

Text S1: Supplementary Note

Double genomic control correction in the meta-analysis

Sex-specific standard errors and P-values were genomic control (GC) corrected computing the study-specific lambda factor and a second GC correction was performed on the meta-analyzed result[50]. While all genome-wide available SNPs were used for GC correcting the *in-silico* studies, for metabochip studies, we only used a subset of 4,427 SNPs for GC correction: Most of the SNPs had been selected for the metabochip due to metabolic trait associations that would result in overestimated lambda factors, but these 4,427 SNPs selected for QT-interval association onto the metabochip were deemed to be least associated with anthropometric traits. The lambda factors for GWAS have been reported previously[49,51,52] and the lambda factors for in-silico follow up studies ranged from 0.99 to 1.15 and for metabochip follow up studies from 0.89 to 1.13 except for one large study lambda=1.25.

Power considerations for the discovery

We evaluated the power of the two genome-wide screening approaches (the sex-specific scan and the sex-difference scan) to select sex-sensitive SNPs into follow-up[53]. For this, we assumed a certain genetic effect in women and varied the effect in men from OED to CED (**Figure S4A**). We found that the sex-specific scan had higher power for SSE signals (no effect in men) compared to the sex-difference scan, while the sex-difference scan had higher power for OED signals. It can also be seen that the overall scan (man and women combined) as currently usually applied in GWAS had good power for CED signals, but less for SSE and none for OED.

Specifically, to provide an example for the WHRadjBMI and height analyses in the discovery (34,629 men, 42,969 women for WHRadjBMI; 60,587 men, 73,137 women for height), the power of the sex-specific scan to select, at 5% FDR (corresponding to a P-value of 2×10^{-5} in our data), an SSE signal (i) such as the *LYPLAL1* SNP ($b_{\text{women}} = 0.064$, $b_{\text{men}} = 0$, MAF = 0.28, $R^2_{\text{women}} = 0.00167$, $R^2_{\text{men}} = 0$) was 99%, (ii) for a signal such as the *PPARG* SNP ($b_{\text{women}} = 0.034$, $b_{\text{men}} = 0$, MAF=0.42, $R^2_{\text{women}} = 0.00057$, $R^2_{\text{men}} = 0$), the power was 81%, (iii) for a medium-sized height signal in one sex and none in the other (e.g. rs572169 from *GHSR*, $b_{\text{women}} = 0.030$, $b_{\text{men}} = 0$, MAF = 0.31, $R^2_{\text{women}} = 0.00039$, $R^2_{\text{men}} = 0$, from Lango et al.), the power was 78%. We had 80% power to detect sex-specific signals for height with an R^2 of 0.000485 in women and 0 in men. The power via the sex-difference scan to select an OED signal at $\alpha = 2 \times 10^{-5}$ with effect sizes that were (i) half of the *LYPLAL1* effect (signed $R^2_{\text{women}} = +0.000835$ and signed $R^2_{\text{men}} = -$

0.000835) was 99%, (ii) for effect sizes half of the *PPARG* effect (signed $R^2_{\text{women}} = +0.000285$ and signed $R^2_{\text{men}} = -0.000285$), the power was 66%, (iii) for effect sizes half of a medium height signal (e.g. rs572169, signed $R^2_{\text{women}} = +0.000195$, signed $R^2_{\text{men}} = -0.000195$), the power was 79%. Note that the power to select such signals using the sex-specific scan was 98% (LYPLAL1), 21% (PPARG) or 32% (height gene GHSR), respectively.

Power considerations in the follow-up

When comparing the power of the sex-difference test of the 348 SNPs in the follow-up without and with a prior filter for a main effect (P-value of association combined in men and women < 0.01), it can be seen that there is a higher power with the prior filter for CED or SSE signals. This is due to the fact that the main effect filter utilizes the knowledge that the effect is not OED. For example, the power to detect a signal such as *PPARG* was 79% without the filter and 87% with the filter (see **Figure S4B**).

