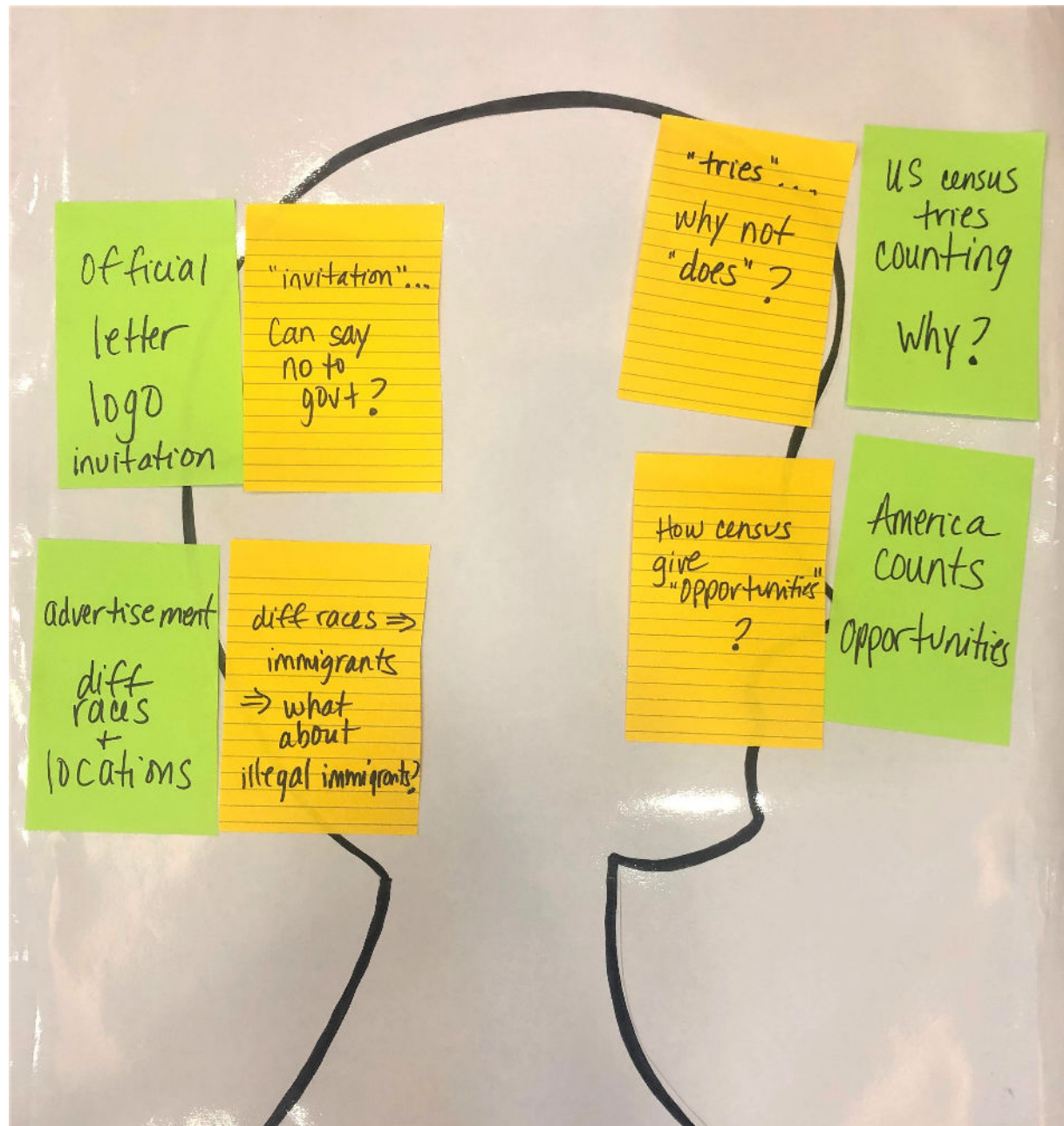


Why the U.S. census tries to count everyone



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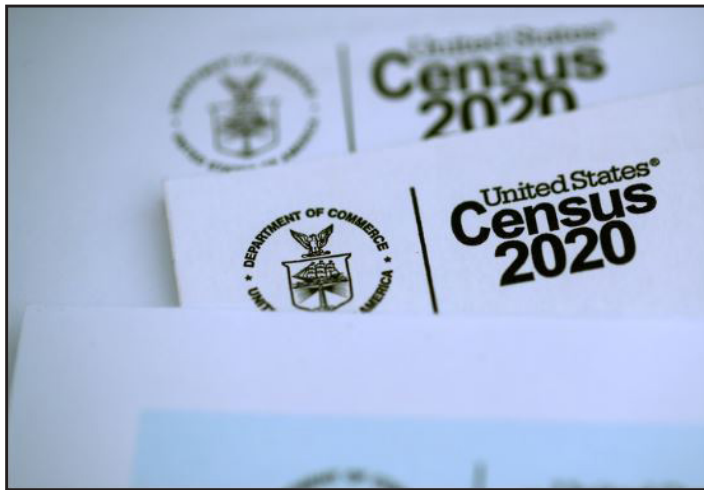


Image 1. The U.S. Census logo on paper gotten in the mail with an invitation to fill out census information online on March 19, 2020, in San Anselmo, California. Photo Illustration: Justin Sullivan/Getty Images



Image 2. Advertising that the U.S. Census Bureau used to encourage people to participate in the 2020 Census is displayed on January 14, 2020, in Washington, D.C. Photo: Michael A. McCoy/AP Photo

Stand up, America. It's time to be counted.

This past week of March 23, a letter should have arrived where you live, asking the adult in charge to complete a form called the 2020 Census. The census (pronounced SEN-suss) is a once-every-10-years tally of everyone living in the United States. It asks who lives in a household, how they are related and their age, race and other information.

This is a huge task. It's important that everyone be counted because the federal government uses that information to determine how many seats in Congress each state should have. If a state loses population, it might lose a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. If its population is growing, it might gain a seat.

Equally important, census numbers help decide how to divvy up more than \$675 billion in federal money each year. Those funds help states and communities build roads, schools, hospitals and fire departments. More than 100 programs, including Head Start and food assistance for low-income people, also rely on the census to direct funds to where the need is greatest.

This year marks the 24th national people count, which the Constitution requires be held every 10 years. The first census, in 1790, was early in the presidency of George Washington. About 650 men set out on foot or horseback to count everyone living in their assigned areas.

President Washington and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson both thought the final number — nearly 3.9 million people — was low. Quarrels and quibbles have dogged just about every census since then.

After all, it isn't easy getting a snapshot of the entire country for a single day. (Census Day has been April 1 since 1930.) The U.S. population grows by one person every 23 seconds because of births in the nation and arrivals from other countries. People living in rural areas, the homeless and children who split their time between two homes present challenges to getting an accurate count. The U.S. Census Bureau says that about 1 million kids younger than age 5 were not counted in 2010. That was the highest number for any age group.

