role of nutrients in the regulation of gastrointestinal motility.....	2
1.2.1 Fasting gastrointestinal motility	3
1.2.2 Postprandial gastrointestinal motility.....	4
1.3 Functions of different regions of the stomach and small intestine.....	5
1.3.1 Function of the stomach	5
1.3.2 Function of the pylorus	6
1.3.3 Function of the small intestine.....	6
1.4 Effect of nutrients on gastrointestinal hormone secretion	7
1.4.1 Cholecystokinin	7
1.4.2 Glucagon-like peptides.....	7
1.4.3 Peptide YY	8
1.4.4 Pancreatic polypeptide	9
1.4.5 Ghrelin.....	9
1.5 Relationship between appetite and energy intake with gastrointestinal motility ..	10
1.5.1 Proximal stomach	10
1.5.2 Distal stomach	11
1.5.3 Pylorus.....	12
1.5.4 Small intestine	13
1.6 The role of gastrointestinal hormones in mediating the effects of nutrients on gastrointestinal motility and energy intake	14

1.6.1 Cholecystokinin	15
<i>Effects of CCK on gastrointestinal function</i>	15
<i>Effects of CCK on appetite and energy intake</i>	16
1.6.2 Glucagon-like peptides (GLP-1 and GLP-2).....	17
<i>Effects of GLP-1 and GLP-2 on gastrointestinal function</i>	17
<i>Effects of GLP-1 and GLP-2 on appetite and energy intake</i>	18
1.6.3 Peptide YY	19
<i>Effects of PYY on gastrointestinal function</i>	19
<i>Effects of PYY on appetite and energy intake</i>	20
1.6.4 Pancreatic polypeptide	20
<i>Effects of PP on gastrointestinal function</i>	20
<i>Effects of PP on appetite and energy intake</i>	21
1.6.5 Ghrelin.....	22
<i>Effects of ghrelin on gastrointestinal function</i>	22
<i>Effects of ghrelin on appetite and energy intake</i>	22
1.7 Role of region and length of small intestinal nutrient exposure on gastro-intestinal function and energy intake.....	23
1.7.1 Effects of the length of small intestinal nutrient exposure.....	23
1.7.2 Effects of the region of small intestinal nutrient exposure.....	25
1.8 Role of energy load and concentration of nutrients delivered into the small intestine.....	26
1.8.1 Physiological responses dependent on load	26
1.8.2 Physiological responses dependent on concentration	27
1.8.3 Physiological responses dependent on both load and concentration	28
1.9 Interactions between stimuli within the gastrointestinal tract on appetite and energy intake	29
1.9.1 Interactions between gastric distension with small intestinal nutrients	29
1.9.2 Interaction between gastric distension and CCK.....	29
1.9.3 Interaction between small intestinal nutrients and CCK.....	30
1.9.4 Interaction between CCK and ghrelin.....	30
1.9.5 Interaction between CCK and GLP-1	30
1.10 Role of adipose tissue in the chronic regulation of appetite and energy intake ..	31
1.11 Role of the central nervous system in the regulation of appetite and energy intake	32

1.12 Summary	34
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Chapter 2: The effects of fatty acids on gastrointestinal function and energy intake

2.1 Introduction	35
2.2 The importance of fat digestion.....	36
2.3 Effect of fatty acids on gastrointestinal motility, hormone secretion and energy intake	38
2.3.1 Effect of fatty acids on gastroduodenal motility.....	38
2.3.2 Effect of fatty acids on pancreatic and gallbladder function.....	39
2.3.3 Effect of fatty acids on gastrointestinal hormone secretion	40
2.3.4 Effect of fatty acid chain length on appetite and energy intake	42
2.4 Impact of load and concentration in the effects of fatty acids on gastrointestinal function and energy intake.....	44
2.5 Role of post-absorptive factors in the regulation of gastrointestinal function and energy intake by fatty acids	45
2.5.1 Fatty acid absorption pathways	46
2.5.2 Synthesis and secretion of chylomicrons and apolipoprotein A-IV	46
<i>Role of chylomicrons and apolipoprotein A-IV in the regulation of gastrointestinal function and energy intake.....</i>	<i>47</i>
2.5.3 Role of vagal afferent activation.....	47
2.6 Cytotoxic properties of fatty acids on intestinal mucosa – potential effects on energy intake	50
2.7 Effects of oral ingestion of fatty acids	51
2.7.1 Comparative effects of intraduodenal, intragastric and oral nutrient delivery on energy intake	51
2.8 Summary	52