Specifically for the example of WHRadjBMI and height analyses (47,896 men, 60,936 women for WHRadjBMI; 62,395 men, 74,657 women for height), the power to establish sex-difference in our follow-up at 5% FDR (corresponding to a sex-difference P-value of 4.2×10^{-3} in our data) was (i) 99% for a women-only signal such as the *LYPLAL1*, (ii) 87% for a women-only signal such as *PPARG*, (iii) 78% for a women-only signal such as the height signal specified in the previous chapter. We had 80% power to establish a sex-difference with $R^2_{\text{women}}=0.0045$, $R^2_{\text{men}}=0$ for WHRadjBMI or $R^2_{\text{women}}=0.00035$, $R^2_{\text{men}}=0$ for height.

Literature search and bio-informatic analyses regarding function of genes and variants at the seven loci

To explore any potentially functional elements underlying the regions of association (ranging from 7kbp to 2337kbp in size), we searched the UCSC and Ensembl genome browsers and found: (i) two of the seven regions (*GRB14/COBLL1* and *HSD17B4*) had one or more protein coding genes overlapping the region of the association signal (*COBLL1* at *GRB14/COBLL1*; *DMXL1*, *DTWD2*, *FAM170A*, *HSD17B4*, *PRR16*, and *TNFAIP8* at *HSD17B4*), making these seven protein-coding genes potential candidates to explain the observed association. (ii) Four of the seven regions (*GRB14/COBLL1*, *LYPLAL1/SLC30A10*, *ADAMTS9*, and *HSD17B4*) had a total of seven annotated non-coding transcripts including a snoRNA (SNORA70F at *GRB14/COBLL1*), a processed pseudogene (ZC3H11B at *LYPLAL1/SLC30A10*), a lincRNA (ADAMTS9-AS2 at *ADAMTS9*), and several microRNAs (MIR548AN at *ADAMTS9*; MIR1244-1, MIR1244-2, and MIR1244-3 at *HSD17B4*) overlapping

the region of association signal. (iii) In the remaining three loci (*VEGFA*, *PPARG*, and *MAP3K1*) we did not find any known coding genes or non-coding transcripts overlapping the regions of association. However, all three of these regions were relatively near to the protein-coding region of the genes (3.7kb downstream of *VEGFA*, 13kb downstream of *PPARG*, and 116kb upstream of *MAP3K1*) and thus could potentially be involved with cis-regulatory elements that have not yet been reported and/or annotated.

More details by locus as derived by searching several catalogues (copy number tagging SNPs, NHGRI GWAS), functional annotation data bases (SIFT, SNPinfo), as well as PubMed and OMIM, are given below:

1. ***GRB14* / *COBLL1*** (2q24.3, selected for WHRadjBMI), lead marker rs6717858, with association signal extending across ~49kb of chromosome 2, ranging from 165216-165265kb. Two genes (*COBLL1* and *SNORA70F*) overlap this signal region, as does a previously reported SNP association with WHRadjBMI in tight LD with our lead marker (rs10195252: ~26.5kb, ~0.001cM, $r^2=0.94$, $D'=1.0$)[51]. Heid et al.[49] also presented eQTL data which suggested that growth factor receptor-bound protein 14 (*GRB14*) expression was associated with rs10195252 genotype and not *COBLL1*[51]. Our region lies ~30-79kb upstream of *GRB14*, which is a member of a family of SH2-containing adaptors. The *GRB14* protein binds directly to the insulin receptor[54,55], and likely has an inhibitory effect on receptor tyrosine kinase signaling as well as on insulin receptor signaling, thereby regulating growth and metabolism. *Grb14*-deficient mice exhibit enhanced body weight, mainly explained by increased lean mass on normal diet, improved glucose homeostasis despite lower circulating insulin levels, and enhanced insulin signaling in liver and skeletal muscle[56]. *Grb14* expression is increased in adipose tissue of insulin-resistant animal models and type 2 diabetic human patients[57], suggesting that *Grb14* may modulate insulin sensitivity. The WHR signal appears to be distinct from a *GRB14* locus previously reported as associated with both smoking initiation and current smoking (rs4423615: ~101kb, ~0.19cM, $r^2<0.001$, $D'=0.01$ with lead marker)[58]. Cordon-bleu protein-like 1 (*COBLL1*) may be involved in neural tube formation[59], is expressed at higher levels in tumors associated with good prognosis in mesothelioma after surgery[60], and its knockdown led to increased apoptosis in both normal and tumor cells[61]. Our bio/informatical analyses did not identify any potentially functional entity.

