

Fast Food Nightmare...

Prepared by UUUS Social Concerns, 2010-11-17

Almost any product you can imagine has both good and bad social results. The benefits of fast food has been a time savings for hurried families with limited budgets. But the downsides are enormous, including poor nutrition, weight gain, excessive salt intake, diabetes (type II), and high cholesterol for the individual. The societal impacts have been equally devastating as health care costs in this country has soared. A big chunk of that cost is poor food choices.

The downsides to fast food gets little attention, except for a two minute news clip now and then. It's difficult to connect the dots, grasp the scope of the problem, formulate an effective plan to deal with it, and daily follow thru that increases your health by eating healthier foods. The incentive is a chance for better health.

Of course, food in itself is not the final word on health, which is a much bigger subject that is covered in some detail on the Health section of the Social Concerns section of the UUUS web site, see <http://universityuus.org/sch.php>.

REAL Dangers of Fast Food

- Fast food is intentionally designed to bypass our neurological defenses to eat moderately; this is done through use of large amounts of fat, sugar, and salt. David Kessler¹ (former FDA head) explores this in this conversation.
- Soda and hamburger buns contains high fructose corn syrup (HFCS) wreaks havoc on your digestive system, spiking blood glucose that leads to diabetes (type II). Fries are often cooked in hydrogenated oils that maintain themselves in a solid form inside your body².
- Because fast foods are designed to overcome ones natural tendencies to eat well, they often result in uncontrolled eating and poor nutritional intake, resulting in cardiovascular disease from consuming high cholesterol foods, kidney stress and high blood pressure (high salt intake),
- The Cost of Obesity⁴ is an excellent fifty page article out of worth reading. Obesity impacts both our individual health and that of our society.
- Health care remains a hot topic after the health insurance reform legislation that was passed in 2010. A statistic often stated is that 15% of individuals consume 85% of health care dollars. Fast food plays a part.
- Obesity rates for America are skyrocketing as indicated by America's number one ranking in obesity. Even more shocking is projections that show that three out of four Americans will be overweight or obese by 2020 and that disease rates and health care spending will balloon⁷.






























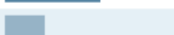
Health Statistics > Obesity (most recent) by country

VIEW DATA: **Totals**

[Definition](#) [Source](#) [Printable version](#)

Bar Graph [Map](#) [Correlations](#)

Showing latest available data.

Rank	Countries	Amount	
# 1	United States:	30.6%	
# 2	Mexico:	24.2%	
# 3	United Kingdom:	23%	
# 4	Slovakia:	22.4%	
# 5	Greece:	21.9%	
# 6	Australia:	21.7%	
# 7	New Zealand:	20.9%	
# 8	Hungary:	18.8%	
# 9	Luxembourg:	18.4%	
# 10	Czech Republic:	14.8%	
# 11	Canada:	14.3%	
# 12	Spain:	13.1%	
# 13	Ireland:	13%	
# 14	Germany:	12.9%	
= 15	Portugal:	12.8%	
= 15	Finland:	12.8%	
# 17	Iceland:	12.4%	
# 18	Turkey:	12%	
# 19	Belgium:	11.7%	
# 20	Netherlands:	10%	
# 21	Sweden:	9.7%	
# 22	Denmark:	9.5%	
# 23	France:	9.4%	
# 24	Austria:	9.1%	
# 25	Italy:	8.5%	
# 26	Norway:	8.3%	
# 27	Switzerland:	7.7%	
= 28	Japan:	3.2%	
= 28	Korea, South:	3.2%	
	Weighted average:	14.1%	

See Reference 7 for the source of this chart.

Why has this Happened?

- **Fruits of a corrupt system.** America's compromised government is due to uncontrolled influence, government's stated role to support the well-being of the country has been redirected to subsidize and protect special interests. One recent example is Mrs. Obama's efforts to improve food standards for children while at the same time the U.S. Department of Agriculture spends millions to get Americans to eat high-fat cheese³.
- **Fast food chains target children.** Connecting children with fast food and free toys⁶ is a strategy followed for decades by fast food chains. It encompasses Saturday morning TV ads for kiddie shows, and the continued onslaught of mainstream advertising to either brainwash, develop long term customers depending on your viewpoint.
- **Unconscious behavior.** Fast food goes hand in hand with distraction, and eating fast, or while doing something else. Individuals who lose a sense of grounding often do not realize how they are acting.
- **Dangers lie hidden.** Adults and parents do not recognize the dangers of poor food because of relentless advertising and a lack of basic knowledge. Junk food over time can result in sudden death or prolonged disease that makes it no less dangerous than a bullet.