Chapter 3: Common methodologies

3.1 Introduction	54
3.2 Subjects	54
3.2.1 Inclusion/Exclusion criteria.....	54
3.3 Ethics approval.....	55

3.4 Study environment.....	56
3.5 Measurement of antropyloroduodenal motility.....	56
3.5.1 Nasoduodenal intubation and manometry.....	56
3.5.2 Data acquisition and analyses.....	57
3.6 Measurement of gastrointestinal hormones	58
3.6.1 Plasma ghrelin	59
3.6.2 Plasma cholecystokinin.....	59
3.6.3 Plasma glucagon-like peptide-1.....	60
3.6.4 Plasma glucagon-like peptide-2.....	60
3.6.5 Plasma peptide YY	61
3.6.6 Plasma pancreatic polypeptide	63
3.7 Measurement of appetite perceptions and energy intake.....	63
3.7.1 Three Factor Eating Questionnaire	63
3.7.2 Visual analogue scale questionnaires.....	64
3.7.3 Energy intake.....	65
3.8 Preparation and administration of study interventions	66
3.8.1 Free fatty acids.....	66
3.8.2 Hormones for intravenous infusion	67
3.9 Data and statistical analyses.....	68

Chapter 4: Effect of fatty acid chain length on suppression of ghrelin and stimulation of PYY, GLP-2 and PP secretion in healthy men

4.1 Summary	69
4.2 Introduction	69
4.3 Materials and methods	71
4.3.1 Subjects	71
4.3.2 Study design	71
4.3.3 Preparation of fatty acid solutions	71
4.3.4 Protocol	72
4.3.5 Measurement of plasma ghrelin, PYY, GLP-2 and PP concentrations	72
4.3.6 Data and statistical analyses.....	72
4.4 Results.....	73
4.4.1 Plasma ghrelin concentrations (Figure 4.1).....	73

4.4.2 Plasma PYY concentrations (Figure 4.2).....	73
4.4.3 Plasma GLP-2 concentrations (Figure 4.3).....	74
4.4.4 Plasma PP concentrations (Figure 4.4).....	75
4.5 Discussion.....	80

Chapter 5: Comparative effects of intraduodenal administration of lauric and oleic acids on antropyloroduodenal motility, plasma cholecystikinin and peptide YY, appetite and energy intake in healthy male

5.1 Summary.....	84
5.2 Introduction.....	85
5.3 Materials and methods.....	86
5.3.1 Subjects.....	86
5.3.2 Study design.....	87
5.3.3 Preparation of C12 and C18:1 solutions.....	87
5.3.4 Protocol.....	87
5.3.5 Measurements.....	88
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressures</i>	88
<i>Plasma CCK and GLP-1 concentrations</i>	88
<i>Appetite perceptions and energy intake</i>	89
5.3.6 Data and statistical analysis.....	89
5.4 Results.....	90
5.4.1 Antropyloroduodenal motility.....	90
<i>Antral pressure waves</i>	90
<i>Pyloric pressures</i>	90
<i>Duodenal pressure waves</i>	91
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressure wave sequences</i>	91
5.4.2 Plasma hormone concentrations.....	91
<i>Plasma CCK</i>	91
<i>Plasma PYY</i>	91
5.4.3 Appetite perceptions and energy intake.....	92
5.5 Discussion.....	97

Chapter 6: Dose-related effects of lauric acid on antropyloroduodenal motility, gastrointestinal hormone release, appetite, and energy intake in healthy men

