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## **THE JUNK FOOD DILEMMA**

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References at the end

“Oh my God, there it is”! A chocolate covered doughnut, a “Super Sized” nut and marshmallow candy bar, steamy hot, garlic Cajun spiced fries. You know this is the last thing you should eat. You know you’ll get a sugar rush that will make you tired, or a bit of heartburn, or an extra 10 pounds. But, right know, you want it more than anything.

If someone could bottle this effect it has on people and sell it, they would make a fortune. So, what is it about junk foods that makes us lose our intelligence, despite knowing that it lives up to its name and is precisely, “junk”?

For one, it tastes good. Maybe you’ve had a crappy day and deserve a “reward”. It’s cheap and it makes me feel soooo good. Whatever it may be, I’m sure you all can come up with a dozen other reasons.

But, the harsh realities are staggering:

In 2003, Americans spent \$117 billion in obesity related costs.

Each year about 300,000 Americans die from fat related causes.

Americans spent more than \$110 billion on fast foods alone in the year 2000.

We now spend more money on fast food than on higher education, personal computers, computer software or new cars.

We spend an estimated \$50 billion a year on diet and weight loss?

The food industry has a yearly advertising budget of \$30 billion.

The “Golden Arches” spent \$500 million on one ad campaign while the National Cancer Institute spends about \$1 million a year to promote eating fruits and vegetables.

Three year olds are targeted for junk food advertisements.

Junk food marketers spent an estimated \$15 billion in 2002 specifically to market children.

Last but not least, the Hawaii chapter of the American Heart Association serves, at their Heart Ball, prime ribs, veal, or fillet mignon to raise money for controlling heart disease. Come on, who’s gonna pay \$3,500.00 to \$25,000 per table for steamed vegetables, tofu, and brown rice? After all these years and all these balls and all the research, isn’t it about time they announced a cure for heart disease? Nah, nah, nah! It’s all about money and the continuation of administrative salaries. It has nothing to do with a cure.

Ok, ok, you’ve figured it out. The healthy food message is no match for the advertising budget of the junk food companies and the hypocrites that are more interested in raising money to keep their salaries than to really do something about obesity and heart disease. Our kids are raised in a world where fake, processed foods are the norm, and drinking soda and eating French fries are an every day experience.

So, what do we do to avoid junk foods? Changing your mindset, which is harder than climbing Mount Everest, is what needs to be done. Instead of looking at this “stuff” as a reward or a treat, try looking at it as:

Calories that will make your body look like the Pillsbury Doughboy.

Toxic garbage that will turn your body into a “dump”.

A combination of chemicals and artificial flavors that defy pronunciation.

A waste of money.

Not something to give a developing kid.

Something that is sure to increase your medical bills.

When you look at healthy foods, don't see them as boring, but see them as the staff of life that will build and enhance your immune system, give you a defense against disease, and make you look younger as you get older.

We are told that there are no “bad” foods, only food that should be eaten in moderation. Do you really believe that crap? I hope not. So, here are some foods that you might want to really reconsider putting inside your body:

### **Doughnuts and Malasadas:**

Think of a malasada as a ball of white flour, covered in sugar, deep fried in grease that will sit in your stomach like a lead weight. A guaranteed Homer Simpson special. Besides the average doughnut and malasada will give you 200 – 300 calories, mostly from sugar, and those that are store bought contain 35 – 40% heart clogging trans fat.

### **Soda:**

Would you believe that a 20 ounce bottle of soda has about 14 teaspoons of sugar in it? There would be more if it would stay suspended and not settle to the bottom. Let's not forget the 7-11 “Big Gulp” with 56 teaspoons of sugar. As if white sugar and high-fructose corn syrup are not bad enough, cola is loaded with caffeine with “Mountain Dew” having almost as much caffeine as instant coffee. Let's also not forget all the artificial flavors and food coloring. Shades of “Agent Orange”!

