

# The Influence of Fast Food and The Risks It Poses to the Health of Adolescents

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## ABSTRACT

Junk food is a type of food that is very popular among the public, especially among teenagers. The choice of food is now no longer based on nutritional value, but rather on the desire to socialize and seek personal pleasure. This study aims to analyze the effect of fast food and the risks posed to the health of adolescents. The method used in this study is a reference source derived from journals related to the research topic. Journals related to the topic of this study is about the diet of fast food/instant in adolescents with the method of literature study or library search obtained from several databases such as the National Library, moraref and google scholar. By citing ten different journals. Each Journal has its own method, such as with cross-sectional research design which uses observational research methods that allow researchers to analyze the same variables for all subjects in the sample population at a certain period of time. The study gives an idea of the situation or phenomenon at that moment, without involving observations in some period of time. The results showed that the needs of calories, protein, and micronutrients in adolescence need to be considered. Fast food and junk food became popular because they were quick to serve, widely available, easy to obtain, and had good taste. However, eating habits by consuming fast food or junk food in excess

will have a bad impact on health, both in children, adolescents, and adults. Fast food can increase the risk of several diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and blood lipid disorders or dyslipidemia. The conclusion of this study found that fast food (junk food) has an important role in the occurrence of obesity. Fast food is very able to slow down the body's metabolism and reduce calories burned, making it difficult to maintain a healthy weight and the risks that may occur, including from junk food can be in the form of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and blood fat disorders or dyslipidemia, digestive disorders, respiratory disorders, triggers the appearance of acne and increased Insulin levels.

**Keywords:** *Junk Food, Habits, and Adolescent Obesity*

## INTRODUCTION

Junk food is a type of food that is very popular among the public, especially among teenagers. This type of food varies a lot, from snacks to main courses, and often the packaging contains ingredients rich in carbohydrates. However, these foods do not always provide good nutritional value for the body, because we often do not know the composition of the ingredients contained in them (Sutrisno, Pratiwi, Istiqomah, & et al, 2018). Adolescents are in a phase of independence, in which they have the

freedom to choose the foods they like, and often lose interest in eating with their family at home. Activities that are mostly carried out outside the home make adolescents vulnerable to peer influence in choosing ready-to-eat foods. The choice of food is now no longer based on nutritional value, but rather on the desire to socialize and seek personal pleasure. Lifestyle changes among adolescents have a significant impact on their diet. Teens become more active, eat out more often, and are more influenced in making food choices. They also tend to be more daring to try new types of food, including junk food (Uswatun & Runi, 2018).

Junk food consumption is a phenomenon experienced by teenagers today. The school canteen also provides a lot of fast food such as instant noodles, soft drinks (soft drinks), fried foods and so on. Types of fast food are divided into two, ranging from snacks to heavy meals. The growing popularity of fast food or fast food among teenagers, supported by the increasing portion and energy in fast food. By eating fast food, teenagers have increased their intake of energy, fat and sugar excessively. Ready meals are foods that can be easily and quickly processed as a home-cooked meal replacement. This food uses many additives in the form of preservatives, flavorings, and artificial sweeteners.

Based on data from the World Health Organization (WHO) (2016) there are more than 1.9 billion adults over the age of 18 are overweight, and of these there are 600 million people who are obese, so that if calculated as a whole it is estimated that about 13% of the adult population (11% of men and 15% of women) are obese. In fact, the use of food additives in excess can cause various health problems such as poisoning, nerve damage, kidney, liver, birth defects, gastroenteritis disorders, convulsions, foot anomalies, growth abnormalities, infertility and even lead to death.

The basic health research (Riskesmas) 2013 presented the proportion of the 10-year-old population with food at risk by province in

Indonesia. Consumption of sweetened foods/drinks  $\geq 1$  time in a day nationally is 53.1 percent. The five provinces with the highest proportion were reported in South Kalimantan (70.4%), in Yogyakarta (69.2%), Central Kalimantan (67.6%), South Sumatra (63.3%) and North Sumatra (62.5%) (table 3.10.9). The national proportion of the population with the behavior of consumption of fatty foods, cholesterol and fried foods ③ 1 time per day is 40.7 percent. The five highest provinces above the national average are Central Java (60.3%), Yogyakarta (50.7%), West Java (50.1%), East Java (49.5%), and Banten (48.8%). Almost four out of five Indonesians consume flavoring 1 time per day (77.3%), the highest in Bangka Belitung (87.4%) and the lowest in Aceh (37.9%).

In addition, if adolescents consume fast food excessively without being balanced with sufficient physical activity, then adolescents will experience disturbances in the body, such as the risk of developing degenerative diseases. Fast food can cause health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, blood fat disorders or dyslipidemia and so forth. Based on the above problems, the purpose of the study was to determine the effect of fast food and identify the risks posed to the health of adolescents. And know what to do to reduce the risks posed by fast food.

There are several factors that contribute to the habit of adolescents in consuming junk food, including lifestyle changes and technological advances that encourage a transformation in the diet and eating habits of adolescents. A gradual increase in family income can also affect the diet and consumption habits of junk food among adolescents. Interaction with peers as well as the ability to buy junk food encourages adolescents to consume different types of food they want. In addition, mass media, both in print and electronic form, can be considered as one of the factors that cause deviations in adolescent eating behavior (Afifah, Suyatno, Aruben, & Kartini, 2017).

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Fast Food**

Fast food is a type of food that is easy to serve, practical and generally produced by the food processing industry with high technology and provide a variety of addictive substances to preserve and give the taste of the product (Sihaloho, 2012).

