

# Preventing Chronic Diseases



Lawrence Appel

Director, Welch Center for Prevention, Epidemiology and International Health

## CURRENT RESEARCH

### How diet and exercise lifestyle changes can prevent chronic diseases

With over 20 years as a high profile clinical researcher, Dr. Lawrence Appel, the Director at the Welch Center for Prevention, Epidemiology and International Health at Johns Hopkins University says he would "love to put doctors out of business." Dr. Appel's studies focus on chronic disease prevention and intervention across the lifespan. This includes understanding the causes and consequences of heart disease, kidney disease, hypertension and other chronic diseases, as well as investigating solutions through lifestyle changes such as diet and exercise. Dr. Appel's desire to reach a broad spectrum of individuals has led him to serve on both the 2005 and 2010 US Dietary Guidelines Scientific Advisory Committee - this group of experts creates the US dietary guidelines. Prior to that Dr. Appel was lead author on the DASH clinical trial; this study identified a diet that is now the benchmark diet recommended as part of the US dietary guidelines.

Dr. Appel's research affects large numbers of individuals, has a huge societal impact, and provides insight to the leading causes of preventable mortality. In addition to the US dietary guidelines committee, Dr. Appel's studies have been enormously influential. His current research focuses on the following:

- Lifestyle Interventions to Prevent Diseases: Dr. Appel is researching how Vitamin D supplements can help prevent falls in older individuals. 30% of people over the age of 70 fall every year. This study is attempting to identify whether or not Vitamin D supplements can prevent falls, and if so, the best dose. Early evidence suggests that vitamin D might improve balance and increase muscle strength.
- Behavioral Intervention...

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## AFFILIATION



Johns Hopkins University

## EDUCATION

- M.D., in Medicine, 1981, New York University School of Medicine
- M.P.H., in Public Health, 1989, Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health
- A.B., in Biochemistry, 1977, Dartmouth College

## AWARDS

- Thomson Reuters Most Influential Scientists, based on number of most highly cited papers, 2014
- National Award for Career Achievement and Contribution to Clinical and Translational Science, 2012
- Institute of Medicine Elected Member, 2012
- Welch Center for Prevention, Epidemiology and Clinical Research Director, 2010
- Conner Award Lecturer American Heart Association, 2010

## RESEARCH AREAS

Health & Wellness, Wellness, Aging Research

## FUNDING REQUEST

Dr. Appel's ongoing research sometimes has immediate translations, such as dietary approaches to improve blood pressure. Others take several years to complete because trials with other outcomes (e.g. falls, weight reduction, kidney disease progression) take time. Your donations will help Dr. Appel as he continues to conduct trials and research on the best lifestyle changes to prevent chronic disease at every stage of life.