

Junk Food - A Cheap Death Warranty

Abstract:

Junk food refer to fast food which are easy to make and easy to consume. Junk food contains high fat, sugar, salt or carbohydrates. Various type of Junk food that available in restaurants is cold-drinks, pizza, burger, and sandwich etc. These foods do not contain nutrients that human body needs to stay healthy and has poor dietetic value. Research into possible health hazards on consumption of such high calorie foods has given an insight to avoid them, but unfortunately measures taken are not as effective as they need to be. Nutritional requirements vary among different individuals but ailments like obesity, high blood pressure, food poisoning, dehydration, cardiac problems, cancer, diabetes mellitus and arthritis have seen a profound rise in developing countries and such foods are notable factors to its contribution. Junk food also effects reproduction in humans. To avoid these ailments you need to evade unhealthy from your life. Eating healthy food is difficult but not impossible. Try to drink more water, eat more proteins, distance yourself from craving, avoid getting extremely hungry, get enough sleep.

Introduction:

The term ‘Junk food’ was coined by Michael Jacobson, director of Center for Science in 1972 in the public interest who wanted to raise public attention about the issue of foods with a high caloric value and a low nutritional value. Junk food contains high level of refined sugar, white flour, trans-fat, polyunsaturated fat, salt and numerous food additives such as monosodium glutamate (MSG) and tartrazine, and lacking in protein, vitamin and fiber. Junk food is popular because of their simplicity of manufacture, consumes, their taste and has a long shelf life which may not require refrigeration.^[1]

In the united kingdom, the food standards agency do not use the term ‘junk food’ and describe food as ‘HFSS’ (high fat, sugar or salt). They state that has this kind of foods can form part of a balanced diet, but research show that children diet contain too much fat (especially trans-fat), salt and sugar.^[2]

Americans eat the most fast food, but the Japanese spend the most on take away (home delivery) according to a research conducted by Euro-monitor International. The high level of per capita consumption demonstrates the importance of fast food in life style in these countries. Burger dominates the US fast food industry as it taking more than half of total fast food expenditure.^[3]

What is a Junk Food?

What makes these foods to be called as Junk is that it contains high levels of refined sugar, white flour, trans fat and polyunsaturated fat, salt, and numerous food additives such as monosodium glutamate and tartrazine; at the same time, it is lacking in proteins, vitamins, essential minerals, fiber, among other healthy attributes. These foods have little enzyme producing vitamins and minerals and but contain high level

of calories in their place. A food that is high in fat, sodium, and/or sugar and provides high calories yet useless in value is generally known as a junk food. On the contrary, junk food is easy to carry, purchase and consume. Generally, a junk food is given a very attractive appearance by adding food additives and colors to enhance flavour, texture and for increasing long shelf life.^[4]

Reasons of Eating Junk Food:

1. Time Factor:

People have no time to cook food. Lifestyle changes has compelled us so much that we have so little time to really think about healthy diet. Junk food is easy to carry, purchase and consume. Globalization has seriously affected our eating habits and enforced us to consume fancy and high calorie fast food. People save themselves a lot of hassles and time when they are in a hurry eating pizzas and burgers as they are served at their door step hot and ready to eat.

2. Taste Factor:

If time constraint is one reason that pushes peoples to eating junk food, great taste also, to an extent influences them to opt for junk food. But junk foods get their taste owing to lavish usage of oils, salts and sugar. Global broadcaster BBC World and leading market research firm Synovate conducted a survey that showed Britons are more addicted to junk food than any other nation. Overall the survey showed that across the people have conflicting attitudes and behavior about junk food. Once they caught in junk food addiction, they find it hard to think about the loss of nutrition due to junk food.^[5]

3. Junk Food Advertising:

Foods prepared outside the home and restaurant foods have a great attraction for food buffs. An estimate tells that Frito Lays is selling a billion bags of Cheetos per year. Junk food advertising has a major role in this. There is also concern about the targeting of marketing to children because children are easy and potential target for junk food.^[6]

4. Shelf Life:

Junk food has a long shelf life and may not require refrigeration for most products like chips and wafer.^[7]

5. Ease of Transportation:

The transportation of junk food is easy due to its packaging as compare to the man-made food. Ease of transportation and availability increase the popularity of junk food day by day.

Some Junk Foods with their Adverse Effects and Alternatives:

i. Sugary Drinks:

Added sugar is the single worst ingredient in the modern diet. However, some sources of sugar are worse than others, and sugary drinks are the absolute worst. When people drink sugar calories, the brain doesn't "register" them as food.