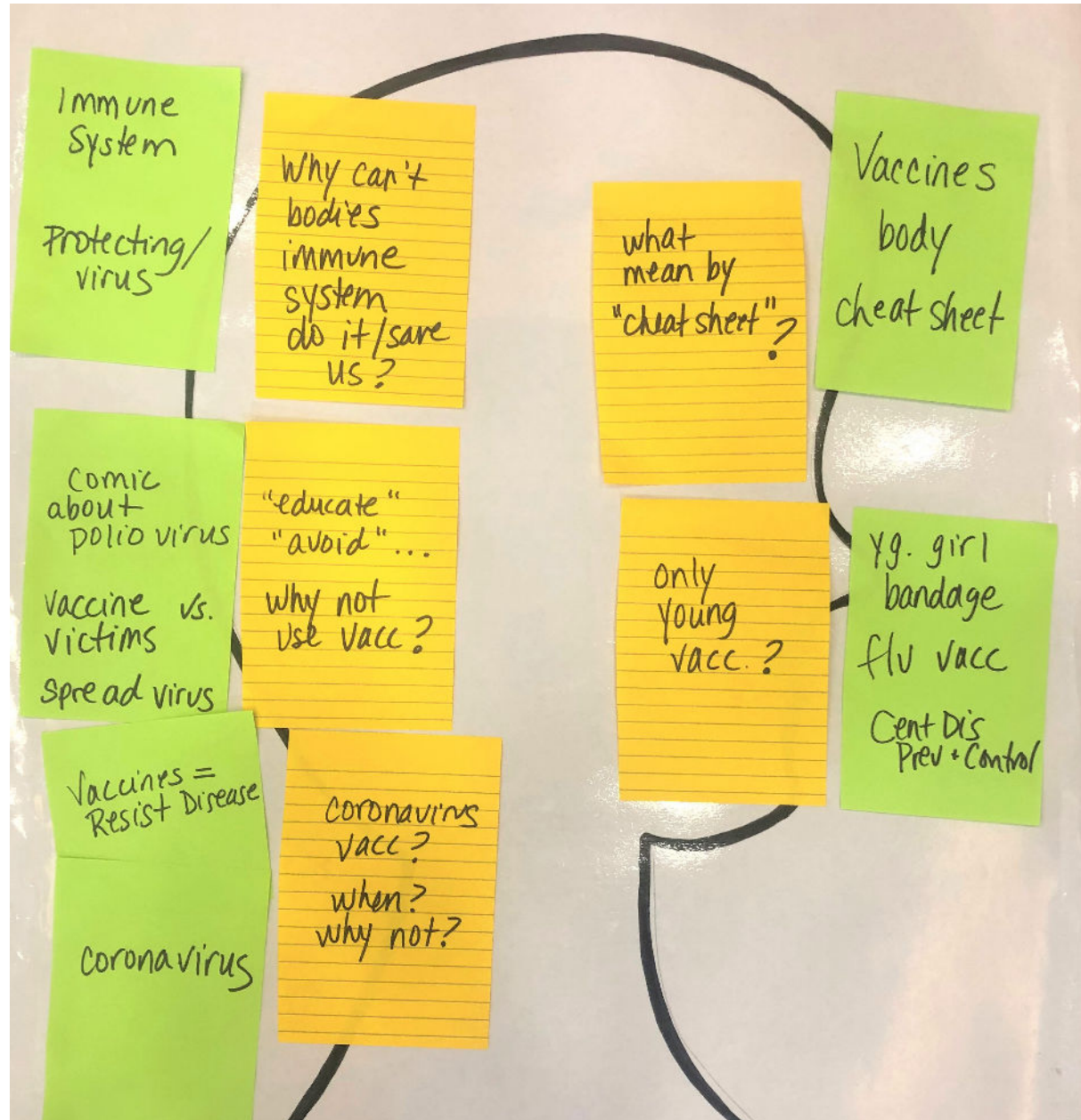
Officials have tried to simplify this year's process. For the first time, responses can be made online, as well as by phone and mail. To help people who speak little or no English, officials have prepared guides in 60 languages, plus Braille for the blind.

Each head of household — even someone living alone — must fill out a census form or face a fine. No citizenship question is asked. This has eased the concerns of some who said asking about citizenship would reduce the response rate of immigrants and result in less funding for their communities.

The Census Bureau is required by law to protect people's privacy. No one will be identified by name when officials analyze the numbers the census collects.

But for anyone tempted not to respond, know this: the people who are census takers are like a dog looking for that tasty bone it buried. They don't give up easily. Ignore their letter, and more will follow because they really want everyone to be counted.

