

LOW-INCOME FAMILIES ARE UNHEALTHY DUE TO THE PROCESSED FOODS THEY BUY

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Introduction

In the United States, many low-income families are unable to afford nutritious foodstuffs. Families in the medium to upper income range are more likely to buy healthful food. For the goal of this study, I want to examine how low-income families' poor health is caused by their preference for processed food over more nutritious options. Low-income families are unhealthy because they rely on inexpensive, pre-made foods that are heavy in salt, which raises blood pressure and increases the risk of heart disease. In the second part, we'll talk about where and what low-income families are most likely to turn to for low-cost meals. If there are any possibilities for low-income families who want to eat healthfully, we'll talk about them in the third section. Programs that collect food contributions from the public and use coupons for discounts, as well as food stamps, are the most probable candidates. The pricing of healthy,

non-processed food items will be discussed in the fourth aspect. The shortage of nutritious food and the high demand for it among the general population are two such issues. The fifth part of this section will focus on the harmful impacts of a lack of access to good meals on children in low-income homes. Children's health risks and poor eating habits may both be harmed as a result of this practise. Low-income households are more at risk of developing health problems because of the factors listed above.

Cheap, Sodium-Rich Foods and the Risks they Pose

Food that is pre-processed and rich in salt is mentioned as a factor in the paper's opening section. Foods that must be heated in a microwave or that can be taken out of the oven are the most probable causes of excessive salt content. Sodium has a role in diet, according to Katherine Zeratzsky. "Salt (sodium

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chloride) serves a multitude of objectives," explains a Mayo Clinic dietitian. The bacteria, yeast, and mould that might otherwise cause spoilage are slowed down by the antimicrobial agent. Salt also enhances the taste of meals." Despite the fact that processed food is very affordable, this research reveals another reason why low-income households might choose to purchase it. It's easier for individuals to consume food that has already been flavorful since they don't have to do anything more to it. Similarly, the low cost of processed food provides an additional incentive to purchase it. Processed food may be afforded by low-income households due to its low price tag. According to The New York Times, "the "truth" that junk foods are cheaper than genuine foods has become a reflexive component of how we explain why so many Americans are overweight." The goods branded "Buy so many things for this price" are an example of inexpensive food for low-income households. You should expect to see a lot of these offers on packaged items at grocery shops. Stuff with the slogan "Buy so many items and receive so many free" are another good example of low-cost fare. Families on a tight budget will appreciate this offer since it allows them to stock up on food without spending any more funds (which can be used for other meals). This promotion's campaign slogan is "BOGO" (buy one get one free). However, this sort of marketing method is known as BOGO, and it is viewed as one of the most successful ways of marketing special deals. BOGOfetcher.com states: One of the reasons why BOGO offers are so popular is that people love receiving one thing for the price of two. Buying from the value menu at fast food restaurants is perhaps the most prevalent approach to save money while still getting a substantial amount of food. According to Bonnie Riggs, customers who had purchased combination meals but no longer do so have realised that "you can 'bundle' from the value menu and it is a lesser price" (White, 2012). A value menu at a fast-food restaurant offers items that may be used as an entrée, a side dish, or a beverage for a dollar. When money is tight, low-income families often turn to value menus for sustenance. After analysing the means through which cheap, processed

food is classified as inexpensive, it is vital to highlight the health hazards that come with eating cheap, processed food. Low-income households are at greater risk of developing high blood pressure because they eat a lot of sodium-rich foods. Hypertension may occur if a person consumes a lot of sodium-rich diet. "Heart disease, stroke, and renal disease are all increased with this condition, which is characterised by abnormally high blood pressure" (Thompson and Manroe, 2010). A person may die from the aforementioned health concerns, which are induced by high blood pressure. a daily sodium intake of 2,300 mg is suggested (Thompson and Manroe, 2010). A low-income family's susceptibility to ingesting more than 2,300 mg of sodium might be inferred from the cheap, high-sodium cuisine available in supermarkets and fast food restaurants. For low-income families, consuming processed food is more reasonable than spending a lot of money, yet the dangers of processed food are not nice to these people.