2. ***LYPLAL1* / *SLC30A10*** (1q41, WHRadjBMI), lead marker rs2820443, with association signal extending across ~62kb of chromosome 1, ranging from 217793-217855kb. One gene (*ZC3H11B*) overlaps this signal region, as does a previously reported SNP associated with WHRadjBMI (rs4846567: ~2.8kb, ~0.0002cM, $r^2 = 0.96$, $D' = 1.0$ with lead marker)[51]. Zinc finger CCCH-type containing 11B (*ZC3H11B*) is a pseudogene with no known function. Another previously reported

SNP association with WHRadjBMI lies ~82-144kb from our association region (rs2605100: ~109kb, ~0.04cM, $r^2 = 0.68$, $D' = 0.84$ with lead marker)[62]. Excluding ZC3H11B, our signal region is nearest to *SLC30A10* (~299-361kb downstream) and *LYPLAL1* (~340-402kb downstream). Solute carrier family 30, member 10 (*SLC30A10*) belongs to a family of membrane transporters involved in intracellular zinc homeostasis and is expressed in brain and liver[63]. *LYPLAL1* encodes lysophospholipase-like 1 protein, which is thought to act as a triglyceride lipase and is reported to be up-regulated in subcutaneous adipose tissue of obese subjects[64]. Intergenic variants near *LYPLAL1* have also been associated with fatty liver disease (rs12137855: ~305kb, ~0.22cM, $r^2 = 0.1$, $D' = 0.40$ with lead marker)[65].

Our bio-informatical analyses found several SNPs moderately correlated with our lead SNP that are putative transcription factor binding sites (rs7538503: $r^2 = 0.78$, rs2605101: $r^2 = 0.72$, rs2605098: $r^2 = 0.66$, rs2605100: $r^2 = 0.62$).

3. **VEGFA** (6p21.1, WHRadjBMI), lead marker rs1358980, with association signal extending across ~7kb of chromosome 6, ranging from 43872-43865kb. No genes overlap this signal region, but it does include a SNP previously associated with WHRadjBMI (rs6905288: ~5.6kb, ~0.01cM, $r^2 = 0.5$, $D' = 0.91$ with lead marker)[49]. The associated region is located 3.7-10.7kb downstream of vascular endothelial growth factor A (*VEGFA*). Multiple variants and mutations in *VEGFA* are risk factors for diabetic retinopathy[66-68], and variants in *VEGFA* have been nominally associated with Type 2 Diabetes (T2D)[69]. *VEGFA* is proposed as a key mediator of adipogenesis and angiogenesis[70], is highly expressed in adipose tissue, and has increased expression during adipocyte differentiation[71-74]. *VEGFA* serum concentrations are elevated in overweight and obese patients compared with lean subjects[75] and decrease after weight loss following bariatric surgery, behaving similarly to other hormones related to adipose mass, such as leptin and insulin[76]. Variants near *VEGFA* have also been associated with kidney function (rs881858: ~42kb, 0.2cM, $r^2 = 0.01$, $D' = 0.18$ with lead marker)[77] and advanced age related macular degeneration (rs4711751: ~64kb, 0.2cM, $r^2 = 0.04$, $D' = 0.21$ with lead marker in 1000G data)[78] although both appear likely to be distinct from our signal.

Our bio/informatical analyses did not identify any potentially functional entity.

