

Frank M. Sacks, M.D.
Narrative Bio



Dr. Sacks is Professor of Cardiovascular Disease Prevention, Department of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health. He is also Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, and a senior attending physician at Brigham and Women's Hospital where he has a specialty clinic in hyperlipidemia with the cardiovascular division. He is involved in research and public policy in nutrition, cholesterol disorders, hypertension, and cardiovascular disease.

His research program is a combination of laboratory research on human lipoprotein metabolism, and clinical trials in nutrition and cardiovascular disease and hyperlipidemia treatments. The laboratory research concerns the acute and long-term effects of diet on the kinetics of lipoproteins, cholesterol carrying particles, in humans, the effects of human lipoproteins on vascular wall cells, and biochemical epidemiology of lipoprotein particle types and CVD. Dr. Sacks was Chair of the Design Committee of the DASH study where the DASH diet was designed, and Chair of the Steering Committee for the DASH-Sodium trial. These multi-center National Heart Lung and Blood Institute trials found major beneficial additive effects of low salt and a dietary pattern rich in fruits and vegetables on blood pressure. Dr. Sacks is Co-Chair of the recently published OmniHeart Trial, a multicenter feeding trial that found that a variation of the DASH diet that is higher in protein or unsaturated fat diets further improved blood pressure and lipid risk factors compared to the lower fat DASH-type diet. Dr. Sacks was the Principal Investigator of the Cholesterol and Recurrent Events trial (CARE) which found that pravastatin treatment reduced coronary events and stroke in patients with average cholesterol concentrations. Finally, he is Principal Investigator of an ongoing NIH funded trial on dietary approaches for weight loss and maintenance. In this trial, 4 diets varying in protein, carbohydrate and fat content are being tested in 811 overweight people for 2 years. In a pilot study, a Mediterranean-style moderate fat diet produced better long-term maintenance of weight loss than a conventional low-fat diet. Dr. Sacks has 140 publications of original research, and over 60 reviews, editorials, and chapters.

Dr. Sacks is active in national and international committees and conferences in nutrition and health guidelines. He is member of the American Heart Association Nutrition Committee, the policy making group for nutrition at the AHA. Dr. Sacks teaches at Harvard School of Public Health as course director for nutritional biochemistry, and at Harvard Medical School on pharmacology of drugs for hyperlipidemia, and clinical epidemiology and trials in cardiovascular disease.