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Is fast food junking our body?

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Abstract

In a world evaluating at such high speed we are unable to keep up with healthy food habits. This paper aims to highlight various effects of junk food on our body. It also focuses on the various organs that are highly affected due to lack of proper nutrition in such food. Junk foods not only deficient in nutrients, but they mainly contain ingredients that can damage our health. Trans fats are highly used in most fast food restaurants and in many prepackaged foods such as cookies, margarine, cakes and crackers. These man-made fats raise bad cholesterol while simultaneously lowering good cholesterol. This paper studies the damage done by such food on human body.

Keywords: Health, Fast food/ Junk food, Nutrition, Obesity, Body, Calories etc

Introduction

"Unfortunately, the civilized Western diet's refined, processed foods and the proportions in which we eat them pave the way for susceptible people to 'lose their balance'. They no longer obtain the right nutrients in the right proportions.... they succumb to... chronic conditions... All because the goodness and balance Grandma associated with the proper mix of foods have been refined out."

Robert C. Atkins

Remember when our body is hungry it wants nutrition not calories. Temptation plays a very important role when it comes to choosing junk food over healthy food. The melted chocolate on a brownie is always more tempting than a salad bowl. Junk food doesn't contain the nutrients which our body needs to stay healthy. As a result, one may feel chronically fatigued and lack the energy one needs to complete daily tasks. The high levels of sugar in junk food puts your metabolism under stress; when we eat junk food our body misses out the nutrition it needs to do various tasks. This is so because fast food and junk food don't contain adequate amounts of protein and good carbohydrates, your blood sugar levels will drop suddenly after eating, leaving you feeling grumpy, fatigued and craving sugar.

Digestive and cardiovascular system

Most fast foods are loaded with carbohydrates with very low amount of fiber. When our body breaks down these foods, the carbs are released as glucose (sugar) into our bloodstream which results in increase of blood sugar. Our Pancreas responds to the surge in glucose by releasing insulin. Insulin transfers sugar throughout your body to cells that need it for energy. As our body uses or stores the sugar, our blood sugar returns to normal. This blood sugar process is highly synchronized by our body, and as long as we are healthy, our organs can properly handle these sugar spikes. But frequently eating high amounts of carbs can lead to repeated spikes in your blood sugar. This increases your risk for weight gain, insulin resistance, and type 2 diabetes.

Sugar and fat

Most junk-food meals have added sugar which means extra calories with no nutrition. It is proven that no amount of trans fat is good for health. Eating foods that contain it can increase our LDL(bad) cholesterol, lower HDL (good) cholesterol, and increase our risk for type 2 diabetes and serious heart diseases. The combination of fat, sugar, and lots of sodium (salt) can make fast food tastier to some people. But diets which are high in sodium can lead to water retention, which is why you may feel puffy, bloated, or swollen after eating fast food.

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A diet high in sodium is also dangerous for people with blood pressure conditions. Sodium can elevate blood pressure and put stress on your heart and cardiovascular system.

Respiratory system

Excess calories from fast-food meals can also result in weight gain. This may lead toward obesity, which is one of the most common health issue faced by people today. Obesity leads to increases our risk for respiratory problems, including asthma and shortness of breath. The extra weight can put pressure on your heart and lungs and symptoms may show up even with little exertion. One may notice difficulty breathing when walking, climbing stairs, or exercising.

Central nervous system

Fast food though may satisfy hunger for the short term, but long-term results are not positive. People who eat fast food and processed pastries are 51 percent more likely to develop depression than people who don't eat those foods or eat very few of them.

Integumentary system (skin, hair, nails)

The foods we eat also has impact on our skin's appearance, but it might not be the foods you suspect. In the past, chocolate and greasy foods like pizza have taken the blame for acne breakouts, but according to latest studies, it's carbohydrates which causes it. Carb-rich foods lead to blood sugar spikes, and these sudden jumps in blood sugar levels may trigger acne.

Skeletal system

Carbs and sugar in fast food and processed food can increase levels of acids in our mouth. These acids can break down tooth enamel. As tooth enamel disappears, bacteria can take hold, and cavities may take place. Obesity can also result in complications with bone density and muscle mass. People who are obese have a greater risk for falling and breaking bones. It's important to keep exercising to build muscles, which support your bones, and maintain a healthy diet to minimize bone loss.

Conclusion

A diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help reduce our risk of a variety of diseases, including heart attack and stroke. It has been noted that eating healthy food regularly can protect against certain cancers and decrease the risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes. Moreover, most vegetables are low-calorie foods that contain high levels of many vitamins and minerals and fiber, all of which can improve overall health. Junk foods are often the exact opposite of healthy foods -- they are high in calories and low in nutrients. Healthy food is not processed, therefore they are low in calories and do not lose out on essential nutritional values. Having multi-grain breads, sprouts, low fat dairy items (like skimmed milk, home-made *paneer* or curd) and fruits will give a good amount of nutrition.

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