4. **ADAMTS9** (3p14.1, WHRadjBMI), lead marker rs2371767, with association signal extending across ~31kb of chromosome 3, ranging from 64704-64673kb. Two genes (*ADAMTS9-AS2* and *MIR548AN*) overlap this signal region, as do three previously reported SNP associations, one with WHRadjBMI (rs6795735: ~12.9kb, ~0.004cM, $r^2=0.311$, $D'=1.0$ with lead marker) [51], and two with T2D (rs4607103: ~6.4kb, ~0.001cM, $r^2=0.90$, $D'=1.0$; and rs4411878: ~14.6kb, ~0.005cM, $r^2=0.85$, $D'=0.95$)[69,79]. The T2D association is possibly mediated through decreased insulin sensitivity of

peripheral tissues[80]. *MIR548AN* is a microRNA which primarily maps to the X chromosome but also maps with 96.4% identity (full length transcript with 3 base mismatches) within our signal region. The function of *MIR548AN* is not known. *ADAMTS9-AS2* is a long non-coding RNA which is an antisense for *ADAMTS9*. Our region is located ~25-56kb upstream of *ADAMTS9*. *ADAMTS9* is a member of the disintegrin and metalloproteinase with thrombospondin motifs (ADAMTS) family, a group of genes encoding metalloproteases that lack transmembrane domains and are secreted into the extracellular matrix[81]. Members of the ADAMTS family have been implicated in control of organ shape during development and inhibition of angiogenesis[82].

Our bio/informatical analyses did not identify any potentially functional entity.

5. ***HSD17B4*** (5q23.1), lead marker rs10478424, with association signal extending across ~2337kb of chromosome 5, ranging from 117911-120249kb. Nine genes (*DMXL1*, *DTWD2*, *FAM170A*, *HSD17B4*, *MIR1244-1*, *MIR1244-2*, *MIR1244-3*, *PRR16*, and *TNFAIP8*) overlap this signal region. The lead marker, rs10478424, is located in an intronic region of hydroxysteroid (17-beta) dehydrogenase 4 (*HSD17B4*). The protein encoded by *HSD17B4* is a bifunctional enzyme that is involved in the peroxisomal beta-oxidation pathway for fatty acids. Mutations in this gene are known to cause DBP deficiency, an autosomal-recessive disorder of peroxisomal fatty acid beta-oxidation that is generally fatal within the first two years of life[83,84]. Expression levels of *HSD17B4* have been associated with prostate cancer severity[85], and it is also a significant independent predictor of poor patient outcome[86].

Our bio-informatical analyses found that our lead marker is in a predicted transcription factor binding site (TFBS) and could therefore potentially influence regulation of transcription of an alternative putative protein-coding splice variant of *HSD17B4*. Interestingly, one of the transcription factors predicted to bind at this site is *PPARG*, which itself is located near one of the other association regions reported here. In addition, several proxies in moderate LD with the lead marker disrupt predicted microRNA bindings sites (rs1045241: $r^2 = 0.53$, rs1045242: $r^2 = 0.53$, rs11064: $r^2 = 0.53$) and are also possible candidates for functional explanations of the association signal at this locus. It should also be noted that there was one CNV tagging SNP (rs1948325) in that region that showed nominal significance in women ($P=0.054$, $P=0.281$) consistent with the women-only association signal of WHRadjBMI, but this would not hold significance when accounting for the multiple testing conducted in the CNV tagging SNP analysis (6016 SNPs tested).

6. ***PPARG*** (3p25.1, WHRadjBMI), lead marker rs4684854, with association signal extending across ~10kb of chromosome 3, ranging from 12463-12473kb. No known genes overlap this region. However, it does lie approximately 13kb downstream of the well known type 2 diabetes susceptibility gene, peroxisome proliferator-activated receptor gamma (*PPARG*), although the T2D

associated SNP appears to be distinct from our locus (rs1801282: ~96kb, ~0.11cM, $r^2=0.04$, $D'=0.61$ with lead marker)[26,87,88]. The protein product encoded by *PPARG* is PPAR-gamma which is a regulator of adipocyte differentiation. Additionally, PPAR-gamma has been implicated in the pathology of numerous diseases including obesity[89-92], diabetes[93,94], atherosclerosis[95] and cancer[93,96-98]. Interestingly, previous studies of the Pro12Ala polymorphism in the *PPAR* gene have demonstrated genotype-by-sex interaction with BMI[99], fatty acid concentrations during the first 24h after birth were related to *PPARG* expression in female but not in male lambs[100], and female 12Ala mutation carriers had greater risk of developing abdominal obesity than female non-carriers while male 12Ala mutation carriers had no significant increase in risk[101].