Vaccines are like giving your body's defenses a cheat sheet



Vaccines are like giving your body's defenses a cheat sheet

Image 1. A girl gets a bandage on the spot where she just received a flu vaccine. Photo: Center for Disease Prevention and Control on Unsplash

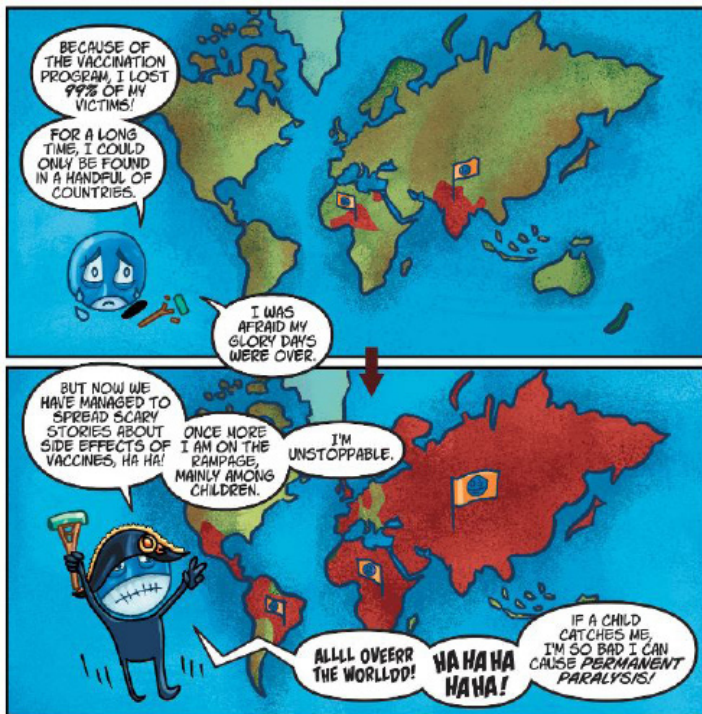


Image 2. Susan Nasif, an expert on viruses and an artist, helps educate kids about vaccines with comics. In this one, she tells a story about poliovirus, which paralyzed thousands of people before a vaccine was developed. Polio cases nearly disappeared until some people avoided the vaccine. Image: Susan Nasif

A needle's sting in the arm or leg is nobody's favorite thing. However, the vaccines within those shots are significant. They are some of the most important medical inventions in the history of science.

There can be misunderstandings about what vaccines are and how they work. The Washington Post newspaper reached out to Susan Nasif on the topic. Nasif is an expert in the study of viruses. She is also an artist who specializes in creating comics that tackle difficult subjects in science.

"When I was 8 years old, I remember watching a cartoon that explained the immune system to children," Nasif said. She talked to the Post by email.

She enjoyed the science cartoon she saw as a child. "I loved it, and I decided then to draw and create my own comics."

Immune System

The immune system is the body's natural protection against viruses, bacteria and other nasty stuff, Nasif said. Viruses are especially good at developing disguises that help them hide from the immune system. This is why we need vaccines. They help our bodies see through the disguise.

Most vaccines contain a weakened or dead version of the virus they are meant to protect against. Some vaccines carry only the proteins found on the virus's surface. In both

cases, after these substances are injected into the body, your immune system grabs them up. Then it learns how to identify them. It works kind of like a cheat sheet that helps you prepare for a big test.

Protecting Against A Virus

Then, when the body comes into contact with the real thing, a live virus, it knows what to do. The body now knows how to protect against the virus. It can set to work gobbling up the viruses before they can do too much damage.

You may be wondering why you still have to get shots for something such as polio. Polio is a virus that can make it hard for a person to move. It can be deadly. You might not know anyone who has gotten it. This is called “herd immunity” which is explained below.

“Vaccines act as a firewall that prevents the spread of diseases to others,” Nasif said.

Vaccines Make People Resistant To Disease

When enough people develop resistance to a disease by getting a vaccine, the chance that a virus can infect someone drops. Its chances to keep spreading can drop to near zero. This is “herd immunity.”