Buying Locations for Processed Food

The second part of the study focuses on the locations where low-income households may buy processed food at a discount. In order to save as much money as possible, low-income households must know where to get low-cost processed foods. Grocery shops are a good area to look for reasonably priced meals (Wal-Mart for example). The following remark explains why Wal-Mart is a great option for low-income families shopping for affordable food. Furthermore, the business hasn't mentioned which items would be on sale. Although Walmart is the biggest consumer of organic goods, I don't anticipate organic vegetables, dairy, or meat to make the cut for whatever reason. The vast majority of Walmart's products are heavily subsidised, manufactured foods that include genetically modified components. (Blackwell, 2012; p. When shopping at smaller stores, consumers may apply for a store card, get discounts, and accumulate points toward store rewards via these programmes. It is possible to save money in a smaller supermarket by purchasing banquet meals. These meals may be had

for as little as one dollar and change, which is why they are so popular. Customers who have a shop loyalty card may, however, save money on the meals. Families on a tight budget might benefit from the discounts offered by loyalty cards, which can be used to acquire 10 Banquet meals for the price of ten, for example. One establishment that sells pre-made meals at affordable pricing is a grocery store, but there are many more that do the same. Fast-food places are often a good place to get inexpensive cuisine.. It is the most popular fast-food chain in the United States. Dollar menu items, such as the sodium-heavy burgers and fries on offer at McDonald's, draw a large number of customers. The McDouble cheeseburger and the McChicken sandwich are two of the most popular items on their dollar menu. There is a danger of overconsumption since both goods are pre-made, which means that they contain a large level of salt.

Low-Income Families Have Choices

The final part of the study analyses whether or not low-income households have any choices for purchasing healthful food. Food contributions might be a good choice for low-income households. Community members may contribute food that will then be given to low-income households as part of this option's success strategy. When it comes to donating food to low-income households, the holidays are the most prevalent time period. Food stamps may also be used by low-income households to purchase nutritious food. The Food Stamp Program has a long and distinguished history. Johnson asked Congress to approve legislation making the FSP permanent on January 31, 1964. Strengthening agriculture and improving nutrition for low-income families were two of the proclaimed goals of the 1964 Food Stamp Act. Unified, (undated). As a means of ensuring the health and well-being of those living on the breadline, the Food Stamp Program was created. In order to guarantee that families have the money to buy a sufficient amount of healthy food, benefits are granted to participating families" (United, n.d.). Low-income

families in need of nutritious meals may always rely on food stamps. It is possible for low-income households to get healthful meals via the use of coupons. Coupons may be sent to families. As a result, they often reported shopping at chain shops that provide "double coupon redemption" and "two-for-one" deals," according to the report (United, n.d.). Coupons should alleviate the financial strain on low-income households by lowering the cost of nutritious foods that would otherwise be out of reach.

What Affects the Cost

The explanation for the high cost of nutritious food is the fourth topic for discussion. As a low-income consumer, you may not be able to afford to adopt a healthy diet because of the high cost of food and nutrition (Maillot et al., 2007). As soon as the term "natural" is used, the first thing that springs to mind is "healthy". More natural food is better for people since it provides them with more nutrients. In certain cases, it is impossible to raise and transport a specific kind of food to supermarkets. In the case of a product that has been damaged by the weather, a premium price would be placed on it. There was no rain in Texas or elsewhere in the nation during the summer of 2012. A large amount of maize was planted in fields, however because of the severe temperatures, many of the plants perished. As a result of the blistering heat and the worst drought in almost a half-century, food prices might rise, spooking consumers and raising concerns about global food costs." It was announced on July 25th, by the US government, that record-breaking weather will raise the cost of food in 2013, especially milk, beef and poultry. One of the country's most important food crops was decimated by a severe drought, which devastated 88 percent of the maize harvest. Besides severe temperatures, natural calamities also have a part in harming crops. Hurricanes, typhoons, and floods are the worst natural catastrophes for crops because of the large volumes of water they contain. Flooding in Madagascar has wiped away important crops, which

