

# The american diet essay sample

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According to an article by Herbes (Dietary Trends, par 1), Americans are more conscious of their diet now and how the food that they eat affects their health. On the other hand, experts say that the American diet has too many calories this is according to the article of Chris Woolston of Caremark (What's Wrong with the American Diet, par 1). In the last twenty years, the average American consumed about 1, 850 calories a day. However, the number of calories had increased by 148 calories. Woolston had stated that, theoretically speaking, the added 148 calories can add an additional 15 pounds to a person per year (Woolston, par 2).

. Herbes had stated that the Food consumption for vegetables and fruits shows a relative increase compared to the past however, the recommended Dietary allowance of five servings a day, the average American eats only two and a half servings all in all. Vegetable servings are only one and a half and fruits are one serving only per day. The consumption of milk and egg had declined while cheese had gone up. Meat, poultry and fish intake had also increased together with the grain and cereal consumption. It has also been noticed that vegetable fats had replaced most of the animal fats used before however; total consumption of fat did not decline.

According to Woolston's article, there had been two types of American diet. He had named the prudent and western. The " Prudent" diet is composed of poultry, fish, legumes, vegetables and whole grains. Fatty and calorie rich foods are avoided by Prudent dieters. On the other had the western diet, fatty foods and red meats are patronized while the greens are avoided. There had been evidence that the red meat and food rich in calories are bad

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for the health. The evidence can be found in the article of Liebman in Nutrition Action. The most that can describe the western diet is the Atkins diet which has been the craze before. Recommendations of experts regarding the Atkins diet are not true. Based on facts, the Atkins diet is rich in red meat, butter and other food that is high in saturated fat. Red meat can also provide risk of colon and prostate cancer.

Herbes had stated in his article that many adult women fail meet the Recommended Dietary Allowances for calcium, vitamin E, vitamin B<sub>6</sub>, magnesium and zinc. On the other hand, men do not meet the standard for Vitamin E, magnesium and zinc. However, there are also excess in the diet of the average American. Currently, it is estimated that most men consume about 4,000 milligrams of sodium daily, while women consumes 3,000. If both figures are compared to the Dietary Allowance, both exceeds the recommended level which is 2,400 milligrams per day. Intake of fat and saturated fat had also exceeded the recommended dietary allowance. Cholesterol consumption is within the recommended allowance of no more than 300 milligrams per day. Iron is low in adolescents and women which sometimes result to anemia.

On the other hand the consumption of artificial sweeteners have increased. However there is a 14% increase in sugar consumption. Substitutes are now being used instead of the real thing. This is very evident in diet soda's where the use of artificial sweetener is used. Based on statistics it was stated that total soft-drink use had increased by 300% since the 1950s.

Looking at the state of events, as stated earlier there is too much calories in the American diet. Herbes had stated that there is over one-third of adult Americans who are obese and a growing number of children overweight. Even if there was an evident consciousness regarding the proper dieting, still most Americans do not follow the recommended guidelines. Fast food, convenience stores, snacking, supplementation and soda may have played a role in contributing to the growing population of obese people in the United States. (The Paradox of Hunger and Obesity in America, p 1) There are also evidences that even if the low-income people are considered obese. Obesity can also be caused by the portions of food ordered. Away from home, most restaurants serve big portions of food items for the people. Huge platters of food from these restaurants can cause any person to overeat because of the thinking that the food can get spoiled if it is not eaten and the like. A singular serving can be equal to 2, 000 calories as per Woolston.

As stated above, there is a recommended dietary allowance that had been established by the National Research Council of the United States National Academy of Sciences. The set guidelines are classified based on gender at various ages. Smokers are also considered in the dietary allowance. Table 1 shows the dietary allowance table provided by the US National Academy of Science.

As a guideline, the following must be met by the Americans in order to have a healthy diet. The value with the \* sign are lowered levels of value from the previous report given by the USDA. The \* with a red font are the minerals and vitamins that the smokers must watch out for. Americans must check

regarding what foods to take in order to be aware and complete the recommended dietary allowance stated by the government.

