

“Food habits threaten the young generation”

<http://www.yourcommonwealth.org/social-development/health-safety-wellbeing/food-habits-threaten-the-young-generation/>



Fast food seems like a necessary convenience for the busy student, but Omer Fayshal Pavel, 22, a Correspondent from Dhaka in Bangladesh, argues that consistently making the wrong food choices can have long term and devastating impact.

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Omer Fayshal Pavel

There is a proverb in Bangladesh: “If you want to reach one’s heart, then convince him with his favorite foods”.

Actually, it’s difficult to find anyone who doesn’t like food. It’s also true food is the fuel of our life. But what if food becomes the cause of intolerable suffering, followed by death?

Nowadays we are living very hectic and busy lives, so somehow it’s become difficult to maintain the daily routine of lunch and evening snacks. Unfortunately, this irregularity is particularly predominant among the youths, especially college or university students.

Many studies have shown that food preference among the youths is for takeaway and fast foods. There are some reasons behind it, such as back-to-back classes or the short duration of breaks between classes. Or can happen that a student doesn’t manage to take proper food before the class. A survey conducted among students of one university has shown 54 per cent of students skip breakfast due to a variety of reasons, including school pressure.

Another problem working behind this is the high price of local food. Moreover, there are some educational institutions that don’t have their own cafés or canteens. Students have to search for other sources of food, which is sometime expired or unhygienic.

In the ages between 20 and 40, the human body is more productive than any other time. Muscle strength, sensory abilities and cardiac functioning are at their most significant rates in this age. Different physical and mental developments occur until the age of 24. The majority of students at college and university are between the ages of 16 and 24. This means they are in the period of physical and mental development described as early adulthood.

In an adult body, six essential elements of food are compulsorily required. There are carbohydrates, proteins and fats including the vitamins, minerals and water. In a healthy diet, the required amount of carbohydrates is 2,000 calories including 46 to 56 grams of protein. As well, vitamins and minerals like sodium, calcium, phosphorus, and iron are required. And one of the most important parts of diet is water – a normal person needs at least eight glasses, or two litres, per day for proper kidney function.

But fast foods can’t meet the demands of the body, thus problems arise: cardiovascular disorders, digestive system disorders, lowered CNS activities, respiratory disorders, hampered formation of bones and developing skin. Cardiovascular and digestive problems can develop very rapidly by consuming fast foods, because the majority of fast foods contain large amounts of carbohydrates and are rich in fat.

High amounts of carbohydrates produce a rich amount of calories and increase the sugar count in blood. This can have a notable bad effect on diabetic patients. The low fibre content can also cause accumulation of food particles in the gut wall, risking the formation of ulcers, followed by cancer. High sodium content can cause water retention and can be the cause of feeling bloated and puffy. Too much sodium also enlarges the muscles of the heart and increases the risk of heart disease. Then comes the topic of cholesterol. The HDL (High density lipid) content in food can be accepted, but high content of LDL (Low density lipid) is very harmful for the body. These

cause obesity, pushing the Body Mass Index count up to 40, where even 30 is risky in the normal case. Osteoporosis, or low bone density which results in fragile bones, is another common problem found in those who consume much fast food.

These problems can be divided in to two stages. First is the early stage which includes gastritis, obesity or other respiratory problems. But in the long run these lead to more devastating issues like cardiovascular problems, stroke, and osteoporosis.

We know this busy time of student life is a must for our future, but it's up to you. After the age of 40, do you want to lead your future on your legs, or do you want to risk your health and physical capabilities?

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About me: I am a youth from Bangladesh, a country which is densely populated. The overpopulation has created issues that reduce the environmental and health status. As a result, different unexpected health challenges are arriving. My ambition is to overcome these problems by making a network of youths and working as public health professional in the future.

I like to visit different places with different traditions and taste different foods. Right now I am a student of Pharmaceutical science and a health columnist in national news papers.