

## Link between fast food, depression “confirmed”

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and World Science staff

**A new study supports past research tying fast food consumption to a greater risk of depression.**

Published in the research journal *Public Health Nutrition*, the results indicate that frequent consumers of fast food are 51 percent more likely to develop depression than those who eat little or none of it. And “the more fast food you consume, the greater the risk of depression,” said Almudena Sánchez-Villegas of the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria in Spain, the study’s lead author.



A new study supports past research showing that eating fast food is linked to a greater risk of depression. (Image © Joey)

**The study included 8,964 participants that had never been diagnosed with depression or taken antidepressants. They were assessed for an average of six months; during that time, 493 were diagnosed with depression or started to take antidepressants.**

The research also found that participants who ate the most fast food and commercially baked goods were more likely to be single, less active and have poor dietary habits, which included eating less fruit, nuts, fish, vegetables and olive oil. Smoking and working more than 45 hours per week were other prevalent characteristics.

The data was found to support research published last year in the journal *PLoS One*, which recorded 657 new cases of depression out of 12,059 people analyzed over more than six months. A 42 percent increase in depression risk associated with fast food was found.

**“Although more studies are necessary, the intake of this type of food should be controlled,” Sánchez-Villegas proposed. He cited its effects for both mental and physical health, including its established tendency to promote obesity and cardiovascular disease.**

**Depression affects an estimated 121 million people worldwide. Previous studies suggest that certain nutrients may help prevent depression. These include group B vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids and olive oil, as well as a healthy “Mediterranean”-type diet more generally.**