6.1 Summary	101
6.2 Introduction	102
6.3 Materials and methods	105
6.3.1 Subjects	105
6.3.2 Study design	105
6.3.3 Preparation and doses of C12 solutions	106
6.3.4 Protocol	106
6.3.5 Measurements	107
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressures</i>	107
<i>Plasma CCK and GLP-1 concentrations</i>	107
<i>Appetite perceptions and energy intake</i>	107
6.3.6 Data and statistical analyses	108
6.4 Results	109
6.4.1 Antropyloroduodenal pressures	109
<i>Antral pressures</i>	109
<i>Pyloric pressures</i>	110
<i>Duodenal pressures</i>	110
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressure waves sequences</i>	111
6.4.2 Plasma hormone concentration	111
<i>Plasma CCK concentrations</i>	111
<i>Plasma GLP-1 concentrations</i>	112
6.4.3 Appetite perceptions and energy intake	113
6.5 Discussion	119

Chapter 7: Effects of lauric acid on upper gut motility, plasma cholecystokinin and peptide YY and energy intake are load, but not concentration, dependent in humans

7.1 Summary	124
7.2 Introduction	125
7.3 Materials and methods	127
7.3.1 Subjects	127
7.3.2 Study design	128
7.3.3 Preparation of C12 solutions	128
<i>Experimental protocol 1: Different loads of C12 at 56 mM (“C12 load”)</i>	129
<i>Experimental protocol 2: Different concentrations of C12 at 0.4 kcal/min (“C12 concentration”)</i>	129
7.3.4 Protocol	130
7.3.5 Measurements	131
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressures</i>	131
<i>Plasma CCK and PYY concentrations</i>	131
<i>Appetite perceptions and energy intake</i>	131
7.3.6 Data and statistical analyses	131
7.4 Results	132
7.4.1 Effects of load of C12	133
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressures</i>	133
<i>Plasma hormone concentrations</i>	134
<i>Appetite perceptions and energy intake</i>	135
7.4.2 Effects of concentration of C12	135
<i>Antropyloroduodenal pressures</i>	135
<i>Plasma hormone concentrations</i>	136
<i>Appetite perceptions and energy intake</i>	137
7.4.3 Comparison between C12(0.4) (“C12 load”) and C12(56) (“C12 concentration”)	137
7.5 Discussion	142

Chapter 8: Evaluation of the interactions between cholecystokinin and glucagon-like peptide-1 in their effects on appetite, energy intake and antropyloroduodenal motility in healthy men

8.1 Summary	147
8.2 Introduction	148
8.3 Materials and methods	150
8.3.1 Subjects	150
8.3.2 Study design	151
8.3.3 Protocol	151
8.3.4 Measurements	152
<i>Appetite perceptions and energy intake</i>	152
<i>Antropyloroduodenal motility</i>	152
<i>Plasma CCK and GLP-1 concentrations</i>	152
8.3.5 Data and statistical analyses	153
8.4 Results	154
8.4.1 Appetite perceptions and energy intake	154
<i>Desire to eat</i>	154
<i>Fullness</i>	154
<i>Nausea</i>	154
<i>Energy intake</i>	155
8.4.2 Antropyloroduodenal pressures	155
<i>Antral pressures</i>	155
<i>Pyloric pressures</i>	156
<i>Duodenal pressures</i>	157
8.4.3 Antropyloroduodenal pressure wave sequences	157
8.4.4 Plasma CCK and GLP-1 concentrations	158
8.5 Discussion	165

Chapter 9: Acute effects of oral lauric acid on appetite and energy intake in healthy males

9.1 Summary	170
9.2 Introduction	171
9.3 Pilot study: Effect of C12 on gastrointestinal symptoms	173

9.3.1 Methods and materials	173
<i>Subjects</i>	173
<i>Study design</i>	173
<i>Preparation of C12 capsules</i>	175
<i>Protocol</i>	174
<i>Measurement of gastrointestinal symptoms</i>	174
9.3.2 Results	174
9.3.3 Conclusion.....	175
9.4 Effects of oral C12 ingestion on appetite and energy intake	176
9.4.1 Methods and materials	176
<i>Subjects</i>	176
<i>Study design</i>	176
<i>Preparation of C12 capsules</i>	177
<i>Protocol</i>	177
<i>Assessment of appetite and energy intake</i>	178
<i>Data and statistical analyses</i>	178
9.4.2 Results	179
<i>Appetite perceptions and gastrointestinal symptoms</i>	179
<i>Energy intake</i>	180
9.4.3 Discussion	185
Chapter 10: Conclusion	190
Appendix I	194
Appendix II	198
Appendix III.....	199
Appendix IV.....	200
References.....	201

