



Fast Foods: Making Good Choices

Description

- ◆ This activity explores the issue of trying to eat healthy while eating at fast food restaurants.

Recommended Participation

- ◆ It is recommended a minimum of four (4) participants participate in order for the activity to be interactive and effective.

Objectives

Our objectives are to ensure participants:

- ◆ Develop an awareness of high fat items that permeate fast food restaurants menus.
- ◆ Develop an awareness of healthy alternatives available at fast food restaurants to help make healthier choices to maintain an overall balanced diet.

Time

30-40 minutes

Materials

- ◆ *Various Fast Food Restaurant Menus (Available upon request at restaurants indicating food content, calories, fat levels, etc.)*
- ◆ **Appendix 1: Fast Food Meal Planning sheets**
- ◆ **Appendix 2 Healthy Fast Food Ideas sheets**
- ◆ **Appendix 3 Where's the Fat song sheets**
- ◆ White board or large sheet of butcher paper, or chart paper for classroom display
- ◆ Flip chart and markers, dry erase board, or chalk board
- ◆ Markers, pencils & pens

Advance Work

- ◆ *Obtain various Fast Food Restaurant Menus (Available upon request at restaurants indicating food content, calories, fat levels, etc.) to have enough for every two participants*
- ◆ Print **Appendix 1: Fast Food Meal Planning sheets** for each participant
- ◆ Print **Appendix 2: Healthy Fast Food Ideas sheets** for each participant
- ◆ Print **Appendix 3: Where's the Fat song sheets** for each participant
- ◆ Ensure that there is a white board, flip chart, or large sheet of butcher paper, or chart paper for classroom display available to compile and post key points from the participant discussion.



Facilitation Instructions

1. Introduce the activity by asking participants to raise their hands if their answer is Yes to the following questions:
 - ◆ Who has eaten at a Fast Food Restaurant or got food or drinks from a Fast Food Drive Thru today?
 - ◆ Who ate at a Fast Food Restaurant or got food or drinks from a Fast Food Drive Thru yesterday?
 - ◆ Who ate at a Fast Food Restaurant or got food or drinks from a Fast Food Drive Thru during the past week? Month? Year? Continue extending the timeframe until all participants have their hands raised?
2. Divide the participants into groups of 2-3 participants each.
3. Note that Fast Food restaurants are popular because their FAST, they're relatively inexpensive, they're convenient and THEY'RE EVERYWHERE!
4. Ask each participant to:
 - ◆ Quickly (without thinking) say what their favorite Fast Food Restaurant is and their favorite food or drink at that restaurant.
5. Ask the participants:
 - ◆ "Do you think Fast Food is more or less healthy than when they eat at home? "Why or Why Not?"
6. Clarify that usually, fast food is less healthy than when we eat at home. A big reason for this is that most fast food is fried or deep-fried (hamburger, French fries, chicken, fish, and even fruit pies. They also often use bread coatings on their food, and their soft drinks contain high sugar content.
7. Ask the participants:
 - ◆ "Do you think there are some healthy foods available at fast food restaurant? What?"
 - ◆ Their answers should include:
 - 100% Orange Juice
 - 100% Apple Juice
 - Baked Chicken or fish
 - Baked Potatoes
 - Corn
 - Fruit (Fresh, sliced/diced in juice packs, mixed with granola and with low-fat yogurts
 - Green Beans
 - Salads (garden or chef) with fat free and low calorie dressings
 - Skim or Low fat milk
 - ◆ "Are there ways to make some unhealthy high-fat and high-sugar foods better choices with less fat and sugar?" How?
 - ◆ Their answers should include:
 - Baked Chicken or baked fish please.
 - DO NOT SUPER SIZE!
 - Hold the MAYO!
 - Low fat dressing please.
 - NO CHEESE please!
 - Small Fries please.
 - Small Drink please.



- “What fast foods could you order to help ensure you get five servings of fruits and vegetables everyday?”
- ◆ Their answers should include:
 - Ask for extra lettuce and tomato on your burgers, sandwiches, tacos and burritos.
 - Ask for fruit cup side dishes
 - Drink 100% orange juice
 - Drink 100% apple juice
 - Order salads
 - Request a veggie side dish
 - Look for fresh fruits for your dessert
- 8. Distribute the *Fast Food Restaurant Menus* to the participant groups.
- 9. Distribute the *Fast Food Meal Planning* sheets to all the participant groups.
- 10. Distribute the *Healthy Fast Food Ideas* sheets to all the participant groups.
- 11. Instruct the participants to have their team select four (4) items from their menu and write the items on their Fast Food Meal Planning sheet. They must come to a consensus for the meal
 - Allow 2 minutes
- 12. Gather the participants back together
- 13. Request each team read their respective meal items.
 - ◆ Ask the participant groups to clarify :
 - What healthy foods are on their list?
 - What changes they might request to make their selection healthier?
 - What foods would still be high in fat content or sugars?
- 14. While they list the healthy foods and changes they might request, list these on the board to show the types and varieties of healthy choices that were made? (This might be done by categorizing the items by the main food groups they represent, such as: Grains, Meats/Protein, Dairy, and Fruits/Vegetables)
- 15. Provide a summary statement encouraging participants to Stop, Think, Chose, and Eat Smart at Fast Food restaurants.



