

# Unhealthy america

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American is supposed to be the strongest nation in the world however we have managed to grasp the largest and most unhealthy nation trophy along with it. Americans care more about how quickly they can grab a meal rather than what that meals consists of and how bad the food is for the body.

Americans are becoming increasingly unhealthy with every meal they consume. My aunt went on a trip to Greece recently where she says the food was exquisite and utterly delicious. While she was crashing a Greek wedding she got to experience some of the traditional food.

She said the meats were fall off the bone tender with more explosive tastes than her taste buds could handle. She said the salad was a rainbow of green lettuce with mixed with reds of all colors for tomatoes. She produced a tiny bottle that once was full of homemade Greek salad dressing that the mother of the bride had made especially for her daughter's perfect day. She recalled how immaculate the food was saying specifically she had never seen such amazing foods in America and wished she could bring the cooks back with her.

She later told me that when she got back to the states, she realized just how bad she ate before she went on her trip and she sees more clearly now just how unhealthy Americans really are. Her story prompted me to step back and look closer at how we as a nation chooses what we are eating. I took my son to the grocery store to get food for the next couple weeks. I made all of his food myself instead of buying processed baby food because I know it is much healthier for him and it makes me think about what I eat.

While we were in the fruits and vegetables aisle, I noticed we were one of three people shopping in this area while the rest of the market place was packed with people. With the previous conversation stuck in my head, I decided to look around at what others were purchasing around me. I spotted a woman with a shopping cart mounding over with food. The looks of her cart reminded me of a contest I watched on TV where the mom got 5 minutes to get as much stuff as she could and by the end of her 5 minutes her cart was overflowing with stuff.

As I watch her carefully choose what she was placing in her cart I realized we were in the frozen foods section. She was staring at a glass door intensely. Behind that glass door sat probably 20 different variations of ice cream. While this stranger and her overweight daughter discussed the options together, I watched her pick up two different one gallon containers of ice cream. One container had chocolate swirls throughout the off white vanilla ice cream and the other had the same chocolate swirls accompanied by pink strawberry swirls.

I could hear her daughter asking for one kind and her mother saying she wanted the other kind. So instead of having to choose between the two different gallons of ice cream, she placed both containers in her already overflowing cart. I could sense both of their insulin levels increasing as they began to walk away with their prized frozen treats. While I was standing in the aisle with this mother-daughter duo, I was able to get a good look at what they had stuffed in to their cart.

I saw several blue boxes of Mac-N-Cheese paired with packages of processed animal intestines otherwise known as hotdogs. I could count six boxes of Hamburger Helper and each one a different variation but all boxes had the detail in bold of being doubly cheesy. I would think that a box of processed food that only needs to have water added to it is not the healthiest meal a mother could make for her child. I also spotted a couple 12 packs of various types of soda. I saw short green soda containers of individual bottles of Mountain Dew placed neatly on the side wall of her cart.

Thinking to myself I remembered something I read saying that Mountain Dew has the most sodium per bottle than any other soda drink in the business. I came to the conclusion that my aunt was right. We as a nation are not only eating unhealthy but teaching our children to do the same as well. After leaving the grocery store with our fruit and veggies in hand, I decide to stop at fast food restaurant to grab a salad for lunch. While in line the person ahead of me places his order. The young lady taking his order is a very short woman with a very wide stance.

As he gives his order I recount the experience that I had just had, watching this stranger and her daughter purchase mass quantities of food that were processed and extremely unhealthy. The gentleman tells the cashier he would like a Quarter Pounder with cheese. He asks for an extra slice of cheese, extra pickles and no lettuce or tomato. While the young lady quickly punches thing in to her computer screen to detail the order to his specific wants, he also adds that he would like to supersize his meal and requests a fresh batch of French fries.

In my head, still reeling from my conversation with my aunt, I thought about how much grease this man is going to eat in just his lunch sitting. The woman waddled over to the fryers that were full of what looked like grease that had not been changed in a week, pulled out a new bag of frozen French fries, filled the container full of them and slid them in to the hot, boiling grease to cook. With his order being made, I couldn't help but to think of all of the calories in his meal that he was getting ready to devour. He stepped aside waiting on his food and I placed my order for a grilled salmon salad with no dressing.

I quickly realized our two orders couldn't be more on the opposite sides of the nutrition chart as his meal was nothing but fat and grease and mine containing lettuce, fish, cheese and tomatoes. Another stranger opting to eat absolutely nothing good for them. As I sit down to enjoy my salad I look around and see the meals of others in the restaurant. I take out a package of already cut up bite size pieces of peaches for my son to eat since he is only 7 months old. Trying to be inconspicuous, I look at the table next to me.

A mother and her two young children are sitting, enjoying their lunches. The mother had a cheeseburger with so much ketchup running out of the sides you would think there was more ketchup than meat. Her youngest son had a 10 piece chicken nugget meal. The nuggets were obviously fried but the meat inside was a strange color of grey leading me to believe it was imitation meat. The little boy devoured each nugget only after carefully dipping each one of the nuggets in to a tub of barbeque sauce, making sure to lather each inch of the nugget to his desired amount.

The oldest boy had the same fried, strangely grey food but was dipping his nuggets in to ketchup. In my head I couldn't help but to sum up their lunch as to being fried fat and fried imitation meat, all lathered in a sodium filled dipping sauce. I quickly finished my meal and headed for the door. I had set my mind that I would not be like that mother, teaching her sons that eating unhealthy was acceptable. As I started putting away my groceries, I also started riding my cupboards and refrigerator from anything processed.

It was clear to me that the word unhealthy was quickly becoming our nation's primary adjective. As I reflect on my conversation with my aunt and the experiences I had with the unknowing strangers I watched purposely chose fatty, processed, fried and ultimately the most unhealthy foods possible, I realized obesity is not just a term used to define a plus size individual but a growing epidemic that is quickly spreading across our great nation. Unhealthy Americans are more prominent in society today and the growing trend does not look to be slowing down any time soon.