might cause a food crisis in the future, as Sudan, Uganda, and Afghanistan have all been affected by drought (Emergency, n.d.). The affordability of nutritious food for low-income households may be influenced by factors such as the amount of natural impact on the food and the price. Another aspect that affects the price of nutritious food is the demand from the public. When the sales of a certain product rise, the general public has an impact on the price of healthy food. For healthy food sales to increase, there must be a compelling motive to do so. For example, an athlete or an actor/actress may have endorsed a healthy food product in the past. Other factors contributing to sales growth include consumers' desire to consume foods that are rich in nutrients. For example, the lack of sunlight in Alaska results in vitamin D deficiency in the majority of the population. Due to Alaska's population's strong demand for vitamin D-rich meals, these items may command the highest prices. An further example is that as the world's population expands, more food will be needed to feed everyone. As a result, healthy food prices are beginning to climb, making it more difficult for people to purchase it. As of 2010, the world's population was projected at 6.9 billion, which is expected to rise to 9.2 billion by 2050, necessitating an increase of 70 percent in global agricultural output. There can be no question that the cost of nutritious food is rising and will continue to climb as agricultural productivity has increased by 70%. Low-income households are finding it increasingly difficult to acquire healthful food because of these variables that raise the cost.

Children's Health Risks

The children of low-income households may suffer because their parents are unable to afford nutritious meals. A child's health will be at danger if a low-income family chooses to eat a diet of processed and unhealthy food. When compared to their wealthier peers, low-income youngsters were more likely to be described as "in fair or poor health," had anaemia, and have a disability that interfered with their daily activities (Katrina Alaimo, 2001). According to the

source, low-income children's health was not up to par with that of their more affluent peers. This claim is supported by the fact that children from well-to-do families get the highest-quality nutrition and hence face fewer health hazards. Obesity is another concern for children from low-income households. As a result of childhood obesity, there is a chance of gaining weight as an adult. Childhood obesity is linked to an increased risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and high cholesterol that eventually causes a person to death. In addition to dealing with bad health and obesity, children who are raised in low-income households will find it challenging to succeed academically. As a result of their poor health and obesity, low-income children are more likely to have difficulty in school. Some of the hardships that children may face are not unique to their age group. Children are especially vulnerable to the negative effects of hunger, which include lower test scores and worse school performance as well as greater absenteeism and higher levels of hyperactivity and anxiety," according to a report from the Pew Research Center (Winter, 2004). Low-income children have a better chance of staying healthy and losing weight if they aren't compelled to consume processed foods throughout their childhood. The food children are compelled to consume in low-income families puts them at risk for health issues.

Conclusion

We hope that by examining how low-income families' use of processed foods leads to poor health, we have accomplished our goal. Food preserved with salt, which has health hazards, is available at affordable costs for low-income families in the first section. If you purchase a lot of sodium-rich food, your family may suffer from high blood pressure that may lead to heart attacks. Low-income households are more likely to eat high-sodium items at these locations. Grocery shops and fast-food restaurants are the greatest locations to shop for low-income families because of promotions like buy one, get one free (which feature the dollar menu items). What can low-income families do to afford healthful food? This is

the third part of the discussion. Food stamps, vouchers, and community food contributions are a few of the solutions being addressed. Fourth, what are the reasons behind the high cost of nutritious food? As the world's population continues to rise, it will need a large amount of nutritious food to meet this demand. Lastly, the study discusses the dangers that come with being a youngster in a low-income household. Poor health, obesity, and academic failure are just a few of the dangers. It's hard to see why low-income families wouldn't be unwell after considering their challenges, methods, and the qualities of the cheap, processed food they purchase.