



THE ROAD TO
HEALTH & WELLNESS

HEALTH TOPIC OF THE WEEK

4/1 - Processed Foods: Run Away as Fast as You Can

Introduction

This week's health topic is just the tip of the iceberg. I don't have enough time in my week to say enough bad things about processed foods [although I'm considering an entire series]. Americans eat more highly processed foods today than ever, a trend that is especially pronounced among children and adolescents, who get 67% of their daily calories from these foods. At the same time, nutritional research continues to uncover ways in which highly processed foods are detrimental to human health, implicating them in a host of chronic diseases ranging from diabetes to cancer. But what exactly are highly processed foods, and why are they so bad for you?

Highly Processed Foods

Also known as ultra-processed foods, highly processed foods consist primarily of extracted or synthesized ingredients. Hallmarks of ultra-processed foods include a lack of fiber, high amounts of added sugar, salt, and fat and long ingredient lists, often full of hard-to-pronounce substances.

These industrially formulated products first gained popularity in the U.S. in the mid-20th century, as manufacturers began leveraging technological advances to cheaply produce convenient, highly palatable (and addictive) foods with long shelf lives. By the 21st century, they'd become a fixture of the American diet, making up more than half of all calories consumed.

Propaganda

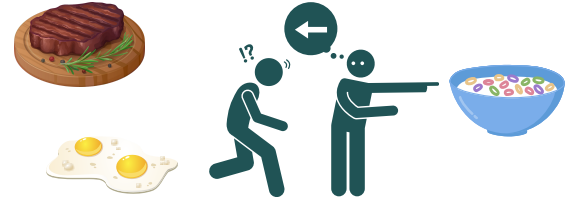
In the last few decades, almost every meaningful and measurable health metric has significantly worsened. The government and food industry would like you to believe it is because of our milk, eggs, butter and red meat consumption.



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Magicians refer to this as misdirection - having you focus on the right hand while the left hand is doing the sleight-of-hand to fool you.

It takes considerable propaganda to make us believe that Froot Loops is a better food choice than beef or eggs and that synthetic plant-based beef with 97 chemical ingredients is better for you than beef which has one ingredient - beef.



How can our food be so harmful?

The FDA allows food manufacturers to add literally hundreds of chemicals to their processed foods without having to reveal what the chemicals are. Many of these chemicals are banned in other countries and were previously banned in the United States only to end up back in our food.



How did this happen? Our friends at the FDA created a new category called GRAS [Generally Recognized as Safe - wink wink] which allowed previously banned carcinogenic chemicals to end up back in our food.

Processed food - how bad is it really?

Most of us know that processed foods like potato chips, store-bought pastries, and sodas aren't the foundation of a healthy diet. But how bad for us are these foods, really?

A new review of research involving nearly 10 million participants offers some of the most compelling evidence yet that highly processed foods undermine our mental and physical health.

For the comprehensive review, published in the British medical journal BMJ, researchers pooled data from 14 studies, which encompassed 9,888,373 participants in all, to look at connections between ultra-processed foods (UPFs) and different health outcomes, including Type 2 diabetes, anxiety, cancer, and early death.



For their definition of ultra-processed foods, the researchers referred to the NOVA system, which classifies foods according to their level of processing. They included only studies published within the last three years and excluded any studies that received funding from manufacturers of UPFs.



What the research showed

Highly processed food was linked to a higher risk of 32 of the 45 adverse health outcomes under investigation. The researchers noted that the most convincing evidence involved mental health and cardiometabolic health: Participants who ate more highly processed foods were 53% more likely to suffer from anxiety and/or depression and 50% more likely to die of cardiovascular disease. They were also 12% more likely to have Type 2 diabetes. The authors concluded that ultra-processed food is harmful to most, if not all, body systems.



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Run, Run, RUN!

Average Americans consume approximately 50% of their daily calories via processed foods. Don't be one of them. The most significant thing you can do to improve your health is to greatly reduce or eliminate processed foods!

Think of processed food like poison – which it is. Consuming a small amount infrequently won't kill you but consuming it regularly certainly can.

Summary

Processed food consumption is powerfully linked and is a causative factor in:

- Obesity
- Hypertension
- Hypercholesterolemia
- Dyslipidemia
- Cancer
- Type II diabetes mellitus
- Acne
- Cardiovascular disease
- Irritable bowel disease



Don't Wait

Resolve today to dramatically cut out processed food and replace it with whole foods. This change alone will dramatically improve your health, appearance and longevity.

It's difficult to break unhealthy habits, especially when it comes to highly addictive processed food. EPT is here to help you. Our trainers are certified in functional nutrition. Feel free to reach out to us.



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