



The Effect of Fast Food on the Body

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ABSTRACT

Fast food can be a good way to save time, can be prepared and served very quickly. It is not the proper way for nutrition. Some of these foods that are of little nutritional value and often high in fat, sugar, and calories. Fast food especially affects the younger generation like high school students and teenagers. A lot of times their lives are always somehow relate to the fast food industry, like their lunchtime and casual meeting place with friends can be occurred often at fast food restaurants. People like to eat something and think of food, the things come to mind first are the taste, odour or colour. Those who have to look after their weight will think of the portion size, many others think of energy, fats, sugars, vitamins or minerals. The food we eat may cause side effects and a list of disadvantages like obesity, Digestive and Cardiovascular disease, Atherosclerosis, Hypertension, Type-2 Diabetes, Cancer, Liver Damage, Peptic Ulcer. All are effects of Fast Food on the Body. This does not mean fast food is bad. But it does mean you should fit fast food into a balanced healthy diet.

KEYWORDS

Fast food, Ill health, Nutritional value, Fats, Sugar, Carbohydrates, Disease, Obesity, Balanced diet, Human body, Cancer, Hypertention.

They say “you are what you eat” and needless to say, it is absolutely true. Our health is nothing but a clear reflection of our food habit. If we consume healthy food and follow a well-balanced diet, we will definitely stay healthy and fit. But sometimes, the eye-catching advertisements and the colourful packaging of unhealthy processed foods de-motivate us and send our healthy food habits into a spin. In such situations, we need inspiration from different sources to keep ourselves going.

The Wiseman should consider that health is the greatest of human blessing, let food be your medicine and medicine be your food-Hippocrates

Fast food is the term given to food that can be prepared and served very quickly. Fast food can also be defined as any food that contributes little or no nutrient value to the diet, but instead provides excess calories and fat. Fast food can be a good way to save time, but it is not the proper way for nutrition. Some of these foods that are of little nutritional value and often high in fat, sugar, and calories. Common foods include salted snack foods, gum, candy, sweet desserts, fried fast food, and carbonated beverages. Fast food may include chips, hot pies, pasties, sandwiches, burgers, croissants, kebabs, pizzas, chicken, soups, and salads. It also includes drinks, for instance, milkshakes, and soft drinks. Food is fuel for your body and has a direct impact on how you feel as well as on your overall health. Fast food refers to food that can be served quickly. In many cases, that means food that is highly processed and contains large amounts of carbohydrates, added sugar, unhealthy fats, and salt (sodium). These foods generally contain a high number of calories but offer little or no nutritional value.

A 2013 study published in [JAMA Pediatrics](#) showed that children and adolescents take in more calories in fast food and other restaurants than at home. Eating out added between 160 and 310 extra calories a day. According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), some fast food meals give you a whole day’s worth of calories. That can really pack on the pounds. Being overweight is a risk factor for a variety of chronic health problems. When fast food frequently replaces nutritious foods in your diet, it can lead to poor nutrition and poor health.

Fast food influences our lives as well as our culture since the last few decades. Especially it affects the most on younger

