

A Study on Eating Habits

S.Lakshmi

Student-III BCOM Accounting & Finance,
Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Arts & Science College for Women
Email id: lakshmi1907@gmail.com

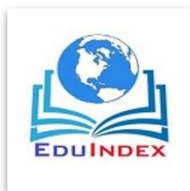
Abstract

Healthy eating refers to the intake of food that contains the right amount of nutrients and vitamins that help in keeping our mind and body fit. Each individual require eating healthy diet. In this era, though many people are health conscious, we can still find youngsters who are fond of junk food and do not have a balanced diet on a day to day basis. The importance of drinking enough water and regular exercise also needs to be taken into account for a healthy life style. This study aims to find out the eating habits among different age groups, to know the preferences of the respondents to various food items, the type of breakfast taken and the time gap between breakfast and lunch, dinner and bed time, water consumption level and whether they exercise on a daily basis.

Key Words: Healthy food, water intake, balanced diet, exercise.

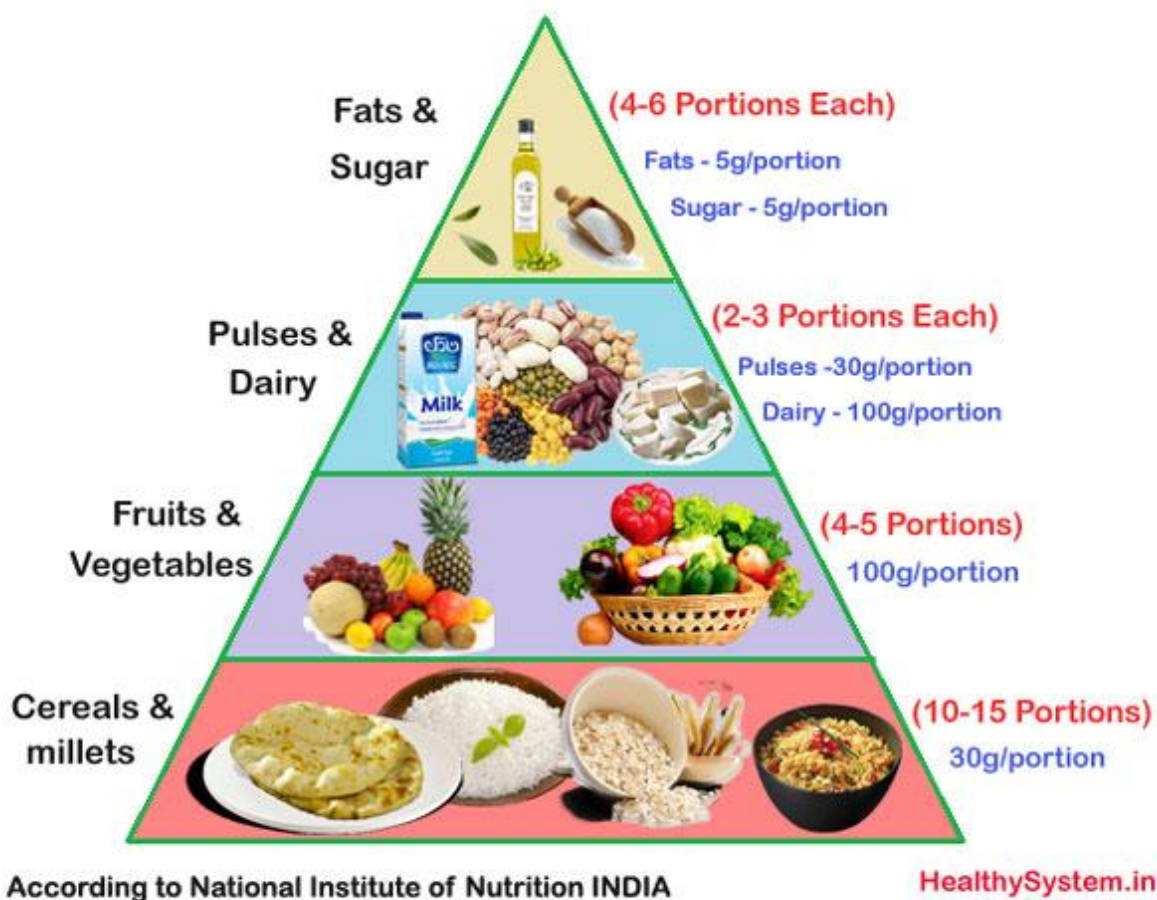
INTRODUCTION

Healthy eating refers to -“eating a variety of food, gives us the nutrient which is required to maintain our health, feel good, and stays fit and energetic”. The essential nutrients include – Protein, Carbohydrate, Fat, Amino acids, Vitamins & Minerals and Water.



