Obesity and related metabolic disorders are on the rise worldwide. To effectively combat this new epidemic, we need a detailed understanding of the mechanisms that regulate energy intake and expenditure. In this issue we present four review articles, a perspective and a commentary highlighting current progress in the neurobiology of feeding regulation, energy metabolism and obesity. This special focus is sponsored by the Obesity Research Task Force of the National Institutes of Health. Cover image: "Venus from Willendorf," ca. 25,000–22,000 BCE. © Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria. (pp 551–589)

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