generation like high school students and teenagers. The relationship between fast food culture and teenagers is inseparable. The movie also reveals many negative sides of the fast food industry especially the employment of teenagers in fast food restaurants. Fast food defines teen culture as fast paced, convenience, disrespectful, insecure, and superficial like employment and the relationship between males and females. Teen culture is how teenagers think and act in their everyday lives. A lot of times their lives are always somehow relate to the fast food industry, like their lunchtime and casual meeting place with friends can be occurred often at fast food restaurants. Furthermore, teenagers are also the main workforces of the fast food industry according to Schlosser’s statement “Teenagers have long provided the fast food industry with the bulk of its workforce”. Also the movie itself has shown many scenes of teenagers working at the fast food restaurants. From this we can see that teen culture is deeply affected by the fast food. Have you ever asked yourself why there are so many fat people out there? No? Yes? This researcher has, and this researcher would like to know what the reasons are. It is hard to know all the reasons, but most of them are obvious. We are what we eat. This is one of the simplest reasons, and this researcher believes it is right. Most of obese people have bad nutrition habits such as high fat level food intake. One of the reasons for this percentage is the frequent consumption of fast food. The fast food is not healthy and most of it leads to obesity and might cause so many problems. It also contributes to polluting the environment. Another reason is that millions of cows, chickens, and pigs are killed every year to satisfy hungry people. Fast food is not good for our health and for our environment. Most of fast food is unhealthy, high in calories, fat, sodium, and cholesterol, but generally low in the nutrients a growing body needs. The reason is because fast food is not often labelled with nutrition facts, but people do not care about it, they just want something fast to eat. The problems begin when the intake of fast food is frequent or almost every day. Fast foods often contain too many calories and too little nutrition.

A scholar said-If u haven’t time for your health today, you won’t have health for your time tomorrow

Effect of Fast Food in Our Health

When you feel like eating something and think of food, the things come to mind first are the taste, odour or colour. Those who have to look after their weight will think of the portion size, many others think of energy, fats, sugars, vitamins or

minerals. But do you know that the food we eat may cause side effects and a list of disadvantages. We are not talking about spoiled or poor quality food. Freshly harvested or just cooked food may also cause side effects, some are serious, some are just disturbing, and some may put you into embarrassing situation. Over time, this can lead to an increased risk for illness and disease. Fast food is harmful to health. It is a cause of various diseases. Here we discuss some most common disease and other side effects caused by fast food.

Obesity-Obesity means having too much body fat. It is not the same as being overweight, which means weighing too much. Fast food is high in calories and sugar that contribute to increased-weight gain. Even small amount of fast food can increase your calorie intake considerably. Fast foods also replace healthy eating habits, People who consume fast foods are less likely to eat fruits, vegetables, milk etc. This change in eating habits can easily lead to obesity.

Digestive and Cardiovascular Systems-Many fast foods and drinks are loaded with carbohydrates and, consequently, a lot of calories. Your digestive system breaks carbohydrate down into sugar (glucose), which it then releases into your bloodstream. Your pancreas responds by releasing insulin, which is needed to transport sugar to cells throughout your body. As the sugar is absorbed, your blood sugar levels drop. When blood sugar gets low, your pancreas releases another hormone called glucagon. Glucagon tells the liver to start making use of stored sugars. When everything is working in sync, blood sugar levels stay within a normal range. Added sugars have no nutritional value but are high in calories. All those extra calories add up to extra weight, a contributing factor in heart disease. Too much sodium helps to retain water, so it can cause general bloating and puffiness. Sodium can contribute to high blood pressure or enlarged heart muscle. If you have congestive heart failure, cirrhosis, or kidney disease, too much salt can contribute to a dangerous build-up of fluid, children who have a high-sodium diet are at twice the risk for developing high blood pressure than children on a low-sodium diet. Excess sodium may also increase risk for kidney stones, kidney disease, and stomach cancer. High cholesterol and high blood pressure are among the top risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

Respiratory System-Obesity is associated with an increase in respiratory problems, and treating those ailments may be more complicated. Even without diagnosed medical conditions, obesity may cause episodes of shortness of breath or wheezing with little exertion. Obesity may play a role in the development of sleep apnea and asthma. A recent study published in the journal [Thorax](#) suggests that children who eat fast food at least three times a week are at increased risk of asthma and rhinitis (congested, drippy nose).

Central Nervous System-There are many types of headache and many things that can cause them. Some dietary triggers that can be found in fast food include salt, processed meats, nitrates, and MSG. A study published in the journal [Public Health Nutrition](#) showed that eating commercial baked goods (doughnuts, croissants, cake) and fast food (pizza, hamburgers, hot dogs) may be linked to depression. People who eat fast food are 51 percent more likely to develop depression than those who eat little to no fast food. It was also found that the more fast food they consumed, the more likely study participants were to develop depression.