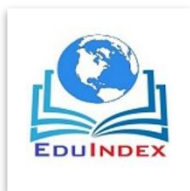
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Held on 4th January 2020

According to National Institute of Nutrition India, the Health Pyramid includes the balanced level of all the essential nutrition that is required for our body. In short, it can be called as **BALANCED DIET**.



The above picture projects the quantity of each nutrient required to be taken by an individual on a routine or daily basis.

Cereals & Millets i.e., Carbohydrates takes the first place as it acts as a source of energy which helps us to work the whole day. The next major portion to be consumed is the



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fruits and vegetables which provide Vitamins and minerals to our body which develops a strong immune system and helps to keep us away from commoncolds to dreadful diseases. The 3rd major essential component is the **Good Fat** and edible oil which helps in absorbing our vitamins in the body and gives good lubrication to our body. The least priority is given to **sugar and dairy products**.

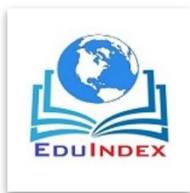
A study also concludes that having **ABC (Amla,Beetroot,Carrot)** juice a day helps to improve our immune system and which provides Vitamin C, E and D to our body.

VITAL COMPONENTS IN FOOD

COMPONENTS	FUNCTIONS
Carbohydrates	• Source of energy. • Acts as roughage
Protein	• Body building blocks. • Repairs tissues.
Fat	• Helps in vitamin absorption • Energy giving. • Maintains body temperature.
Vitamins & Minerals	• Key Micro nutrients. • Helps to stay away from diseases and disorders.

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Tips for healthy eating:



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- Stock up more fruits, low-fat dairy products (low-fat milk and low-fat yogurt), vegetables, and whole-grain foods at home and at work. Add healthyfood to your diet, rather than taking unhealthy junk foods.
- Eat a family meal every day. This will help you to have a healthy meal.
- Pack a healthy lunch and snacks for work. This helps you to have more control over your diet.
- Eat your snacks on a plate instead of eating from the package as it helps us to know the quantity of consumption.

Objectives of the study:

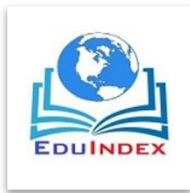
- The paper aims to study the demographic profile of the respondents.
- To know the preferences of the respondents to various food items.
- To study the type of breakfast taken by the respondents.
- To study the time gap between breakfast and lunch & dinner and bed time.
- To study the water consumption level per day.
- To study whether the respondents exercise on a daily basis.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is exploratory in nature. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire and was circulated among friends and relatives; the data was collected through Google forms. Data was collected from 153 respondents and three forms were not suitable due to certain defects, which were eliminated and study was restricted to 150. Also information was collected through secondary sources.

Research Gap:

The author found that there were not much of review of literature on eating habits among common public, this was taken as a study. The paper aims to get data from various age groups of people and study the eating habits of people without any scientific analysis into it. The previous studies have been done to find out malnutrition, or habits among patients etc.



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Limitations of the study:

Since the respondents have filled in through Google forms it may be subject to personal bias. The forms were circulated among known people. So it is a convenient sampling and not a random sampling.

III. DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

TABLE: 1 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

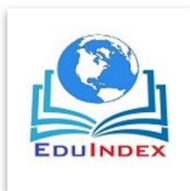
GENDER/AGE	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51-60	Above 60	TOTAL	%
MALE	39	9	2	4	2	4	60	40
FEMALE	65	11	6	4	1	3	90	60
TOTAL	104	20	8	8	3	7	150	100
%	69.33	13.33	5.33	5.33	2	4.68	100	

- Out of 150 respondents, 40% are male and 60% are female respondents.
- 69.33% of the respondents belong to the age group between 10 & 20 and only 2% of the respondents belong to the age group 51 – 60.

TABLE: 2 GENDER WISE ANALYSIS OF BREAKFAST EATING HABIT

GENDER	YES	%	NO	%	TOTAL
MALE	53	42.07	7	29.17	60
FEMALE	73	57.93	17	70.83	90
TOTAL	126	100	24	100	150
%	84		16		100

- 84% of the respondents have their breakfast, of which 57.93% are female.



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- 16% of the respondents do not have breakfast, of which 70.83% are female.

