

## **Fast Food Frenzy**

### **Goals:**

- *Students will learn about the consequence of consuming too much fast food*
- *Students will be able to identify healthier options on the fast food menu*

**Audience:** 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade

### **Optional Craft, Activity or Snack:**

- Not Your Mama's Edamame
- Super Size Me!

### **Materials:**

*Eat This Not That For Kids (Book or printout available on the website)*

### **Lesson:**

Leader: In the United States, on any given day, one in four of us will have eaten at least one of our meals at a fast food restaurant.

Let's brainstorm reasons why people eat fast food:

1. It's cheap
2. It's fast
3. It's convenient
4. It (tastes) good?
5. Other reasons? For toys, marketing/advertising, large portions?

Leader: Ok, now how about reasons why we don't (or shouldn't) consume fast food:

1. It is typically higher in calories, fat, preservatives, salt, and sugar (which means it is not good for us)!
2. It usually lacks nutritious ingredients such as whole grains, fresh fruits, vegetables, and lean protein.
3. It can be expensive. If you eat one value meal a day, you would spend over \$1600 in a year!
4. It doesn't taste good?
5. If consumed regularly, can contribute to weight gain and numerous health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, and heart disease.
6. Others reasons?

Leader: Do the pros outweigh the cons? It depends on who you ask. Most health professionals recommend limiting fast food consumption to a few visits per month. If you have to eat at a fast food restaurant (if you are on a trip, or it is the only option available), can you think of things that you can order that would be better for you than the Super-sized meal with fries and soda?

Brainstorm as a class (here are a few ideas to get started):

- Grilled Chicken instead of a burger
- Water instead of soda
- Salad or baked potato instead of fries
- Add extra veggies to sandwiches

Leader: These are great ideas! Another thing you can do is check out the restaurant's website or ask the manager to see detailed nutrition information for a menu item. Healthy diets are all about balance. Although fast food is not particularly nutritious, it can be consumed in moderation. Unfortunately, many people do not consume moderately! Many of the fast food portions are way too big! You don't have to eat everything that is on your plate, and many portions are big enough to share.

We're going to end our lesson with a game of *Eat This, Not That*. We'll test your fast food smarts!

Leader: (Pick out a few samples from the book, or check out the website and print slides)

<http://eatthis.menshealth.com/game/>