Skin and Bones-Chocolate and greasy foods, often blamed for acne, are not the real culprits. It's carbohydrates. According to the [Mayo Clinic](#), because foods that are high in carbohydrates increase blood sugar levels, they may also trigger acne. The [Thorax](#) study showed a higher risk of eczema (inflamed, irritated patches of skin) among children with a diet high in fast food. When you consume foods high in carbohydrate and sugar, bacteria residing in your mouth produce acids. Those acids are hard on your teeth. In fact, they can destroy tooth enamel, a contributing factor in dental cavities.

When the enamel of your tooth is lost, it can't be replaced. Poor oral health has also been linked to other health problems. Excess sodium may also increase your risk of developing osteoporosis (thin, fragile bones).

Atherosclerosis-Meat- and fish-based entrees, as well as side orders such as fried onion rings and French fries, contain large amounts of cholesterol and/or saturated fat, substances that threaten your arterial health. The more you consume, the greater the build-up in your arteries. This narrows the space where blood flows, reducing the amount of oxygen that reaches your cells. Damage to the artery walls can create bleeding and dangerous blood clots. This condition, called atherosclerosis, or clogged arteries, can cause heart attacks and strokes.

Hypertension-Hypertension, or high-blood pressure, is directly linked to excessive sodium intake. Many fast foods are loaded with the sodium that comes from salt used in seasoning. Burgers, tacos, French fries and even hot fruit pies have high sodium contents. Some, such as fried shrimp, have nearly 100 percent of the daily limit suggested by the American Heart Association. Hypertension increases the progression of atherosclerosis and raises your risk of developing heart disease.

Type-2 Diabetes-Although no one knows if fast foods themselves cause diabetes, health problems related to fast foods can increase your likelihood of getting the disease. Overweight, obesity, high-blood pressure and elevated blood-sugar levels have all been linked to type-2 diabetes. According to a 2005 medical study published in "The Lancet," eating fast-food meals more than twice per week can cause an average 10-pound weight increase in young adults over time. Carrying that much extra weight raises your risk of developing insulin resistance and type-2 diabetes.

Cancer-Again, fast foods themselves may not cause cancer, but they can cause conditions such as weight gain that precipitate cancer. Menus that emphasize fat and sugar at the expense of fiber and other beneficial nutrients have the poor-nutrition building blocks for cancer. The Office of the Surgeon General associates overweight and obesity with colon, kidney, gall bladder and other forms of cancer.

Liver Damage-Since the distribution of the fast food meal that you eat doesn't get distributed in the body evenly, the fat tends to accumulate in the liver and can cause permanent damage, inflammation and even scarring.

Peptic Ulcer-A peptic ulcer, also known as PUD or peptic ulcer disease, is the most common ulcer of an area of the gastrointestinal tract that is usually acidic and thus extremely painful. For almost 100 years, doctors believed that stress, spicy foods, and alcohol caused most ulcers. Fast Foods which may causes Ulcer are Pizzas, Chips, Salted snakes etc.

Tips for Making Healthier Fast Food Choices

When you're hungry and on the run, fast food can really hit the spot. It's cheap, tasty, and, best of all, convenient. But it's also loaded with calories, sodium, and fat—often enough in one meal for an entire day. Fast food menu are tricky when you're watching your weight or your health. Finding a healthy, well-balanced meal in most fast food restaurants is a challenge. But there are always healthier options hidden among the diet disasters. You just need to know where to look and how to order. Fast food is typically high in Trans fat, saturated fat, sodium, and calories. And it also tends to be low in nutrients and almost totally lacking in fruits, vegetables, and fiber. That doesn't mean you have to avoid fast food entirely. It's OK to indulge a craving every once in awhile, but to stay healthy you can't make it a regular habit. The key is moderation—both in how often you frequent fast food chains and what you order once you're there. There are always choices you can make that are healthier than others. The following tips and menu recommendations can help you stay on track. Just remember that even the healthiest fast food options of-

ten have other nutritional drawbacks such as high sodium. So try to keep fast food to the occasional treat.