### **Health**

Health is a resource that belongs to all human beings and is not a goal of life that needs to be achieved. Health is not focused on physical fitness but includes a healthy soul where individuals can be tolerant and can accept differences (Robert. H. Brook, 2017).

### **Obesity**

Obesity is an imbalance of nutrients that enter the body that is not appropriate or beyond the expenditure of energy at a certain time (Arisman, 2011).

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The Framework used in this study is a reference source derived from journals related to research topics. Journals related to the topic of this study is about the diet of fast food/instant in adolescents with the method of literature study or library search obtained from several databases such as the National Library, moraref and google scholar. By citing ten different journals. Each Journal has its own method, such as with cross-sectional research design which uses observational research methods that allow researchers to analyze the same variables for all subjects in the sample population at a certain period of time. The study gives an idea of the situation or phenomenon at that moment, without involving observations in some period of time.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

A food can be said to be healthy if it contains balanced nutrition, namely carbohydrates, protein, vitamins, minerals, and a little unsaturated fat, or also said to

contain foods that are 4 healthy 5 perfect. While less healthy foods are foods that do not contain balanced nutrition and do not contain substances that the body needs. Less healthy types of food include fast food and junk food. Fast food and junk food are modern ready-to-eat foods that have a high appeal, especially in adolescents. The choice of food in adolescence is now not based on nutritional content, but rather for fun and socializing.

Fast food (fast food) is a type of food that has been processed and then produced for resale with a fast service process. Fast food was originally a commercial strategy for shoppers who often did not have time to sit and wait for their food. Fast food is available in quick time and ready to eat.

Fast food outlets are growing rapidly in Indonesia. In the period from 2007 to 2021, the growth was 44.6 percent. The sophistication of technology makes it easier for consumers to access these appetizing foods and drinks. However, behind its attractive appearance and addictive taste, the snack can threaten our health.

During 2015-2018, children and adolescents aged 2-19 consumed an average of 13.8% of their daily calories from fast food. Overall, the difference in the percentage of calories from fast food observed was not significant for boys and girls. There was no difference by sex for children aged 2-11 years, but in adolescents aged 12-19 years, girls (18.5%) had a higher average daily intake than boys (14.9%).

The percentage of calories consumed from fast food increases with age. In children aged 2-11 years, the average percentage of calories consumed from fast food was 11.4%, while in adolescents aged 12-19 years, the average percentage of calories consumed was 16.7%. This age-based difference is seen in boys and girls.

The Ministry of Health has issued regulation of the Minister of Health number 30 of 2013 on the inclusion of information on the content of sugar, salt, and fat as well as health messages for processed foods and ready-to-eat foods. The regulation aims to

enable the public to know the nutritional value information contained in foods and beverages that are written on food labels. Unfortunately, almost all ready meals do not include nutritional value in a portion of the dish offered.

The impact caused by junk food is an increase in cholesterol levels in the blood, malnutrition, heart disease, diabetes, and other diseases. Most of these quick and tasty foods contain high amounts of sodium, which increases and worsens the risk of high blood pressure. According to the recommendations of the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences, the minimum daily requirement for sodium for an adult is only about 1,200-1,500 mg. Although the body needs a minimum amount of sodium, too much sodium contributes to high blood pressure. Sodium can also cause fluid buildup if the person is suffering from congestive heart failure, cirrhosis, or kidney disease.

According to the regulation of the Minister of Health number 25 of 2014, adolescents are the age group of 10 years to 18 years old. Adolescence begins at age 12 and ends around age 17 or 18. Adolescents have special nutritional needs compared to other age groups. This is because during adolescence there is rapid growth and changes in physiological maturity in relation to puberty.

Adolescents need different nutritional needs when viewed from the biological and psychological side. Biologically, the nutritional needs of adolescents must be balanced with their activities. Teenagers need more protein, vitamins, and minerals from each energy consumed compared to childhood. When viewed from the psychological side, adolescents do not pay much attention to health factors in making their choices. However, adolescents pay more attention to other factors, such as surrounding people, hedonistic culture, and social environment that greatly affect. Nutritional needs in adolescents need to be considered because the nutritional needs in adolescents increased due to increased

growth and development. In addition, lifestyle and eating habits that change will also affect the nutritional intake of adolescents. The teenage age group is preoccupied with a large amount of physical activity.

Fast food outlets are growing rapidly in Indonesia. In the period from 2007 to 2021, the growth was 44.6 percent. The sophistication of technology makes it easier for consumers to access these appetizing foods and drinks. However, behind its attractive appearance and addictive taste, the snack can threaten our health. The number of fast food restaurants in Indonesia shows that fast food restaurants are popular with Indonesian people. In fact, Databoks (2023) shows that the majority of Indonesian people consume fast food at least once a week, and the majority of fast food consumers are dominated by women.

Therefore, the need for calories, protein and micronutrients in adolescence needs to be considered. Fast food and junk food became popular because they were quick to serve, widely available, easy to obtain, and had good taste. However, eating habits by consuming fast food or junk food in excess will have a bad impact on health, both in children, adolescents, and adults. Fast food can increase the risk of several diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and blood lipid disorders or dyslipidemia.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

In this research observation it can be concluded, among others:

1. Fast food (junk food) has an important role in the occurrence of obesity.
2. Fast food can greatly slow down the body's metabolism and reduce calories burned, making it difficult to maintain a healthy weight
3. Risks that may occur, including from junk food can be in the form of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and blood fat disorders or dyslipidemia, digestive disorders, respiratory disorders, triggers the appearance of acne and increase Insulin levels

**Declaration by Authors**

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