Healthy Tips to Promote Health, Not Disease

- **Arm yourself with knowledge.** Successful advertising is great for fast food businesses but is dangerous for individuals and families. Read or listen to a good book on healthy eating and cooking⁵.
- **Keep bad food out of your house.** It is easier to avoid buying potato chips and soda while shopping than it is to resist eating them at home.
- **Develop a richer food palette.** Eat raw or lightly cooked vegetables with varied spices to create a wider range of food taste than is usual.
- **Don't eat unless you are hungry.** It's important to hold off eating when you are hungry. At first it may be difficult to accomplish but with time it will seem natural, and more in tune with your body. If it's a family gathering, eat reduced portions.
- **Keep your energy level up.** Eat well, get regular exercise, sleep 7 to 8 hours per night, and reduce artificial stimulations. Caffeine raises your energy level, but it naturally subsides in a few hours, forcing you to take yet another cup of coffee or cola drink; the problem with this yo-yo behavior is interference with restful sleep, and masking inadequate rest.
- **If your energy level dips snack on real food.** Try an apple, a carrot,

- or carry some almonds in your pocket, or take a walk.
- **Think long term.** If you do over eat, be aware of it, but do not beat yourself up. You can do without a lot of food but you have to live with yourself everyday!

References:

1. David Kessler (former head of the FDA): Addictive Food
<http://www.onpointradio.org/2009/07/controlling-the-american-appetite> <http://www.onpointradio.org/2009/07/the-end-of-overeating-excerpt>
2. Real Dangers of Fast Food Consumption: <http://achieve-fitness.com/blog/2010/10/04/fast-food-danger/>
3. Conflicted Anti-Obesity Message in U.S.:
<http://www.121doc.com/news/anti-obesity-message-conflicted-in-us-4972.html>
4. Cost of Obesity in British Columbia: This is well worth reading!
<http://www.gpiatlantic.org/pdf/health/obesity/bc-obesity.pdf>
5. Great Info on Healthy Eating: Beating Obesity: This Atlantic article is well worth reading!, see [http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=7&ved=0CEMQFjAG&url=http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/05/beating-obesity/8017/&rct=j&q=individual and societal "cost of fast food"&ei=5-jTKLAJcb_lgeHk9W7DQ&usg=AFQjCNFYAkjkGj1S9fAsVnfeskI6origqQ&sig2=5yyWFyB-ox2519IeoyzY4g&cad=rja](http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=7&ved=0CEMQFjAG&url=http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2010/05/beating-obesity/8017/&rct=j&q=individual and societal) Eat, Drink, and Be Healthy, see <http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CBgQFjAA&url=http://www.amazon.com/Eat-Drink-Be-Healthy-Harvard/dp/0743223225&rct=j&q=best books on healthy eating> [amazon&ei=6u7jTJPqB8T_lge5qbHNDg&usg=AFQjCNHbZEZ7uHqmL9uU67QW8nCvHBLVZw&sig2=zfeIiuKNm7NrHMkHCBXvQ](http://www.amazon.com/dp/0743223225), Super Size Me has a companion book, Don't Eat This Book..., Michael Pollan's Omnivore's Dilemma and his latest book are worth looking at, see <http://www.salon.com/books/review/2008/01/08/pollan>.
6. Fast Food, Childhood Obesity & the Hidden Costs of that Free Toy, see <http://www.healthreformwatch.com/2010/07/07/fast-food-obesity-the-hidden-costs-of-that-free-toy/>
7. Obesity statistics, people, healthcare spending in US growing fatter, report says, see <http://lubbockonline.com/national-news/2010-09-26/number-fat-people-us-grow-report-says> and the included chart above is from this source: http://www.nationmaster.com/graph/hea_obe-health-obesity