Kendra Williams

Professor Sue Muecke

English 1020 2010

4 October 2010

Supersize Me

Fast food has become a part of Americans’ everyday lives because it is quick, easy and convenient. Even though fast food has these great factors, does that mean Fast food is good for you? Obesity and overweight issues has become a problem within the United States today and some people believe that the cause of this epidemic is fast food restaurants. Morgan Spurlock is a film maker, screen writer, journalist, and a movie producer. In Supersize Me Spurlock uses doctors, experiments and the general public to prove the physical and mental problems that comes along with fast food.

Spurlock decided that he was going to eat McDonalds three times a day for breakfast, lunch and dinner for the next thirty days to see what happens to his body. To keep track of his progress he worked with four doctors and a personal trainer. He worked with a cardiologist to monitor his heart, a gastroenterologist, a general practitioner and a nutritionist. At the beginning of the experiment he went through a series of test to get a general idea of how his body was before eating the McDonalds. Spurlock weighed 184 pounds and only had 11% body fat. Overall he was a healthy guy.

At the beginning of his 30 days Spurlock was getting sick. He was one of the few Americans who didn’t eat fast food. He was experiencing stomach aches, mood swings and even at one point he was vomiting. He said he felt like he was getting addicted to the food because when he didn’t eat McDonald he would feel down and weak but when he ate it he got his energy back. His girlfriend also says she noticed a difference because he was lazy and didn’t want to do anything but sit around and watch television.

While Spurlock was conducting his experiment he was also talking to people on the streets and he also visited an elementary school. While he was on the street he asked people how many times they ate fast food a week. The answer for most people was two or more times a week. In addition he asked what their favorite places to dine were, majority said McDonalds. It was interesting to find a French woman who says she does not eat fast food in America her reason being the portions are too big.

Visiting the elementary school he brought along some pictures. He brought first graders pictures of George Bush, Wendy, Ronald McDonald and Jesus. He proceeded to ask the children who were the people in the picture. They knew who the food characters were and George Bush but none of them knew who the picture of Jesus was. Just like when he asked the people on the street what was a calorie and nobody knew what a calorie was.

At the end of the experiment Spurlock has gained 24 ½ pounds, 2% body fat and fat around his liver. “Fatty Livers are associated with diabetes mellitus, high blood triglycerides” (Frank W. Jackson, M.D). His cholesterol shot up to 120, the guy who eats Big Macs five times a day claims his cholesterol is 140. High cholesterol can lead to heart disease. You will also have plaque buildup in the liver which causes restriction to the blood flow towards the heart. The experiment was proven to be successful because he proved that McDonalds was the reason for all his diseases.

“America has now become the fattest nation in the world” (Spurlock). I believe this because Americans are lazy and too busy to cook for their families or goes grocery shopping for their families so that they can have that healthy home cooked meal. The next best thing is to get fast food. In the movie Morgan shows how Americans don’t even walk on the daily basis let alone exercise.

One in every three children born in the year 2000 will develop diabetes in their lifetime (Spurlock). Parents don’t cook at home so kids have to look for other places to eat. At school the children usually tend to steer away from the healthy homemade food and lean towards the vending machines. Typically in vending machines they’re full of sugary snacks and carbs. By children having sugary snacks during the day and fast food at night all that “junk” builds up in their system and they do gain weight and become obese.

Television doesn’t help subside with the obesity epidemic because of all the money spent on advertising. The average child sees 10,000 TV advertisements per year (Spurlock). When you watch television they’re always showing commercials and most of them advertise food. You rarely see commercials about some fruits and vegetables besides the fruit of the loom.

Americans eat fast food every day and never think about the long term affects. No fast food places have up nutrition facts so how do you know what you are eating? The only way you could find out was to go on the internet which isn’t fair because some people didn’t have internet access. Another option is to search high and low throughout the restaurant to find anything dealing with nutritional facts. Last but not least you can ask the managers for any facts and they’d give them to you only if they are available.

At the end of Supersize Me they show the effects this movie has had on the people in the McDonalds Corporation. For one in 2004 they stopped the “Supersized” meals. The reason why I think they stopped the meal is because they actually saw with their own two eyes how much food that is for one person and they even thought it was too much. They also started to put nutritional facts on the back of the containers such as the fries and the quarter pounder boxes. That way Americans can see what they are eating and start taking responsibility for their calorie intake.

Overall Spurlock proved his point with eating fast food. He proves that it does make you sick and gain weight at a rapid pace. If it took him if it took him 14 months to lose 24.5 pounds imagine how long it will take an obese person to lose all of their weight to get back healthy. He also used good ways to show us how the fast food commercials can kind somewhat of brain wash you if the first graders knew all of the fast food characters were but not Jesus, and how not one adult knew what a calorie was. So take a stand against fast food. Would you rather see them go or you?

Work Cited

Spurlock,Morgan,dir *Supersize Me*.Universal,2004.DVD

Jackson,Frank w,comp.”*Fatty Liver*”Jackson Siegelbaum Gastroenterology.web.4 October 2010