

## Fast food meals should include four food groups

**SOUTHAMPTON** — Most everyone has enjoyed such fast food items as hamburgers, hot dogs, and french fries. But many, says Dairy Council Inc., a nutrition education organization in Southampton, Pa., may mistakenly call these fast-service foods "junk food" when, in fact, there is no such thing. Every food has some nutritional merit, if only to provide energy through calories.

Fast food is far from nutritionally worthless. Its potential nutritional contribution to the diet is limited only by the variety of menu items available. This variety has widened from the

original hot dog/hamburger/fried chicken meals to pizza, Mexican food, roast beef sandwiches, and seafood. Recent additions might also include soup, salad bars, and breakfast.

Judging from phenomenal growth figures, fast food has assumed a major — if not an ambivalent — role in American life. Surveys conducted in the late 1970s suggested that nutritional quality was not a primary concern of consumers when they selected a fast food restaurant. Instead, they looked for convenience, taste, and price. With today's emphasis on

physical fitness, however, consumers are more interested in nutritional aspects of fast foods. Even while they eat these foods, they remain uneasy about them and wonder about their nutritional adequacy.

Consumers can eat healthfully at fast food restaurants by remembering basic nutrition rules. A healthful diet should include a variety of foods chosen from the four food groups (milk and dairy products, meats, fruits and vegetables, and grains) in servings and serving sizes appropriate to the individual's energy.

For instance, a meal consisting of hamburger, fries, and a soft drink contains foods from only three of the four groups. It has a moderate number of calories. Missing is a food from the milk group which provides calcium, an all-important mineral for bone and muscle function. Choosing milk instead of the soft drink, or a shake made with real milk would satisfy

nutrient requirements.

Conversely, a meal of fried chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, corn, coleslaw, roll, apple turnover, and milk includes all four food groups. But it is high in calories. These calories can be reduced if the gravy and apple turnover were eliminated, or only one or two servings from the fruits and vegetables group were chosen.

Adults should choose two daily servings from the milk group (children need four), two from the meat group (which includes fish, eggs, nuts, and legumes), four from the fruits and vegetables group, and four from the grains group.

An 8-ounce glass of milk or 1 1/2 slices of cheese make one serving from the milk group; two ounces of meat make one serving; a full cantaloupe should not be seen as a single serving from the fruits and vegetables group; and a sandwich consisting of two slices of bread provides two servings from the grains group.

Fast foods provide ample quantities of protein. Fat is part of a well-balance diet and fast food components (beef, cheese, mayonnaise) as well as the method of cooking (deep frying) are sources of fat. But too much fat in the diet can be a problem.

A well-balanced diet should also include digestible carbohydrates (starches and sugars) and fiber. Fast foods are rich in carbohydrates, but generally low in fiber except for salads and coleslaw—recent additions to many fast food menus. Traditional fast foods are also low in vitamins A and C. Calcium is available in whole milk or in shakes made with real milk.

The nutritional drawback of fast foods is the high fat-high sodium content. To reduce sodium intake, consumers can eliminate condiments, such as pickles, catsup, and mustard. Salad dressing should also be chosen with its sodium and/or caloric content in mind.

## Pa. Ayrshire Field Day slated for DVC

**DOYLESTOWN** — The Pennsylvania Ayrshire Breeders send out an open invitation to everyone interested, for their upcoming field day. The annual Pennsylvania Ayrshire Field Day will take place at the Delaware Valley College farm in Doylestown, on Saturday, July 23 and will get under way at 10 a.m. and continue to 2:30 p.m.

Educational contests are planned as part of the day's activities, including, dairy judging classes, and weed and seed identification contests.

The Pennsylvania Ayrshire Breeders' Association will present production awards to high Ayrshire herds and individuals, based on their DHA production records.

A tour is scheduled for those persons interested in seeing more of the Delaware Valley College campus. The tour will focus mainly on the college farm.

A box lunch will be available for a charge of three-dollars.

Pa. Ayrshire Breeders' Secretary-Treasurer, Milt Brubaker of Lititz, encourages you

to bring family and friends. Come and see this fine agricultural college and Ayrshire herd.

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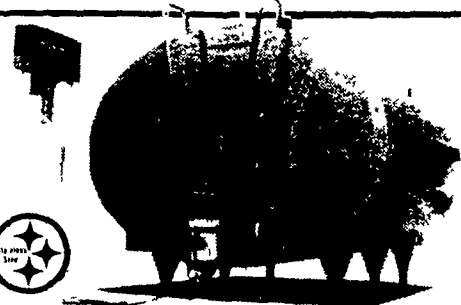
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