TABLE 1. Recommended Dietary Allowance (1997)

	Females	Males		Females	Males
Protein	46 g	56 g	Folacin	400 µg	same
Vitamin A(retinol)	700 µg*	900 µg*	Biotin	30 µg (AI)	same
Thiamine(Vitamin B <sub>1</sub> )	1.1 mg	1.2 mg	Calcium	1000 mg (AI)	same
Riboflavin(Vitamin B <sub>2</sub> )	1.1 mg	1.3 mg	Phosphorus	700 mg	same
Niacin(Vitamin B <sub>3</sub> )	14 mg	16 mg	Selenium	55 µg	same
Pantothenic acid (Vitamin B <sub>5</sub> )	5 mg (AI)	same	Iron	18 mg	8 mg
Vitamin B <sub>6</sub>	1.3 mg	same	Zinc	8 mg	11 mg
Vitamin B <sub>12</sub>	2.4 µg	same	Magnesium	310 mg	400 mg
Vitamin C	75 mg*	90 mg*	Iodine	150 µg	same
Vitamin D	5 µg	same	Fluoride	3 mg (AI)	4 mg (AI)

(AI)\*\*

Vitamin E	15 mg**	same	Linoleic acid	12 g (AI)	17 g (AI)
Vitamin K	90 µg (AI)	120 µg	α-Linolenic acid	1. 1 g (AI)	1. 6 g (AI)

SOURCE: Recommended Dietary Allowance Website: <http://users.rcn.com/jkimball.ma.ultranet/BiologyPages/R/RDAs.html>

There had been several myths regarding how a person must diet. (Nutrition Action Health letter, p 1) As stated above, before Atkins diet was promoted left and right, however, this diet is not recommended by the experts because of red meat and the saturated fat content of the food being eaten in Atkins diet. There are claims that saturated fat does not promote heart disease. Experts say that saturated fat promotes both good and the bad cholesterol. As experts say bad cholesterol causes coronary disease. A low fat diet does not mean a weight loss. Fat is not only the cause of Obesity. Most experts say that Americans are obese because of the lack of activity. Nowadays, physical activity cannot be seen much. The calories that had been gained after eating is used up by the body. The unused calories then becomes a part of the body and is accumulated. This becomes fats which causes obesity.

Being obese have many complications. According to a research of Center on Hunger and Poverty, Obesity is a risk factor for heart disease, diabetes, cancer ad other chronic health problems. In other words, it is better for Americans to stop eating fats and calorie rich food and concentrate in <https://assignbuster.com/the-american-diet-essay-sample/>

completing the recommended dietary allowance which had been set in order to have complete nutrition.

In a nutshell, looking at the current happenings in the American society, most of the food items that Americans eat are food rich in fat and calories. Fastfood had become a part of the American diet. This could not be discounted by anyone because almost everyone eats in fastfood chains. There are several steps that must be taken in order to improve the typical American diet. The steps that would be discussed in this part of the paper came from the American Yoga Association. Recommendations of experts say that the food to be included in the diet must have a high variety. A combination of almost everything is important. This is so that the person can supply all nutritional requirements as stated in the Recommended Dietary Allowance. A person must think about the dietary allowance, since there is a limit to the calorie consumption given, he or she must maintain his ideal weight in order to avoid obesity. Eat only the recommended fat allowance by the RDA. It is also important to eat fat because it also has a role in the body. However, the recommended fat which is only 30% must be followed.

The American Diet is a very complex system of food measurement. In order to complete the recommended allowance, the person must take note of the food that he or she is eating. Too much of anything may lead to too much of something in the report and a little of anything may result to imbalanced vitamins and nutrients received by the body. As stated by Woolson in his article, the person can make healthy choices of food when he or she dines outside. Foods that had been baked, steamed or grilled must be chosen instead of eating fried. Instead of using mayonnaise for a salad dressing the <https://assignbuster.com/the-american-diet-essay-sample/>

person can opt to choose vinaigrette to avoid more calorie intake from the mayonnaise. Most importantly, the person must eat in moderation. Eating in moderation must be done to avoid accumulation of more calories in the body.

As a conclusion, the typical American diet must be change. The average American Adult consumes a lot more than his body can take. This is based on the current situation of Obesity that is very evident in the current situation of America. The American Diet does not only end in the recommended dietary allowance but it ends in having the right nutrition and the right physical condition. Americans may find it difficult to follow the dietary rules that had been set-up because of the fast food and convenience stores that is already in the neighborhood. However, if the person really aimed for the right nutrition and he or she must commit himself to eat only what's right.

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