

# March of Dimes High School Science Week

## Panelist Profile

**Name:** Victor Pai

**Hometown:** I grew up in Vancouver, Canada, but spent over 10 years on the east coast, mainly in Boston and New York

**Position:** Postdoctoral Fellow

**Hobbies:** boardgames

### What do you study?

I am interested in how our body store and use the energy we eat. In humans and most mammals, there are two types of fat tissue: white fat, used to store energy, and brown fat, used to burn energy by giving off heat when we feel cold. For my research, I am trying to figure out how we can convert our excess white fat into active brown fat to lose weight (or eat what you want when you want!).

### Why is it important?

One of the biggest health concerns for many people today is being overweight and obese, leading to common acute and chronic illnesses such as heart attack, liver disease, diabetes, and stroke. We are trying to help these people so they can maintain a healthy body and lifestyle.

### What piqued your interest in science?

I have always been curious about how things worked. Being a scientist means that you spend your day solving hard problems that will help people in the future!

### What do you like about being a scientist?

To be honest, being a scientist is sometimes frustrating for a long, long time because something does not work. But beyond the frustration, the best thing about being a scientist is finally solving a problem, and knowing that at that moment, you are the only person in the world that knows the solution.

### What are 5 general vocab terms someone should know going into your field of science?

energy expenditure, adipocytes, gene regulation, cellular signaling

### What are 5 specific vocabulary terms someone should know about your research?

thermogenesis, futile cycles, microproteins, signaling cascade, cell metabolism