For this reason, people don't automatically compensate by eating less of other foods instead, and end up drastically increasing their total calorie intake. Sugar, when consumed in large amounts, can drive insulin resistance in the body and is strongly linked to non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. It is also associated with various serious diseases, including type 2-diabetes and heart disease. Sugary drinks are also the most fattening aspect of the modern diet, and drinking them in large amounts can drive fat gain and obesity.

Alternatives: Drink water, soda water, coffee or tea instead. Adding a slice of lemon to water or soda water can add some taste if you don't like it plain.

ii. Most Pizzas:



Pizza is one of the world's most popular junk foods. This is not surprising, given that it tastes awesome and is incredibly convenient to eat. The problem is that most commercially prepared pizzas are made with seriously unhealthy ingredients. The

dough is made from highly refined wheat flour, and the meats on them are usually processed. Pizza is also extremely high in calories.

Alternatives: Some pizza places use healthier ingredients. Homemade pizzas can also be very healthy, as long as you choose wholesome ingredients.

iii. White Bread:



Bread is generally made from wheat, which contains the protein gluten. For this reason, all wheat-based breads are a bad idea for people who have celiac disease or gluten sensitivity. However, most commercial breads are unhealthy even for people who tolerate gluten. This is because the great majority of them are made from refined wheat, which is low in essential nutrients (empty calories) and leads to rapid spikes in blood sugar.

Alternatives: For people who can tolerate gluten Ezekiel bread is an excellent choice. Whole grain bread is also definitely better (or “less better”) than white bread.

iv. Most Fruit Juices:



Fruit juice is often assumed to be healthy, but this is a mistake. Many fruit juices are actually little more than fruit-flavored, sugar and water. It is true that the juice contains some antioxidants and vitamin C, but this must be weighed against the large amount of liquid sugar. In fact, fruit juice contains just as much sugar as a sugary drink like Coke or Pepsi, and sometimes even more.

Alternatives: There are some fruit juices that have been shown to have health benefits despite the sugar content, such as pomegranate juice and blueberry juice.

However, these should be considered as supplements, something you drink every day to quench thirst. Drink water instead.

v. Industrial Vegetable Oils:



In the last 100 years or so, people have increased their consumption of added fats. However, this is entirely explained by a drastic increase in the consumption of refined vegetable oils, such as soybean oil, corn oil, cottonseed oil and canola oil. These oils are very high in omega-6 fatty acids, which humans never consumed in such large amounts before. There are many serious concerns with these oils. They are highly sensitive to oxidation and cause increased oxidative stress in the body. They have also been linked to increased risk of cancer.

Alternatives: Use healthier fats like coconut oil, butter, extra virgin olive oil or avocado oil instead.

vi. Margarine:



Margarine used to be considered a healthy alternative to butter. Fortunately, most people have now realized that this is far from being true. Margarine is a highly processed pseudo-food that has been engineered to look and taste like butter. It is loaded with artificial ingredients, and is usually made with industrial vegetable oils that have been hydrogenated to make them more solid. This increases their trans-fat content significantly. Keep in mind that manufacturers are allowed to label their products with "no trans-fat" as long as it contains less than 0.5 grams per serving, which is still a significant amount.

Alternatives: Use real butter instead, preferably from grass-fed cows.

vii. Pastries, Cookies and Cakes:



Most pastries, cookies and cakes are extremely unhealthy. They are generally made with refined sugar, refined wheat flour and added fats, which are often disturbingly unhealthy fats like shortening (high in trans fats). These tasty treats are literally some of the worst things that you can put into your body. Almost no essential nutrients, but tons of calories and unhealthy ingredients.

viii. French Fries and Potato Chips:



Whole, white potatoes are very healthy. However, the same cannot be said of the products that are made from them, such as french fries and potato chips. These foods are very high in calories, and it is easy to eat excessive amounts. Consumption of french fries and potato chips causes weight gain. These foods may also contain large amounts of acrylamide, carcinogenic substances that form when potatoes are fried, baked or roasted.