Our bio/informatical analyses did not identify any potentially functional entity.

7. ***MAP3K1*** (5q11.2, WCadjBMI), lead marker rs11743303, with association signal extending across ~198kb of chromosome 5, ranging from 55832-56030kb. No known genes overlap this region, but it does overlap with another SNP (rs6867983: ~5.8kb, 0.02cM, $r^2=0.71$, $D'=1.0$ with lead marker) reported as a suggestive association with triglyceride level[102]. The associated region also lies ~116-314kb upstream of mitogen-activated protein kinase kinase kinase 1 (*MAP3K1*), a serine/threonine kinase that occupies a pivotal role in a network of phosphorylating enzymes integrating cellular responses to a number of mitogenic and metabolic stimuli, including insulin (MIM 176730) and many growth factors[82]. Mutations in *MAP3K1* are associated with gonadal dysgenesis[103], and a SNP within *MAP3K1* (rs889312: ~172kb, 0.44cM, $r^2=0.005$, $D'=0.10$ with lead marker) has been reported to be associated with breast cancer[104,105], possibly as a gene-gene interaction with *BRCA2*[106]. It is also ~384-582kb upstream of ankyrin repeat domain 55 (*ANKRD55*), which harbors SNPs reported to be associated with longevity (rs415407: ~445kb, 1.1cM, $r^2=0.005$, $D'=0.12$ with lead marker)[107], Rheumatoid Arthritis (rs6859219: ~421kb, 0.93cM, $r^2=0.008$, $D'=0.10$ with lead marker)[108], and Celiac Disease (rs1020388: ~300kb, 0.71cM, $r^2=0.003$, $D'=0.11$ with lead marker)[109].

Our bio/informatical analyses did not identify any potentially functional entity.

Human tissue eQTL

Subcutaneous adipose tissue and whole blood from deCode: As described previously[110], 603 (252 males, 351 females) individuals with adipose tissue and 747 (312 males, 435 females) individuals with whole blood samples were genotyped with the Illumina 317K or 370K platform and HapMap imputation performed. Gene expression profiles were conducted using RNA from the adipose and blood samples using a custom-made human array with 23,720 unique oligonucleotide probes. *Cis* associations were tested separately by gender by regressing the

mean logarithm ($\log_{10}$) expression ratio (MLR) on the number of effect alleles adjusting for age (and the differential cell count for the blood analyses) and accounting for familial relatedness. Only *cis* associations with a P -value $< 1 \times 10^{-5}$ corresponding to an FDR $< 5\%$ in either sex are reported.

Subcutaneous adipose tissue and whole blood from MoIABB: Seventy-three individuals were recruited to donate subcutaneous adipose tissue from the abdominal wall and gluteus [In press Plos Genetics]. Total RNA was extracted from the fat tissue using TRIreagent and hybridized onto the Affymetrix Human Genome U133 Plus 2.0 gene-expression microarrays (hgu133plus2 arrays), containing 17,726 non-overlapping probes. Subjects were genotyped with the Illumina 317K Beadchip chip array and imputation conducted using IMPUTE. After quality control filters were applied to the expression and genotype data, 52 individuals (31 male, 21 female) with abdominal adipose tissue, 62 subjects with gluteal fat (35 male, 27 female), and 65 subjects with whole blood (36 male, 29 female) remained for eQTL analysis. *Cis* associations within 500kb of each gene were evaluated by regressing expression level on genotype and adjusting for plate effects. Two models were tested: 1) assuming the same slope in each gender (e.g., gender-homogeneity effects) and 2) assuming a different slope for each gender (e.g., gender-specific effects). Only those associations with an FDR $< 1\%$ in either sex are presented.

Lymphoblastoid cell lines from a childhood asthma study. As described previously [111], peripheral blood lymphocytes were transformed into lymphoblastoid cell lines for 206 families of European descent (214 male, 181 female). Using extracted RNA, gene expression was assessed with the Affymetrix HG-U133 Plus 2.0 chip. Genotyping was conducted using the Illumina Human1M Beadchip and Illumina HumanHap300K Beadchip, and imputation performed using data from Phase II HapMap CEU population. SNPs were tested for *cis* associations (defined as genes within 1 Mb), adjusting for non-genetic effects in the gene expression value. Only *cis* associations that reached a $P < 6.8 \times 10^{-5}$ (FDR of 1%) in either sex were included in the table.

