

IS FAST FOOD FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS?

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[Assignment: Write an essay in which you explore a cause/effect relationship. Have a clearly defined purpose and tone. Then make a prediction, argue a point, explain a process, or analyze a situation. Organize enough evidence and detail to support the claims made.]

(1) At Valparaiso University and at other universities around the country, students are eating at Burger King, McDonald's, and other fast food places more often. College students go to these eating establishments even though they have been warned about the effects of consuming too much fast food. Students eat out at fast food restaurants for many reasons including breaking the pressure of college life, getting served quickly and for a relatively low price, and saving time because the meal requires no at-home preparation.

(2) Most students go to fast food restaurants because it gives them a break from classes and studying. Fast food places exist nearby at nearly every university in America. When students want to get off campus, they are able to eat at these places and socialize with their fellow classmates in a clean and friendly atmosphere. Fast food places are also popular with students because the food is relatively inexpensive as compared to the same food that would be purchased at a grocery store or in their school cafeteria.

(3) Many students save precious time by going to these establishments to eat. College students who have classes all day, for example, have only a limited lunch hour. During this time, many students run errands or finish homework, and therefore have only a few minutes for a quick lunch. When students go to fast food restaurants, they can choose to eat at the restaurant, in their car, or at their apartment. Bringing the meal back to their home is very convenient for some college students because then they do not have to prepare a meal. This allows students to eat and study at the same time. Students who obtain their food at these restaurants do not have to shop for the food, take time to prepare the meal, wash the dirty dishes, or put away any leftovers. Fast food restaurants take care of these tasks, because they place the food in styrofoam containers which can be used as plates and then thrown away after use.

(4) Although fast food seems perfect for students, there are some drawbacks to eating these meals. Consuming this food in excess creates some major health problems. These foods are loaded with calories. For example, a meal at Burger King for college students often consists of a Whopper, a large order of fries, and a

twelve ounce Coke. Fitness of Health, Figure/Physique, Posture, by R. Lindsey and A. Whitley, records that a Whopper contains 600 calories, the large order of fries has about 560 calories, and the glass of Coke has 140 calories. This all adds up to a total of 1,300 calories for only one meal. Therefore, eating these meals without exercising can lead to an increase in the percentage of body fat and to eventual weight gain.

(5) Another problem that arises after frequently eating fast food is the development of arteriosclerosis--hardening of the arteries--and other heart diseases because the fast foods contain large quantities of grease and fat. Fast foods are also loaded with an excess of sodium. Too much salt in a diet is not healthy because it can lead to high blood pressure. Students continue to eat a lot of these foods because the heart diseases and other problems that arise show up only later on in life. Consuming these meals often results in an unbalanced diet. The meals students get do not contain any vegetables or fruit. This unbalanced diet leads to a deficiency of minerals and vitamins, which causes a person to have a lack of energy and eventually affects the student's study habits.

(6) Despite the health risks taken when eating these meals, students at Valparaiso University will continue to walk across Lincolnway to eat at fast food places because the idea of going to these eating establishments has become part of college life. The students appreciate the fast service, the simplicity of the meal, and the time saved.