TABLE: 3 RESPONDENTS AGE WISE ANALYSIS OF TIMING OF INTAKE OF BREAKFAST

TIME/AGE	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51-60	Above 60	TOTAL	%
7:30 – 8:30	34	2	1	3	2	1	43	28.67
8:30 – 9:30	23	3	4	2	0	3	35	23.34
9:30 – 10:30	21	8	2	2	0	2	35	23.33
After 10:30	14	4	1	0	1	0	20	13.33
NOT APPLICABLE	12	3	0	1	0	1	17	11.33
TOTAL	104	20	8	8	3	7	150	100
%	69.33	13.33	5.33	5.33	2	4.68	100	

- 69.33% of the respondents belong to the age group of 10-20, of which 32% (34 /104) eat between 7:30 to 8:30
- 42.8% (3/7) of the respondents aged above 60 have their breakfast in the time slot 8:30 – 9:30.
- 28.67% of the respondents have breakfast between 7:30 to 8:30.

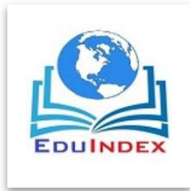
TABLE: 4RESPONDENTS PREFERENCE OF BREAKFAST

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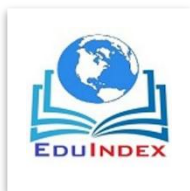


VARIETIES/ AGE	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51-60	Above 60	TOTAL	%
IDLY, DOSA, KICHIDI VARIETIES	72	13	4	6	2	3	100	66.67
FRUIT & NUTS	5	1	0	0	0	2	8	5.34
HEALTH MIX	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1.33
MILK, BREAD, OATS	7	2	2	0	1	0	12	8
RICE	11	3	2	1	0	0	17	11.33
NOT APPLICABLE	8	1	0	0	0	2	11	7.33
TOTAL							150	100

- 66.67% of the respondents eat idly, dosa, kichadi varieties as their breakfast of which 72% belong to the age group between 10 & 20, 6% belong to the age group 41 – 50 and only 3% belong to the age group above 60.
- Only 1.33% intake health mix as breakfast of which only 50% belong to the age group 10 – 20 & 31 - 40.

TABLE: 5 RESPONDENTS AGEWISE ANALYSIS OF EATING FRUITS & DRY FRUITS

FREQUENCY/ AGE	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51-60	Above 60	TOTAL	%
REGULARLY	32	3	4	5	2	5	51	34
RARELY	48	10	5	1	1	1	66	44
OFTEN	14	6	0	3	0	1	24	16
NOT AT ALL	7	2	0	0	0	0	9	6
TOTAL	101	21	9	9	3	7	150	100



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- 44% of the total respondents eat fruits & dry fruits rarely, of which 47% (48/101) belong to the age group 10-20.
- 6% of the total respondents don't eat any fruit or dry fruit, of which 7% (7/101) belong to the age group 10-20.
- 31% (32/101) of the respondents in the age 10-20 regularly take fruits and dry fruits. Same way 71% (5/7) above sixty eat fruits.

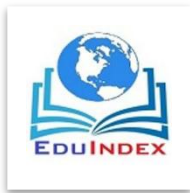
**TABLE: 6 AGE WISE STATISTICS OF RESPONDENTS CONSUMPTION OF
BALANCED DIET**

FREQUENCY/ AGE	10 - 20	21 - 30	31 - 40	41 - 50	51-60	Above 60	TOTAL	%
YES	51	11	3	7	3	7	82	54.67
NO	53	9	5	1	0	0	68	45.33
TOTAL	104	20	8	8	3	7	150	100

- 54.67% of the respondents consume a balanced diet. 50% of them belong to age group 10-20.
- Middle aged (31-40) feels they do not consume a balanced diet.
- Respondents above 41 consume a balanced diet.

TABLE: 7 CONSUMPTION OF WATER PER DAY

WATER CONSUMPTION (litres)	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	%
0.5 Lt – 1Lt	15	10.6
1Lt - 1.5Lt	57	37.7
1.5Lt – 2 Lt	40	26.5
MORE THAN 2 Lt	38	25.2



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TOTAL	150	100
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- 37.7% of the respondents drink 1 to 1.5 liters of water daily.
- 10.6% of the respondents drink less than 1 liter daily.

