

# A Study and survey on effect of junk food in the health of adolescent girls

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## **Abstract:**

*Junk refer to fast food which are easy to make and easy to consume. The purpose of current study was to explore the perceptions of health effects of frequent junk food consumption in adolescent stage. Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood, which begins from the earliest signs of secondary sexual characteristics development and ends when a person has achieved adult status. Late adolescence (17-21 years of age) is characterized by increased independence and experimentation. A sample size of 119 member's population in a specific community was taken. Self-administered questionnaire prepared by the investigator with 20 closed ended questions open ended questions was selected as the tool for the required study. Eliminating the temptation for junk food and developing the awareness for fitness can be helping in avoid the junk food from the healthy diet regimen.*

**Key words:** Junk Food, Health, Consumption, Survey, obesity

## **Introduction:**

Adolescence is the only time following infancy when the rate of physical growth actually increases. This sudden growth spurt is associated with hormonal, cognitive, and emotional changes that make adolescence an especially vulnerable period of life. First, there is a greater demand for calories and nutrients due to the dramatic increase in physical growth and development over a relatively short period of time. Poor nutrition during any of these stages can have lasting consequences on an adolescent's cognitive development, resulting in decreased learning ability, poor concentration, and impaired school performance. Eating junk food has become a trend. The children hate homemade healthy food. Junk food is injurious to health. Eating Burger and Pizza increases cholesterol in human body. The fat in human body increases. The increase fat is dangerous for heart. Drinking soft drinks adds dangerous toxins in human body. It affects the bone, skin and kidney. These foods and their can affect digestive system, its effects can emerge after many years. Studies have found that food colouring can cause hyper activity and lapses of concentration in teenagers. These are the foods which have low or no calories. They have ingredients which are unhealthy for our regular diet which include large amounts of fats and salts. Some of the foods like French fries, fried foods, pizza, burgers, candy, soft drinks, baked goods, ice cream, cookies, etc are the example of high-sugar and high-fat containing foods. Junk foods are the source of constipation and other disease like diabetes, heart ailments, clogged arteries, heart attack, strokes, etc because of being poor in nutrition. The consumption of junk food all over the world is increasing day by day which is not good for the future. People of all age groups like to eat junk food and they generally chose to eat whenever they enjoy special time with family like birthday party, marriage anniversary, etc. They easily become used to of taking soft drinks, wafers, chips, noodles, burgers, pizza, French fries, Chinese dishes, and other varieties of junk food available in the market. It reduces level of concentration and calls to chronic diseases such as obesity, hormonal imbalances, heart diseases, high blood pressure, diabetes etc.

## Materials & Methods:

The study was a descriptive study using survey method with a sample size of 119.

Data was collected using structured questionnaire from college in Hyderabad selected by convenient random sampling method. The target populations identified were teenagers between the age group 17 years to 21 years studying in colleges. Socio demographic variables were analyzed using descriptive statistics and association between variables was elucidated.

## Results:

Survey has taken on girls in different age groups, 87% belonged to the age group of 17– 21 and 13% belongs to 19-21. A total of 119 people living in urban areas were selected for this survey. Study subjects were assessed using a questionnaire format including information for how frequently people take up junk food, which type of junk food, effects of junk foods etc.

### *Table showing Frequency of junk food and aerated drink consumption per week*

*(Target study for 100)*

S.No.	Parameter	Frequency	No.of.Teenagers(119)
1	Junk food consumption per week according to survey conducted	Never	34
		Some times (1-5)	41
		More than 5-6 times/week	31
		Regularly	13
2	Aerated Carbonated drinks / per week approx	Never	23
		Some times (1-5)	42
		More than 5-6 times/week	31
		Regularly	23

## Health consequences for intake of junk food:

Consuming junk food leads to severe health problems in adolescent age specifically in girls. The major consequences include-

- **Abnormal Weight gain (Obesity):**

Increased in body weight is one of the most common effects of consuming junk foods are increased obesity. It's composition of loads of Carbohydrates, calories and fats contribute to weight-gain. Obesity can cause many medical issues like diabetes, joint-pain and heart diseases.

- **Type-II Diabetes**

Dense sugar content can cause dental cavities and Type - II diabetes. The high levels of sugar in junk food which puts metabolism under stress at adolescent stage .This is due to the secretion of high amounts of insulin by pancreas.

- **Heart diseases**

High content of Trans fat in commercially available fast foods predispose children to risk of future heart diseases. Fast food intake leads to higher proportion of calories being derived from total and saturated

fat .moreover, the micronutrient content of the Junk food & Aerated carbonated drinks is also low levels of calcium and magnesium in the taken measure to liberalize the international trade to reduce the cost of food grains

- **Effects Appetite and Digestion**

Consumption of excess junk food leaves the brain in a complex condition. Excessive sugar intake can cause blood sugar level to fluctuate and makes the brain demand more food, which eventually leads to overeating. It makes it difficult for the body to digest excessive junk food.

- **Effect on the reproductive system in early adolescence:**

The ingredients in junk food and fast food may have an impact on your fertility. One study found that processed food contains phthalates. Phthalates are chemicals that can interrupt how hormones act in your body. Exposure to high levels of these chemicals could lead to reproductive issues, including birth defects.

### **Discussion & conclusion:**

Taking of Junk food is a dietary habit of our present day teenagers. Consumption of diet rich in sugar, saturated fat, salt and calorie can lead to early development of health hazards. There are various reasons for consumption of such food by adolescent girls. Most of fast food users know well about negative effects associated with junk food consumption. However, they take junk food without considering their health complications. The young generations are getting addicted to have this type of foods which leads to a serious public health problem. Identifying the magnitude of the junk food prevalence and factors promoting its consumption is a primary step towards planning multipronged strategies to address this growing health hazard thus protecting our teenagers from the long term ill effects of junk foods.

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