- **Try to keep your entire meal to 500 calories or less.** The average adult eats 836 calories per fast food meal—and underestimates what they ate by 175 calories. So don't guess! Most chains post nutritional info both on their websites and at the franchise location. Take advantage of this information.
- **Opt for foods that are lower in fat and higher in protein and fiber.** Look for items with more good stuff, like fiber, whole grains, and high-quality protein. Also aim for options that are relatively low in saturated fats. And steer clear of all items that contain Trans fats.
- **Bring your own add-on items if you really want a health boost.** Even when you order wisely, it can be pretty tough to get enough fiber and other important vitamins and nutrients from a fast food menu. If you plan ahead, you can bring healthy sides and toppings like dried fruit, nuts and seeds, carrot sticks, apple or pear slices, and cottage cheese or yogurt.

Healthier fast food ordering guidelines

- **Keep your eye on portion size.** Many fast food meals deliver enough food for several meals in the guise of a single serving. Avoid supersized and value-sized items, and go for the smallest size when it comes to sandwiches, burgers, and sides. You can also find more reasonable portions on the children's menu.
- **Focus on grilled or roasted lean meats.** Avoid fried and breaded items, such as crispy chicken sandwiches and breaded fish fillets. Choose turkey, chicken breast, lean ham, or lean roast beef instead. Grilled skinless chicken is usually your best bet.
- **Pay attention to the descriptions on the menu.** Dishes labelled deep-fried, pan-fried, basted, batter-dipped, breaded, creamy, crispy, scalloped, or au gratin are usually high in calories, unhealthy fats, and sodium. Same with items in Alfredo or cream sauce.
- **Don't be afraid to special order.** Many menu items can be made healthier with a few tweaks and substitutions. For example, you can ask to hold the sauce or dressing or serve it on the side. Or you can request a wheat bun for your hamburger or whole-grain bread for your sandwich.
- **Don't assume that healthy-sounding dishes are always your best option.** For example, many fast food salads are a diet minefield, smothered in high-fat dressing and fried toppings. This is where reading the nutrition facts before you order can make a huge difference.

Tips for keeping fast food calories under control

- **Be careful when it comes to condiments and dressings.** When choosing items, be aware of calorie- and fat-packed salad dressings, spreads, sauces, and sides such as sour cream. Mayonnaise- and oil-based sauces in particular add a lot of calories. Try holding the mayo and asking for a packet of ketchup or mustard you can add yourself—controlling how much you put on your sandwich.
- **Stick to zero-calorie beverages.** Soda is a huge source of hidden calories. The average large soda packs around 300 calories, which can quickly gulp up a big portion of your daily calorie intake. Shakes are even worse, with up to 800 calories and a day's worth of saturated fat. And don't be fooled by lemonade and fruit drinks, which add calories and sugar without much in the way of nutrients. Order water, diet soda, or unsweetened tea instead.
- **Be wise about sides.** Watch menu items that come with one or more side dishes. Sides that can quickly send calories soaring include fries, chips, rice, noodles, onion rings, coleslaw, macaroni and cheese, biscuits, and mashed potatoes with gravy. Better bets are side salads with light dress-

ing, baked potato (easy on the toppings), fresh fruit cups, corn on the cob, or apple slices.

- **Pass on the French fries.** Do you really need those fries? A sandwich or burger should be plenty filling on its own. Or if your meal doesn't sound complete without fries, choose the smallest size (which can be 400 calories less than a large serving).
- **Skip the bacon.** It's always tempting to add bacon to sandwiches and salads for extra flavour, but bacon has very few nutrients and is high in fat and calories. Instead, try ordering extra pickles, onions, lettuce, tomatoes, or mustard to add flavour without the fat.

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