List of abbreviations

^{125}I	125 Iodine
Apo A-IV	Apolipoprotein A-IV
APD	Antropyloroduodenal pressure waves
AUC	Area under the curve
BMI	Body mass index
BSA	Bovine serum albumin
C4	Butyric acid, saturated fatty acid with 4 carbon atoms
C8	Caprylic acid, saturated fatty acid with 8 carbon atoms
C10	Decanoic acid, saturated fatty acid with 10 carbon atoms
C12	Lauric acid, saturated fatty acid with 12 carbon atoms
C18:1	Oleic acid, monounsaturated fatty acid with 18 carbon atoms
C18:2	Linoleic acid, polyunsaturated fatty acid with 18 carbon atoms
CCK	Cholecystokinin
CV	Coefficient of variation
GI	Gastrointestinal tract
GLP-1	Glucagon-like peptide-1
GLP-2	Glucagon-like peptide-2
HCl	Hydrochloric acid
HPLC	High pressure liquid chromatography
ID	Intraduodenal
IPPWs	Isolated pyloric pressure waves
L-81	Pluronic L-81
LOX	Loxiglumide
MMC	Migrating motor complex
NaOH	Sodium hydroxide
NPY	neuropeptide Y
PP	Pancreatic polypeptide
PYY	Peptide YY
PWs	Pressure waves
PWSs	Pressure wave sequences
THL	Tetrahydrolipstatin
VAS	Visual analogue scale questionnaire

Thesis summary

The presence of nutrients, particularly fat, in the small intestine modulates gastrointestinal function and subsequent energy intake, and it is well established that the digestion of fat into free fatty acids is required for these effects to occur. Furthermore, the effects of fatty acids are dependent on their chain length. The research presented in this thesis relates to the effects of fatty acids, particularly lauric acid, on the regulation of gastrointestinal function and the suppression of energy intake.

One of the first studies in humans to evaluate the effect of fatty acid chain length established that fatty acids with ≥ 12 carbon atoms slow gastric emptying, while fatty acids with ≤ 10 carbon atoms have no effect, indicating that there may be a separation in the effects of fatty acids occurring between those with ≤ 10 and ≥ 12 carbon atoms. More recent studies in humans have determined that there are marked differences in the effects of intraduodenal lauric acid, a saturated fatty acid with 12 carbon atoms (“C12”), and decanoic acid, a saturated fatty acid with 10 carbon atoms (“C10), on the modulation of gastrointestinal motility, hormone secretion and energy intake. For example, C12, but not C10, markedly suppresses energy intake, modulates pressure waves in the antropyloroduodenal (APD) region and stimulates glucagon-like peptide-1 (GLP-1) secretion, while both C12 and C10 stimulate cholecystokinin (CCK) secretion, however, the effect of C12 was much greater. A previous study in humans has also shown that intraduodenal administration of a long-chain fatty acid, such as oleic acid, a monounsaturated fatty acid with 18 carbon atoms (“C18:1”), suppresses energy intake when compared with a short-chain fatty acid, such as capric acid, a saturated fatty acid with 8 carbon atoms (“C8”). While there have been no direct comparisons between fatty acids with 12 or more carbon atoms (eg C12 vs C18:1) on gastrointestinal function

and energy intake, there is evidence in animals that C12 may be more potent in suppressing energy intake than C18:1.

The first study presented in this thesis (Chapter 4) assessed the effects of intraduodenal C12 and C10 in healthy men on the gastrointestinal hormones; ghrelin, peptide YY (PYY), glucagon-like peptide-2 (GLP-2) and pancreatic polypeptide (PP). C12, but not C10, markedly stimulated the secretion of PYY and GLP-2 and suppressed ghrelin secretion, while both C12 and C10 slightly increased PP secretion.

