

Obesity and Food Away from Home
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According to the World Health Organisation, worldwide obesity has nearly tripled since 1975; as of 2016, more than 1.9 billion adults, 18 years and older, were overweight and of these, over 650 million were obese (<https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/obesity-and-overweight>). While there are many causes, one is the consumption of food away from home (FAFH) (for a review see e.g., Lachat et al. 2012). A study in the UK found that proximity to takeaway food outlets was associated with greater body mass index (Burgione et al 2014). In the USA, researchers found that food away from home increases calories consumed and reduces diet quality (Mancino et al 2009).

Among the causes of increased calorie consumption from FAFH are larger portion sizes (e.g., Zlatevska, Dubelaar & Holden 2014) and its preparation with more negative nutrients such as fat, than one would use at home (for a review see e.g., Lachat et al. 2012). Meanwhile, tactics to increase healthier choices such as menu labelling of calories rely on an assumption that consumers would like to eat healthy if they had the means and knowledge to do so (e.g., front-of package labelling; Ikonen et al. 2020). However, a recent meta-analysis shows that this did not result in change in the quantity of calories consumed among U.S. adults (Cantu-Jungles et al 2017) and a systematic review concludes that there is no support for a significant impact on calories ordered (Long et al 2015). Researchers infer that consumers often have a mindset of indulgence, of treating themselves to a nice meal out and are, consequently, less concerned about the health-related consequences of their consumption decisions. In fact, consumers seem to be more influenced by more affective and behavioural, rather than cognitive, factors in such settings (Cadario & Chandon 2019).

Given the importance of calories consumed away from home in the increasing prevalence of obesity and the different motivations for consumers eating out of home, it is important to understand what influences food choices and quantities in these settings. As noted by Wansink (2004), both the eating and consumption environments play key roles in these decisions. This project aims to understand how cues in these environments can influence consumers' food choices and motivations, and potentially find interventions to mitigate the impact of unhealthy consumption in FAFH.