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General Comments or Activity Tips

1. The USDA Food Pyramid for Kids web site: <http://www.mypyramid.gov/kids/index.html> and the USDA Food Pyramid web site: <http://www.mypyramid.gov/index.html> have diverse high quality resource materials which teachers and facilitators may obtain FREE of Charge to enhance, support and expand your nutrition-related educational programs and knowledge.
2. As an extension activity, the participants could take their *Healthy Fast Food Ideas* sheet home to discuss with their family and use the ideas when they next visit a fast food restaurant.



Appendix 2: Healthy Fast Food Ideas

◆ Healthier fast food choices...

- 100% Orange Juice
- 100% Apple Juice
- Baked Chicken or fish
- Baked Potatoes
- Corn
- Fruit (Fresh, sliced/diced in juice packs, mixed with granola and with low-fat yogurts)
- Green Beans
- Salads (garden or chef) with fat free and low calorie dressings
- Skim or Low fat milk

◆ Healthful ways to improve less healthy fast foods...

- Bake Chicken or bake fish please.
- DO NOT SUPER SIZE!
- Hold the MAYO!
- Low fat dressings.
- NO CHEESE!
- Small Fries
- Small Drink

◆ Get five servings of fruits and vegetables even with fast foods...

- Ask for extra lettuce and tomato on your burgers, sandwiches, tacos and burritos.
- Ask for fruit cup side dishes
- Drink 100% orange juice
- Drink 100% apple juice
- Order salads
- Request a veggie side dish
- Look for fresh fruits for your dessert



Where's the Fat? Activity

Description

- ◆ This activity provides participants a creative means to synthesize what they already know about the sources of Fat in their diet and its impact on healthy eating.

Objective

Our objective is to ensure participants:

- ◆ Become more aware of the common sources of Fat in their diet.

Materials Needed

- ◆ 1 **Appendix 3: *Where's the Fat? Verse*** sheet for every participant

Time

15 minutes

Advance Work

- ◆ Print **Appendix 3: *Where's the Fat? Verse*** sheet for every participant.

Facilitation Instructions

1. Introduce the activity by noting that this activity is just a fun way to remind us about the common sources of Fat in our diets.
2. Ask questions to initiate group participation including:
 - What are Fats?
 - Should we avoid all Fat in our diet? Why or Why not??
3. Distribute *Where's the Fat? Verse* sheet to every participant.
4. Divide the participants into three (3) groups.
5. Explain that they will be doing a choral reading of the verse with Dr Seuss-like manner.
6. Read through the verse once as a group.
7. Now tell the groups to read only the lines assigned to their numbered group.
8. *Start Group 1 reading the verse, then have Group 2 join in with Line 2, then have Group 3 follow with Line 3. Continue through all the verse with the entire group doing the last line.*
9. Try it a 2nd or 3rd time until the group achieves an adequate level of rhythm.
10. Provide a summary statement and encourage the participants to be aware of the amount of Fats they take in on a regular basis.



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General Comments or Activity Tips

1. If there is time, it would be beneficial to quickly review where fats & oils are in the USDA Food Pyramid as part of a balanced diet.



Appendix 3: Where's the Fat Verse?

1. Where is the fat in the food we eat?
2. It's in the cheese, the mayo, and the hamburger meat.
3. If it's a cheeseburger we choose to eat.

1. Where is the fat in the food we eat, where is the fat we eat?
2. It's in the skin of the chicken that is fried so deep.
3. If it's fried chicken we choose as our treat.

1. Where is the fat in the food we eat, where is the fat we eat?
2. It's in the French fries that we think are so neat.
3. Fried in fat are the French fries we eat.

1. Where is the fat in the food we eat, where is the fat we eat?
2. It's in the dressing, sauces, and butter we seek.
3. To put on veggies and salads to make them complete.

All together:

So, where's the fat in the food we eat?