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## Fast food has negative effective on mental health

3RD APRIL 2012

**Eating commercial baked goods and fast food like hamburgers, hotdogs and pizza contributes to depression, according to a team of researchers in Granada and the Canary Islands.**



People who eat foods like fairy cakes, doughnuts and croissants, as well as fast food from restaurants have a higher likelihood of becoming depressed, compared with people who do not eat such things.

Researchers at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and the University of Granada focused on a study group belonging to the University of Navarra's SUN Project, and found that consumers of fast food were 51% more likely to develop depression compared with people who little or none of it.

According to lead author Almudena Sánchez-Villegas, the more fast food you eat, the higher your risk of depression.

People who eat the most junk food items are likely to be less active and have poorer dietary habits, as well as more likely to be single. People in this category also tended to smoke, and work more than 45 hours per week, as well as eating less fruit, nuts, fish, vegetables and olive oil, she said.

Commercial baked goods like cakes and biscuits in packets are just as bad, with even small quantities linked to a much higher chance of becoming depressed, Sanchez-Villegas' team found.

The study followed 8,964 participants who had never been diagnosed with depression or taken antidepressants. After being assessed for an average period of six months, 493 were diagnosed with depression or started to take antidepressants.

Sánchez-Villegas' study is supported by a previous study published in the journal PLoS One by the SUN project in 2011, which found a 42% increase in the risk of depression among consumers of junk food.

Her team concluded that people should carefully control their intake of such food items because it had implications for both their physical and their mental health.

Currently around 121 million people suffer from depression around the world, although little research has been done on the relationship between depression and diet.

Certain nutrients are believed on the basis of previous studies to have a preventative role in depression, including group B vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids and olive oil.

Overall, the "Mediterranean" diet has been linked to a lower risk of depression.

## Article Information

Title: Fast food has negative effective on mental health  
Author: Luisetta Mudie  
Article Id: 21564  
Date Added: 3rd Apr 2012

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The Telegraph  
Medical News Today

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