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FAST FOOD ADDICTION: A MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERN

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ABSTRACT

In the modern era of industrialization, the fast food restaurant are growing at a rapid rate and providing the fast food at cheaper rates and in attractive packing. These are providing high calorie food with less minerals and vitamins. In today's era, the younger generation and working women mostly prefer these food because of their ready to eat availability at reasonable prices. But this kind of food has very bad impact on the physical health of individuals. Many diseases such as obesity, heart attacks and diabetes are increasing due to these fast food. In this research paper main emphasis is made on the negative effects of fast food on public health and the reasons for the popularization of it. The data has been collected from various sources of evidence, in add to books, newspapers, websites and journals. It explores the main issue of fast food addiction and it's deteriorating effects on health.

KEYWORDS

Fast food ,Public health, obesity, deteriorating effects.

INTRODUCTION

Food is the necessity of life. But the traditional food is being replaced by the fast food. Fast food is the any food which has no or negligible nutritional value. The trend of these are increasing more due to the easy availability at reasonable prices. These food are more preferably choosing by the young and working women. Fast food restaurants are playing vital role regarding their availability. These restaurants are providing the food at cheaper rates and speedily so that customers get habitual of it. These food looks very tempting but everyone ignores their negative effects on health. Various diseases such as obesity, indigestion problem and high cholesterol can be caused due to these food. The fast food restaurants are mostly targeting the younger by attractive packing and women by giving speedy delivery. The consumption of these food on regular basis can become a major cause of depression, asthma strokes, liver diseases, cardiovascular disease and cancer. These food has coloring, artificial flavors and preservatives. According to National Institute of Health (NIH) The fast food has the high level of sugar and saturated fat which is not only unhealthy but addictive also and it creates a vicious cycle making it hard for everyone to choose the nutritional food.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to a research conducted by **Heather M. et al (2006)** showed that fast food consumption and breakfast skipping increased weight gain from adolescent to adulthood.

According to study by **Anita Goyal and N.P Singh**, increasing awareness and influence of western culture has caused shift in food consumption patterns among urban India families. Since liberalization of Indian economy in early 1990 many Foreign fast food companies have entered in Indian markets which caused a significant change in lifestyle and food preferences of Indians.

Studies show that individuals consume more food and calories as portion sizes increase **Schwartz & Byrd-Bredbenner, (2006)**.

A study conducted by **Shanthy A. et. al in America (2004)** resulted consumption of fast food among children in United States seems to have adverse effect on dietary quality and also increased the risk of obesity.

In 2014, Chandran and colleagues posed a hypothesis that breast cancer risk was related to fast food and sugary drinks. In this study, well-trained interviewers conducted interviews and questionnaires to 1732 NY and NJ. AA and 1487 EA women who were confirmed breast cancer, age ranging from 20-75. The result of this study shows a positive association of frequency of fast food intake with breast cancer.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

- To study the Reason for popularity of fast food.
- To know about the disadvantages of fast food.
- To get acquainted with the negative effects of junk food.
- To learn about the measures that can be used to get rid of this addiction of fast food.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is exploratory in nature to provide more clear view and it is descriptive also where the focus is on getting more adequate information. For this purpose secondary data were collected from various research publications, journals-online and printed, magazines, books, newspapers, conference proceedings, government reports and websites.

REASONS FOR FAST FOOD ADDICTION

Convenience : The fast food is easily available at every corner of a town and city and it proves convenient for working women who do not have enough time for cooking food.

Affordability : These food are extremely affordable as they are available at cheap prices as compared to healthy food. So everyone wants to enjoy the tasty food which are tempting and cheaper in Price also.

Time saving : These food works as a time saver as it has ready to eat availability and the working individuals who do not much time to cook ,can easily purchase it by simply making a call or placing order from their home.

Advertising strategy : Various marketing strategies are adopting by the fast food restaurants. They market their products by advertising it on television and in newspapers. Everyone watch television and the advertising of fast food appears in between the programs, by looking at these advertisement everyone wants to try same.