But then, there's always diet sodas with Aspartame and Splenda. With aspartame converting to formaldehyde at 86 degrees F (the body is about 98 degrees F) the diet soda drinkers are first in line to be cast for roles in the remake of, “The Night Of The Living Dead”. With sucralose, aka Splenda, being born from chlorine, it might be better served if it were added to swimming pools.

Studies have linked soda to osteoporosis, obesity, tooth decay and heart disease. Americans drink an estimated 56 gallons per year. Sugar blues to the max. In the last ten years, soda consumption by kids has almost doubled. Do you think that the schools, with a vending machine always within sight, could contribute to the problem? What am I thinking? These guardians and caring educators of our children make deals with the soft drink companies to encourage the kids to drink soda after soda because the schools share in the profits which help to fund student activities. What an unconscionable Catch-22! These wonderful human beings sell the health of our kids down the river for a few bucks. It's just like leading the cows to slaughter in a slaughterhouse. Show me a school without a vending machine and I'll show you a closed down building.

### **French Fries:**

Anything that is fried has the issue of trans fat and cancer causing acrylamide to deal with. Foods that are fried in vegetable oil, like canola, soybean, safflower, corn, etc., are polyunsaturates that become rancid when exposed to oxygen and produce large amounts of damaging free radicals to the body. What you may not know is that these heated oils can cause aging, blood clotting, inflammation, cancer and weight gain.

If you like “French Fries” why not try Hesh's “Baked French Fries”? Get a pan or pyrex dish. Rub olive oil on the surface. Cut potatoes in “French Fry” type slices. Coat your hands with olive oil and rub the potatoes in your

hands. Line the slices up in the pan. Coat the potatoes with your favorite spices, cover the potatoes with nutritional yeast, and bake at 350 – 400 until brown. You will never go back to the fried junk again.

### **Chips:**

Trans fat, acrylamide, high fat, excess sodium and heartburn due to cooking in rancid oil. Umm, umm, umm, it's finger lickin' good.

### **Deep Fried Seafood:**

Fried shrimp, clams, oysters, lobsters, etc, have all the trans fats and acrylamide, but they come with an added bonus – brain rotting mercury. But wait, there's more...it is so loaded with mercury that the government has issued warnings not to eat tuna and other popular dead fish bodies more than once a month. As an extra treat, shellfish like shrimp and lobster, the scavengers of the ocean, eat all the crud, are contaminated with parasites and viruses that may not even be killed with high heat. For those of you that have or continue to eat shrimp, did you ever notice little black spots along the back groove? Well, those little black spots are doo doo. What was it that Tiny Tim said? "You are what you eat"!

So, eating these foods give s you mega doses of toxins in the form of trans fat, acryamide, mercury, parasites, doo doo and viruses. Seriously, do you really want to do that to yourself?

Now for the bad news. The U.S. Government has rejected the April 2003 report by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which argued for a reduction in the national recommendation of sugar consumption from 25 to 10%.

The WHO and FAO's report really ticked off the U.S. sugar lobby, so they began lobbying to prevent the U.S. Government from accepting the proposals. The Sugar Association wrote a letter to the WHO asking them to show proof that sugar is linked to obesity and an unnamed congressman, recruited by the food industry, insisted that the Secretary of Health cut off the \$406 million yearly contribution to the WHO. Also, the National Soft Drink Association argued that 25% added sugar in the diet is not harmful despite the numerous studies done showing sugar's link to obesity.

Is it reprehensible that the Government is putting the interests of the sugar industry ahead of the fight against obesity? Yes, but it's the powerful sugar industry that makes those "sweet" campaign contributions year after year and we wouldn't want to bite the hand that feeds us even it means that the kids get fatter and sicker.

If you want change, it has to come from you. Just simple refusal to purchase these obesity linked soft drinks is a good start. Maybe some day the Government will stop subsidizing the sugar industry and the flesh industry. And when chopped meat costs \$98.00 a pound, the country will be swarming with vegetarians. What a nice thought.

Aloha!

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