Lymphoblastoid cell lines from the International HapMap Project: As described previously [112], transcription profiling was done on Epstein-Barr virus-transformed lymphoblastoid cell lines from the original 379 individuals in the four HapMap populations (CEU: 54 females, 55 males; CHB: 42 females, 38 males; JPT: 40 females, 42 males; YRI: 53 females, 55 males) using the Illumina human whole-genome expression (WG-6 version 1) arrays, which contain 47,294 probes. The genotype data from HapMap 3 was used to evaluate the associations with expression. *Cis* associations within a 2 Mb window centered on the gene were tested using

Spearman rank correlation[112], stratified by sex and population. A threshold of $P < 1.0 \times 10^{-5}$ was used to determine nominal significance, but no associations reached this level.

Mouse expression

There were three experiments on mouse expression in Regensburg, Oxford and Houston. The genes explored via PCR in Regensburg are given in **Table S13A**, the genes explored via Illumina array in Oxford and Houston in **Table S13B**. Details of the three experiments are given below:

Mouse experiment at the Regensburg center:

At the Regensburg University, mice (7 female and 7 male animals) were purchased from Charles River Laboratories (Sulzfeld, Germany) at an age of 7 weeks. Body weight of the female mice was 16.7 ± 0.7 g and of the male mice 20.3 ± 1.4 g ($p = 0.001$). After 3 weeks of acclimatisation, animals were killed and respective organs were immediately removed. Total RNA was isolated with TRIzol reagent from GIBCO (Carlsbad, CA), oligonucleotides used for amplification using LightCycler technology were synthesized by Metabion (Planegg-Martinsried, Germany) and are listed in the table. Real-time RT-PCR was performed as recently described[113], and the specificity of the PCRs was confirmed by sequencing of the amplified DNA fragments (Geneart, Regensburg, Germany). For quantification of the results, RNA was reverse transcribed, and cDNA was serially diluted and used to create a standard curve for each of the genes analyzed. The second-derivative maximum method was used for quantification with the LightCycler software. Values were normalized to 18s rRNA expression and are given as arbitrary units.

Mouse experiment at the Oxford center:

Animals: Original Northport Heterogeneous Stock (HS) mice were obtained from Robert Hitzemann of the Oregon Health Sciences Unit (Portland, Oregon). At the time the animals arrived, they had descended from 50 generations of pseudorandom breeding that commenced with eight founder strains: A/J, AKR/J, BALBc/J, CBA/J, C3H/HeJ, C57BL/6J, DBA/2J, and LP/J[114]. The animals were bred for phenotyping in a colony established at the University of Oxford. They were housed at a maximum of six per cage (median of four) and maintained on a 12:12 light:dark cycle with *ad libitum* access to food and water.

Gene Expression Assays: From a pool of over 1940 HS mice (1000 males), the most unrelated animals (based on genome-wide genotyping of 13.5k SNPs using Illumina's BeadArray platform[115]) were assayed for gene expression in several tissues, including the liver ($n = 273$

with 139 males). As detailed by Huang and colleagues[116], the tissues were frozen in liquid nitrogen and homogenised. RNA was extracted from the tissue and mRNA was amplified. Labelled mRNA was hybridised to the Illumina Mouse WG-6 v1 BeadArray platform, which contains 47.4k unique RNA probe sequences.

Gene Expression Data Preprocessing: To extract data from the images produced by the BeadArray platform, the images were imported into the Gene Expression module (V 1.6.0) of the Illumina GenomeStudio (V 2010.1) without invoking any data adjustment procedures. The data were exported to R[117] using the Bioconductor package *lumi*[118], where one outlying liver array and five hippocampus arrays, as visualised in cluster dendrograms, were removed from further analysis. Subsequently, *lumi* was employed to subtract background noise from the arrays, and apply variance stabilising transformation and robust spline normalisation. Only probes identified by Barbosa-Morais and co-workers[119] as “good” or “perfect” matches to the genome, and only probes expressed in at least 5% of animals at a 0.95 detection level (as per GenomeStudio), were retained, leaving 13718 liver and 15737 hippocampus probes. Annotations aligning the probes with physical locations of the mouse genome were also obtained from Barbosa-Morais and colleagues. ComBat was used to remove batch effects[120].