Speedy delivery : This can be cause of fast food addiction as many MNCs such as McDonald's ,KFC are increasing their market share and goodwill by giving speedy delivery of fast food in few minutes.

Attractive packing : The food providing by various sources are very attractive and tempting in the packing as every individual whether it's a child or older person, everyone wants to purchase or eat by just looking at the same.

Peer group : This can be a reason for the fast food popularity. Youngsters wants to enjoy the meal with their friends and due to this peer pressure, they also gets habitual of this food and considers it more convenient as of its easy availability.

EFFECTS OF FAST FOOD ON PUBLIC HEALTH

Headache : Due to eating of the fast food such as pizza, burger etc., the chances of headache increases as these food are rich in sodium.

Loss of memory : A study published in American Journal of clinical Nutrition stated that the people who eat junk food performed poorly in cognitive tests. It means that this food can deteriorate your brain and memory.

Obesity : Obesity is increase in the fat of body. Fast food eating increases the obesity as these are rich in calories, sugar and fats which contributes to weight gain. Many medical issues can be arised due to this.

Depression : More consumption of these food leads to the loss of essential nutrients required to deal with stress and as a result a person suffers depression.

Worst Appetite and Digestion : The fast food contains more sugar and it creates the fluctuation in blood sugar level which demand more food and it becomes difficult for the body to digest the food.

Heart disease : Fast food is full of saturated fat and trans fat which can block the arteries and increases the cholesterol level because of which the chances of getting heart strokes increases.

Peptic ulcer (PUD) : Various fast food can be a cause if ulcer. PUD is the common ulcer of gastrointestinal tract which is normally acidic and painful. Gastrointestinal tract is an organ in humans which intakes the food, digest it, absorbs energy and expels the waste.

Increases Cancer risk : Sodium nitrate and sodium nitrite are additives used to maintain meat color. Both chemicals can break down into nitrosamines, which has the potential to cause cancer, according to a meta-analysis published in the journal *Nutrients*.

Tooth decay : The consumption of more soda and sugar on regular basis can increase the amount of acid in the tooth which leads to tooth decay.

Acne problems : Fast food like French fries, hamburger, and potato chips all are fried and these have excessive oil which became a cause of acne on face.

Weak bones : As already mentioned that fast food is rich in sodium and one single burger contains excessive sodium as required by a human body in a day which enhances the chance of weaken bones.

MEASURES TO OVERCOME FAST FOOD ADDICTION

Identify the triggers : Everyone has to know about the triggers of their fast food. In other words everyone should aware about their fast food cravings so that you can control these and can get rid out of these.

Plan your meals : Everyone should follow a strict meal plan of healthy food, more vegetables and fruits so that unhealthy food enriched with High sugar level and fat can be avoided. As well as keep your refrigerator full of vegetables and fruits so that you can avoid fast food cravings.

Manage stress : Under stress the person eat their comfort food enriched with high sugar and fat having the more health risks as compared to the people who are not stressed and eating same amount of fast food.

Meditate : Studies have shown that meditation calm your mind and helps in overcoming fast food addiction. Firstly just start with 5 to 10 minutes of meditation and watch videos regarding it. This will help you to ease your mind.

Prepare new Recipes of healthy food : Try the new recipes of healthy food by purchasing new cookbooks and by taking help of healthy food cooking channels online so that you can avoid your fast food cravings.

CONCLUSION

Addiction of fast food is an emerging problem nowadays not only in western countries but as well as in Asian countries also. Many programs have been running at school level to aware children about the harmful effects of fast food but these programs will never prove fruitful till the parents not set an example for their children by eating or cooking healthy food. It will help in minimizing the eating disorders. The consumption of these food can be curbed by noted down their negative effects on health like high sugar level, chances of heart strokes and some threatening illness and even death. If people have threat to life, they automatically try to curb their fast food consumption. One more method can be used to get rid of this addiction that is by consuming more vegetables and fruits, when you have cravings of fast food.

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