

**Факультет иностранных языков**  
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SUPER SIZE ME

Three trips to McDonald's a day might be every little boy's dream. But the reality was a nightmare for Morgan Spurlock whose film "Super Size Me" documents his one-month existence on fast food and its disastrous consequences. So, if it was so awful, why did he do it? And does it work as a film?

The main basis of the film is that Spurlock promises to eat three McDonald's meals a day, every day, for a month. He must only eat food from McDonald's and every time an employee asks if he would like to 'super-size' the meal, he must agree. 'Super sizing' refers to the fact that with this type of meal you get a considerably larger portion of everything. Instead of the normal burger, fries and a drink, you get an extra-large burger, extra-large fries, and an extra-large drink for only a very small price increase.

Spurlock admitted that the whole experiment ignored any sensible eating plan. He knew that by eating three McDonald's meals a day, he would be consuming more calories, fat, salt and sugar per meal than he needed. Before he started, three doctors certified that Spurlock was 183 cm tall, weighed about 84 kg and was in good health. Although both Spurlock and his doctors knew this diet was unhealthy, none of them was quite prepared for just how unhealthy it turned out to be. The changes in his body were horrifying. In the first week, he put on 4.5 kilos in weight and by the end of the thirty days; he had gained nearly 14 kilos, bringing his total weight to a massive 98 kg.

Weight gain was only one of the negative effects, however. When all three

doctors saw the severe damage to the liver, they all recommended stopping the experiment after twenty days. Spurlock continued to follow the diet, however, because he wanted to show people what this kind of diet could do to you. And you begin to realize that the film could be a fast-forward picture of your life: in thirty days you get to see what could happen to you over twenty or thirty years of over consumption. You are on a path to heart disease, liver failure, high blood pressure, diabetes, depression and more.

"I think, we have to take responsibility for ourselves," says Spurlock. "There also has to be some responsibility on the part of the fast food companies. McDonald's alone feeds 46 million people every day. They have an obligation to give their consumers information about exactly what they are eating". Spurlock also focuses on the advertising and marketing of fast food products, especially to children. McDonald's markets to children through Happy Meals (a children's meal in a box including a free toy) and playgrounds in the restaurants. "The playgrounds aren't there just for kids to come and play," he says. "You're allowed into the playground when you've bought a burger or some fries or Coke. It's an effective way of establishing a positive association in children's minds".

It's humour above all that makes this film work. Even to the end of the month, when he admitted to feeling lethargic, depressed and smelly, the audience remain entertained by his sense of humour and upbeat style. Spurlock says that he hopes that the film is entertaining, but he also hopes that it encourages them to take better care of themselves. He says, "I'd love people to walk out of the movie and say, "Next time I'm not going to 'super-size'. Maybe I am not going to go there at all. I'm going to sit down and eat dinner with my kids, with the TV off, so that we can eat healthy food, talk about what we're eating and have a relationship with each other." Judging by critics and audiences alike, the film certainly does seem to work. Food for thought indeed.

## **SUPER SIZE ME**

### **QUESTIONS**

1. Why is the film called "Super Size Me"?
2. What experiment did Morgan Spurlock decide to carry out and what was its aim?
3. What were the results of the experiment?
4. Why does the author speak of responsibility? Whose responsibility does he mean?
5. Why does McDonald's focus their advertising and marketing on children?
6. What advice does the author give people?