Mapping human genes to mouse genes: We first mapped human gene names to Ensembl gene IDs using the DAVID gene ID conversion tool[116] (<http://david.abcc.ncifcrf.gov/>). We manually replaced three genes which have alternate names (*ATAD4* with *PRR15L*, *FBXL10* with *KDM2B*, and *MIRHG1* with *MIR17HG*) and could not convert *NIACR2*. Then we looked for mouse orthologs using the BioMart webservice (<http://www.biomart.org/>), keeping only genes with one to one orthologs. We found mouse orthologs for 134 out of 156 human genes at 18 loci.

Testing for Sex-Specific Gene Expression: All probes corresponding to the list of mouse genes of interest were fit into a linear model.

Mouse experiment at the Houston center:

Animals: The study was performed using 21 male, 21 female C57/BL6 mice fed from day 21 (after weaning) or 12 weeks on an HF diet (4.7 Kcal g⁻¹ and 45% calories from fat; Research Diets, Inc., New Brunswick, NJ, US. Mice were single caged and maintained at a controlled temperature (22 °C) and a 12 h light–dark cycle (light on from 0800 to 2000 h). Daily food intake and body weight were monitored. All procedures were approved by the animal care and use committee of the University of Cincinnati.

Tissue collection: After 12 weeks of exposure to the diet, animals were killed during the first 2 h of the beginning of the light cycle after a 12-h fast. All females were killed in the proestrus phase of their estrus cycle. Two different WAT depots, FGWAT and IWATF, were rapidly dissected

and the orientation of the fat pad was maintained. Half of the fat pad was rapidly frozen for microarray analysis, and the other half of the fat pad was rapidly frozen for validation of target genes. Samples were rapidly frozen in liquid nitrogen and stored at 70 °C for RNA analysis.

RNA isolation: GWAT/IWAT were homogenized in 800 ml Trizol reagent (Invitrogen, Carlsbad, CA, USA), and total cellular RNA was isolated according to the specifications of the manufacturer. Total RNA was further purified using the RNeasy Mini kit (Qiagen, Valencia, CA, USA). The quality and concentration of the RNA was determined by measuring the absorbance at 260 and 280 nm, and RNA integrity was confirmed by bioanalysis (Agilent 2100 Bioanalyzer; Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA, USA).

Microarray analysis: For the microarray analysis, seven independent pooled samples were analyzed from GWAT and IWAT fat pads. Each sample comprised a pool of tissue from three animals (for pooled samples, reverse transcription was performed on each sample individually and equal amounts of complementary DNA (cDNA) were pooled); thus, samples were obtained from a total of 21 mice. GWAT/IWAT adipose RNA pools were generated from the following groups of mice: males and females. To identify genes that were differentially expressed in the two WAT fat pads, comparisons were made between normalized signal intensity from the control group (males) and experimental groups (female) from each experiment. Each total RNA sample was processed according to protocols recommended by the manufacturers. In brief, total RNA is reverse-transcribed with an oligo-dT primer and double-stranded cDNA is generated. The cDNA serves as a template for the in vitro transcription reaction that produces amplified amounts of biotin-labeled antisense mRNA. This biotinylated RNA is referred to as labeled cRNA. After fragmentation, the cRNA is hybridized onto oligonucleotide microarrays (Mouse Genome 430 2.0; 40 000 mouse probe sets). A GeneChip Operating System absolute expression analysis was performed for each Gene-Chip genome array hybridization. After the initial analysis, the absolute analysis was re-run using global scaling to an average target intensity of 350. The scaling allows for the direct comparison of hybridization values from the different targets analyzed in this project (and with any additional GeneChip sample assays using the same array type).

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