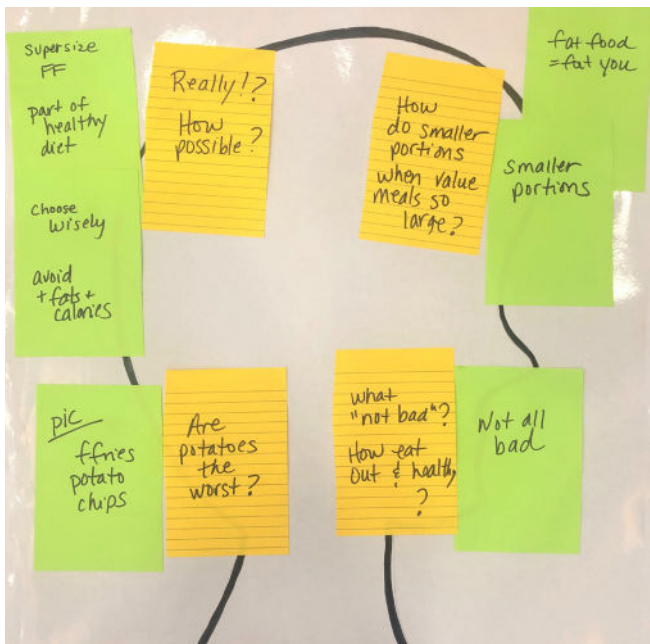
Polio was infecting 350,000 people a year in 1988. Herd immunity reduced the spread of the disease. Just 33 cases were reported worldwide in 2018. The protection continues only if people continue to give their bodies a cheat code to beat polio through vaccines.

Coronavirus

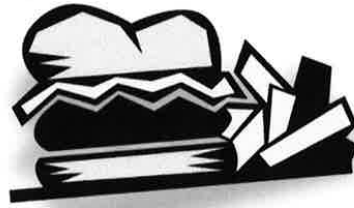
Many people are concerned about a new virus coming from China. They fear it could become a big problem for people around the world. This virus is called coronavirus. Nasif said that scientists are working hard to create a vaccine for this coronavirus. The virus causes a disease called covid-19. Nasif said that it takes time to produce a vaccine that will be safe to use in people.

For now, she said the best thing you can do to protect yourself is to wash your hands often. That helps to protect against this or any other viruses, bacteria and other things that cause diseases. She also suggested avoiding being close to people who are coughing or sneezing.

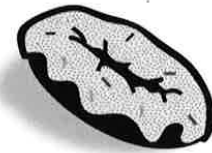
Nasif also suggests eating healthy food and getting plenty of sleep at night. Those are two ways you can give your immune system a helping hand.



EXAMPLE FROM THE LESSON



Super-Size Fast-Food Facts



by Sandy Stiefer

Jeffrey and Gil walked into the Bigger Burger restaurant.

"Man, am I hungry!" said Jeffrey.

"Me too," agreed Gil. "I'm going to have the Super-Dooper Mammoth Burger." He reached into his pocket. "I have just enough money for a Super-Dooper Scooper of fries, too."

"That's a gut-buster," Jeffrey said with a laugh. "I want something smaller. I'm going to get a Super-Dooper cola and the Side-of-Beef burger. With lots of mayo."

"What are we going to do after we eat?" Gil asked.

"Digest the load and rest!" answered Jeffrey. "Fast food is not only fast, it's inexpensive, convenient, and tasty. Many kids could eat it for every meal. In fact, some people do. Gil and Jeffrey have fast food three or four times a week. The number of people eating fast food has almost tripled in the past 20 years. There are 300,000 fast-food restaurants in the United States alone."

And the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) says nearly half of all food dollars is spent on food eaten away from home.

Fat Food, Fat You

Fast food, however, doesn't rank high with health experts because of the fat and calories. We're all familiar with the burgers, fries, fried chicken, tacos, burritos, and roast beef offered by fast-food restaurants.