The effects of intraduodenal C12 and C18:1 delivered at the same energy load (0.4 kcal/min) on APD motility, secretion of CCK and PYY and energy intake were compared in healthy males (Chapter 5). Both C12 and C18:1 stimulated isolated pyloric pressure waves (IPPWs), suppressed the number of antral pressure waves (PWs) and increased plasma CCK concentrations, with no differences between the two fatty acids. In contrast, while both C12 and C18:1 increased basal pyloric pressure and plasma PYY concentrations, C12 had a greater effect on basal pyloric pressure than C18:1, while C18:1 had a greater effect on PYY than C12. Interestingly, C12, but not C18:1, suppressed energy intake.

While a previous study in humans has shown that C12 markedly suppressed energy intake, this was associated with nausea in some subjects, hence, confounding the interpretation of the results. In order to determine whether the effects of C12 on energy intake were physiological, or related to nausea, a dose-response study was performed using loads ranging from: 0.1 – 0.4 kcal/min, but this was also associated with varying C12 concentrations (Chapter 6). C12 potently modulated APD motility, increased

plasma CCK and GLP-1 concentrations and suppressed energy intake in a dose-dependent manner, in the absence of nausea. However, as both load and concentration of the C12 solutions were varied, it was unclear whether these effects were load- or concentration-dependent. Therefore, the study in Chapter 7 assessed the response to (i) increasing loads of C12 (0.2 – 0.4 kcal/min), at a fixed concentration (56 mM) and (ii) increasing concentrations of C12 (40 – 72 mM), at a fixed load (0.4 kcal/min), on gastrointestinal function and energy intake. Increasing load, but not concentration, of C12 modulated gastrointestinal motility, increased plasma CCK and PYY concentrations and suppressed energy intake.

As both CCK and GLP-1 are secreted in response to nutrient ingestion, the study in Chapter 8 assessed whether CCK-8 and GLP-1 interacted in their effects on gastrointestinal function and energy intake. – Intravenous CCK-8 (1.8 pmol/kg/min) and GLP-1 (0.9 pmol/kg/min) were administered alone and in combination. At the doses evaluated, CCK-8 suppressed energy intake, decreased the number of antral and duodenal PWs and increased IPPWs, while GLP-1 only decreased antral and duodenal PWs, but had no effect on energy intake and IPPWs. The combination of CCK-8 and GLP-1 only decreased the number of duodenal PWs to a greater extent than either infusion alone, but this did not exceed the sum of the individual effects of CCK-8 and GLP-1.

A previous study has demonstrated that following intragastric administration of C12, the effects of C12 on gastrointestinal function, including suppression of antral contractions, relaxation of the proximal stomach and stimulation CCK secretion, which are associated with the suppression of energy intake, are still maintained. Hence, C12

may have the potential to be utilised as an oral appetite-suppressant. The study in Chapter 9 investigated the effects of increasing doses of orally ingested C12 between 2 – 6 g on appetite and energy intake. While oral ingestion of C12 had no effect on appetite perceptions, subsequent energy intake was markedly suppressed, in the absence of adverse effects, following the ingestion of 2 g and 6 g of C12.

In conclusion, intraduodenal infusion of C12 in humans has marked effects on gastrointestinal function and energy intake, specifically, the modulation of APD motility, secretion of CCK, GLP-1, GLP-2, PYY and PP, and suppression of ghrelin secretion and energy intake, when compared with fatty acids with both shorter and longer chain lengths. The effect of C12 on gastrointestinal function and energy intake is also dependent on load, but not concentration, of C12 administration. Moreover, oral ingestion of C12 also has a marked effect on the suppression of energy intake, in the absence of any adverse effects.

Statement of originality

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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Kate Feltrin

December 2007

Dedication

For my wonderful parents, Claude and Judy,

And

For my love, my best-friend, Troy

I am forever grateful

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Publications arising from thesis

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