TABLE: 8 ANALYSIS OF TIME GAP BETWEEN BREAKFAST AND LUNCH

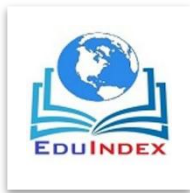
TIME GAP	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	%
3 – 4 HOURS	78	51.7
4 – 6 HOURS	60	40.4
ABOVE 6 HOURS	12	7.9
TOTAL	150	100

- 51.7% of the respondents maintain a time gap of 3 to 4 hours between breakfast and lunch
- 7.9% of them eat their lunch after a gap of 6 hours.

TABLE: 9 ANALYSIS OF TIME GAP BETWEEN DINNER AND BED TIME

TIME GAP	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	%
LESS THAN 1 HOUR	30	19.9
1 – 2 HOURS	68	45
ABOVE 2 HOURS	52	35.1
TOTAL	150	100

- 45% of the respondents maintain a gap of 1-2 hours between dinner and bed time.
- 19.9% of them go to sleep before 1 hour.



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TABLE: 10 ANALYSIS OF FREQUENCY OF DOING EXERCISE

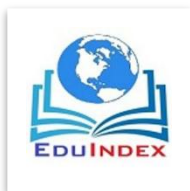
FREQUENCY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	%
REGULARLY	31	20.5
OFTEN	28	19.2
RARELY	53	35.1
NOT AT ALL	38	25.2
TOTAL	150	100

- 35.1% of the respondents rarely do exercise.
- 19.2% of the respondents often do exercise.
- 25.2% of them do not exercise at all.

TABLE: 11 PREFERENCE CHART

PARAMETER	NOT PREFERRED	PREFERED	NEUTRAL	MOST PREFERRED
JUNK FOOD	26	48	61	15
%	17.34	32	40.66	10
FRESH FRUIT JUICE	16	45	37	52
%	10.67	30	24.66	34.67
ORGANIC/ TRADITIONAL	8	44	56	42
%	5.33	29.33	37.34	28
AERATED DRINKS	73	43	29	5
%	48.67	28.67	19.33	3.33

- JUNK FOOD - 10% of the respondents mostly prefer, whereas 40.66% stay neutral.
- FRESH FRUIT JUICE - 34.67% mostly prefer & 10.67% do not prefer.
- TRADITIONAL FOOD - 37.34% stay neutral & 5.33% don't prefer.
- AERATED DRINKS - 48.67 % don't prefer while only 3.33% mostly prefer.



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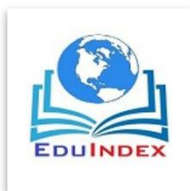
IV. CONCLUSION

In today's digitalized & busy world, on the click of the button we are able to get the food we order in minutes or we consume fast food or cook the half processed food which creates dreadful illness. Now days, we mostly prefer and cherish foreign foods. We are fond of junk food like pizza, burger, aerated drinks, brownie, etc., which contains extra added sugar and items which are not very good for our health. We take it as a pride to say that I had milk and bread as my breakfast whereas we feel so low to say we had either idly or dosa.

Lastly I would like to conclude that we have to change our attitude in what we eat. We must consume food according to the geographical conditions of the city. Most importantly as we Indians should consider it a privilege to have the most traditional spices and the dishes which have medicinal value in it. The proverb "**Unnave Marrundhu**" suits the line well. But if we don't take initiative to safeguard our traditional food and the nation's identity then the proverb "**Marunthe Unavu**" would be our future.

Suggestions:

- Start the day with the king's breakfast and complete the day with the popper's dinner.
- Schedule your diet in such a manner to eat dry fruits daily, if possible in empty stomach.
- Have 8 glasses of water a day and at least make it a habit to do 10 minutes of exercise daily.
- Don't have a lump sum meal at once or over eat. Eat in regular intervals. Maintain a proper time gap between your breakfast and lunch and lunch and your bed time.
- Don't ignore the feeling of hunger as it may lead to the increase in the secretion of acids in the stomach. If regularly done, it may lead to "Stomach Ulcer."
- Enjoy and eat your meals. Don't eat too fast. Always chew your food well before swallowing.
- Always sit and drink water. Drink water after 10 minutes of having your meal as it helps in the process of fully digesting your food.



Think India Journal
ISSN: 0971-1260 Vol-22, Special Issue-21



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- Eat fruits half an hour before your meal as it helps in good absorption of minerals and vitamins in the body.
- Try to have a balanced diet everyday by adding sundals and curd to your meal.
- Reduce junk snacks, instead eat organic or homemade snack.
- Don't eat oil which has been reheated for 3 times.
- Don't consume stored food. Eat freshly cooked food.
- Avoid or at least minimize the consumption of 3 white colored foods – Maida, Sugar and Salt.

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