Alternatives: Potatoes are best consumed boiled, not fried. If you need something crunchy to replace potato chips, try baby carrots or nuts.

ix. Gluten-free Junk Foods:



Gluten-free is all the rage these days. About a third of people in the US are actively trying to avoid gluten, according to a 2013 survey. The problem with many gluten-free diets, is that people replace the gluten-containing foods with processed junk foods that happen to be gluten-free. These gluten-free replacement products are often high in sugar, unhealthy oils and refined grains like corn starch or tapioca starch. These refined starches lead to rapid spikes in blood sugar, and are extremely low in essential nutrients.

Alternatives: Choose foods that are naturally gluten-free, like unprocessed plants and animal foods. Gluten-free junk is still junk food.

x. Low-Fat Yogurt:



Yogurt can be incredibly healthy. Unfortunately, most yogurts found in the grocery store are extremely bad for you. They are frequently low in fat, but loaded with sugar to make up for the lack of taste that the fats provided. Put simply, the yogurt has had the healthy, natural dairy fats removed, only to be replaced with something much worse. Additionally, many yogurts don't actually contain probiotic bacteria, as generally believed. They have often been pasteurized after fermentation, which kills all the bacteria.

Alternatives: Choose regular, full-fat yogurt that contains live or active cultures (probiotics). If you can get your hands on it, choose yogurt from grass-fed cows.

xi. Low-Carb Junk Foods:



Low-carb diets are very popular these days, and have been for several decades. There are plenty of real foods that you can eat on a low-carb diet, most of which are very healthy. However, this is not true of processed low-carb replacement products, such

as low-carb candy bars and meal replacements. These are generally highly processed foods that contain very little actual nutrition, just a bunch of artificial ingredients mixed together and then sold as food.

Alternatives: If you're on a low-carb diet, eat foods that are naturally low in carbs. Low-carb junk food is still junk food.

xii. Ice-Cream:



Ice-cream is one of the most delicious foods on the planet. Unfortunately, it is also one of the unhealthiest. Most commercial ice-cream is loaded with sugar. Ice-cream is also high in calories, and it is very easy to eat excessive amounts. Eating it for dessert is even worse, because then you're adding it all on top of your total calorie intake.

Alternative: It is possible to make your own ice-cream using healthier ingredients and significantly less (or no) sugar.

xiii. Candy Bars:



Candy bars are incredibly unhealthy. They are high in sugar, refined wheat flour and processed fats. They are also very low in essential nutrients. Processed foods like candy bars are generally engineered to be super tasty (so you eat more), and have been designed so that it's very easy to eat them quickly. A candy bar may taste good and cause some short-term satiety, but you'll be hungry again very quickly because of the way these high-sugar treats are metabolized.

Alternatives: Eat a piece of fruit instead, or a piece of real high-cocoa dark chocolate.

xiv. High-Calorie Coffee Drink:



Coffee has been unfairly demonized. It is actually very healthy, and loaded with antioxidants. Studies also show that coffee drinkers have a lower risk of serious diseases, like type 2 diabetes and Parkinson's. Unfortunately, stuff is sometimes added to coffee that turns this wonderful beverage into harmful sludge. If your "coffee" has a ton of artificial creamer and sugar, then it is not good for you. It is loaded with liquid, empty calories, and will be just as unhealthy as any other sugar-sweetened beverage.

Alternatives: Drink plain coffee instead. Black is best, but small amounts of heavy cream or full-fat milk are fine as well.

xv. Anything that is High in Sugar, Refined Grains and Vegetable Oils:



One of the most important things you can do to eat healthier, is to read labels. It is important to avoid or at-least minimize foods that contain:

- Added sugars (High-Fructose corn syrup)
- Refined grains like white flour
- Industrial vegetable oils
- Artificial trans-fats

These are some of the unhealthiest (and most common) ingredients in the modern diet. The importance of reading labels cannot be overstated, and this applies to all foods, even so-called health foods.

Conclusion:

Consumption of the junk food invites various health problems. The habit of the consumption of junk food is continuously increasing in young generation especially in children. The main problems with junk food are increasing childhood obesity, which further leads many health complications in children. The attracting advertisements are largely responsible for the mind make up of children to consume junk food. Multinational companies are attracting the new customers (Young people, children) by attractive and aggressive marketing strategies. Parents should take care of the eating habit of their children and protect them from junk food by increasing the awareness about the health problems associated with junk and fast food. The habit of junk food can be avoided by strong will power and awareness of the side effects associated with them. School/college canteen also ensures to keep healthy food in their menu rather than focusing only on junk food. Children must be educated about the harmful effects of junk food on health, this may be pretty helpful in avoiding of junk food and problems associate with them.

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