Part of the reason fast food tastes good is its high fat content. The fat makes the food taste and feel good in your mouth. Certain amounts of fats are important to a healthy body. But the fats in fast foods are often saturated fats in meat and fried foods. You should not eat too much of these kinds of fats. Kae Fenster, a dietitian, says there are ways to stay away from these fats and still keep your taste buds happy. And if you cut down the amount of fat, you'll knock out a lot of calories, too. That is because fat has more calories per gram.

Why so tired after eating?

What counts as FF?

Why?

how?

How does that work? what does non-fat food "feel" like?

Smaller Portions

"Choosing regular-size portions is a very good idea," Ms. Fenster says. If you go for the super sizes each time, you're probably taking on a super-size portion of fat and calories. There is also the sodium (salt) to think about.

The extra-large burgers and fries and other fast-food servings are far larger than a standard serving size as set by the U.S. government. The sizes of servings you get in most restaurants actually equal several "normal" servings.

Ms. Fenster suggests that if you really are hungry, you can add foods to those regular-size portions. "A salad with low-fat dressing, a glass of low-fat milk, or a baked potato with chili or broccoli and cheese gives us more to eat and some important nutrients, too," says Ms. Fenster. This is good advice because a typical fast-food meal is low in certain nutrients people need. According to the 2000 Dietary Guidelines for Americans report, almost 90 percent of Americans need to improve their diets. For example, fewer than 20 percent meet the daily recommendation for fruits.

According to the National Institutes of Health, more than half the U.S. population is overweight. Fast food is not entirely to blame. People simply don't get the regular exercise they need to burn off the calories they take in. That leads to weight gain and even obesity (weighing 20 percent or more above ideal weight). Serving size certainly can play a part in the overweight picture. Every fast-food place has a larger-size option. If you order a combo or value meal, you get a big burger or sandwich, large-size fries, and large drink. For a few more pennies, you can get a bigger portion of fries or a huge drink. That may be a good deal for your wallet, but it's not so good for your waist! The extra-big sizes go beyond what is considered a normal-size serving. Here, for example, are the normal-size servings of food set by the U.S. federal government.

- Meat: 3 ounces of meat, chicken, fish (the size of a bar of soap)
- Bread: one slice of bread, a tortilla, or half a small bagel
- Cheese: 1 ounce (one slice of American cheese)

Fast-food restaurants aren't the only places where you should watch serving sizes. Many restaurants have large portions that are often equal to two to five normal-size servings of foods.

Not All Bad

"Fast foods are not 'bad' foods," says Kae Fenster. "Foods that are high in calories or fat or salt can be included in what we eat as long as we remember this: balance, moderation, and variety." If you eat fast foods often, you should make choices so that you're not always getting the high-fat and high-calorie meal. Here are ways you can eat healthier in fast-food restaurants:

- Skip the mayo, special sauce, and bacon. Use mustard and ketchup for flavor instead.
- Order the smaller size. Be aware of serving sizes.
- Choose grilled or broiled meat. Skip the fried burgers and breaded, deep-fried chicken and fish.
- Have a salad with low-fat dressing or a baked potato. You'll get more nutrients this way. Says Ms. Fenster, "If you really, really want some fries, get a regular-size order and split it with Dad or your friend . . . sharing is always fun."

Ms. Fenster also suggests balancing what you eat each day. If you do have a typical fast-food meal, balance the rest of the day with healthier, lower-fat and lower-calorie food choices.

Life is busy and fast. We want our food fast, too. But we don't need to gain weight that fast. Choose wisely when you eat fast foods. Unlike Jeffrey and Gil, you won't need to sit down and rest when you're finished.



A
don't do value meals
But what if really hungry?

Break Law?

A
Is this @ home food, too or just FF?

A
How eat out

A How healthy diet possible

why not standard / rec?

A How healthy possible

still wonder why tired after big meal?