Could sunlight be harnessed to suppress the development of obesity?

Tuesday 19 May, 2015 at 1.00pm

Room 1.81, Anatomy, Physiology & Human Biology Building North
The University of Western Australia (off Hackett Entrance No. 2)

The Seminar: Obesity is a crucial health and economic problem for Australians. In recent studies, we have found that frequent skin exposure to a low non-burning dose of ultraviolet radiation reduced weight gain in mice fed a high fat diet. These findings were independent of circulating vitamin D, and could not be mimicked by vitamin D supplementation. We are now starting to characterise the biological mediators (like nitric oxide) affected by ultraviolet irradiation and their potential to prevent obesity. Our novel findings suggest that insufficient sun exposure may contribute towards the development of obesity.

The Speaker: Shelley Gorman is a Research Fellow at the Telethon Kids Institute with interest and expertise in understanding the how sunlight modulates metabolic and immune processes. At UWA, she completed a BSc (Microbiology & Genetics with Honours, 1999) immediately followed by a PhD (Microbiology, 2004). She then began working as a postdoctoral research scientist at the Telethon Kids Institute. Since 2008 she has been an independent researcher, through successive fellowship and grant support.