

CHAPTER : 18

COLD BEVERAGES, CONVENIENT AND READY TO EAT (INSTANT) FOODS

Cold beverages are liquids that quench thirst, help in increasing fluids in the body, enhance body nutrition as well as give energy and pleasure.

Cold drinks are mostly used in summers. There is an urge to drink lemon juice, sharbat, fruit juice, buttermilk like chhachh and milkshakes. These drinks provide relief from hot weather and also increase freshness and moisture.

But in this modern world, children prefer carbonated cold drinks and preserved fruit juices more. These cold drinks are as cold as ice and are of different flavors like lemon, orange, mango etc. consuming these cold drinks in hot weather moistens throat and provides energy to a tired body. The effect of the special carbonated cold drinks stays only for a short period of time.



Figure : 18.1 (Cold Drinks)

The ill-effects of carbonated cold-drinks on health–

1. In these drinks only sugar is present as a nutritive element to provide energy. Other nutritive elements like protein, fats, mineral salts, vitamins are absent.
2. Excessive consumption of these drinks imbalances the proportion of calcium and phosphorous in the body which is harmful.
3. Artificial colour and aroma is added in preserved bottled juices for taste and colour which have no nutritional value.

The carbonated cold drinks available in the market are messing with our health in the name of freshness and energy. The messiness of the carbonated drinks surfaced in news when the presence of insecticides was confirmed and these were removed from the market. The quality of water, purity and packaging of bottles, quantity of preservative artificial agents for increasing taste and aroma as well as the standard of hygiene followed during their manufacturing are all under scrutiny. Therefore, we must consume home-made cold drinks such as fruit juices, lemon juice, buttermilk, etc. which are not only nutritious and safe but also cheap.

In the changing social environment children have become addicted to alcoholic beverages like beer, wine, etc. These drinks contain alcohol which increases weight and liver gets damaged and digestion, and metabolism gets adversely affected and consumer falls ill.

Convenient and instant foods—

Convenient food is food that is commercially prepared (often through processing) to optimize ease of consumption. Such food is usually ready to eat without further preparation. It may also be easily portable, have a long shelf life, or offer a combination of such convenient traits. Ex- chopped vegetables, bottled fruits and vegetables, batter of idli-dosa, refrigerated peas, chips, etc.

Use of convenient foods saves time and energy. For example, if the instant *pulao* (a dish made with rice) mixture is used then the time otherwise required for washing, soaking rice and washing, peeling, chopping vegetables is saved. The *pulao* mixture can be added to hot boiling water and the dish is ready to eat. The use of convenient food is increasing day by day these days because of the following reasons:

1. Increase in the number of working women
2. Increase in the number of nuclear families
3. Less information on culinary skills
4. Physical incapability
5. Old age
6. Lack of time
7. Increased Financial capacity.

Classification of convenient food—

1. **Basic products**— the food items are one or more steps ready before cooking. Ex- peeled garlic, chopped vegetables, etc.
2. **Ready to cook**— these foods are ready to

cook, that is all the steps required for cooking are done by the manufacturer. Ex- batter of idli, dosa, etc.

3. **Already cooked food**— these food products are already cooked. Either they have to be heated before consumption or mixed in hot water or they are ready to eat. Ex- soup mixture, baby food, etc.

Ready made products—

The all-ready processed foods can be eaten instantly like biscuits, carbonated cold drinks, bottled fruit juices, etc.

Advantages of convenient foods—

1. Easy and fast to prepare
2. Saving of time and labor
3. More safe than fresh foods
4. Guarantee against spoilage
5. Inclusion of nutritional elements to improve quality
6. Easy to use as and when required

There are some limitations and disadvantages of convenient foods such as nutritional elements get destroyed during processing, excess use of sugar, salt, ghee, oil for increasing taste, use of chemical colour, aroma, preservatives for making food attractive, etc. Also these convenient foods are expensive.

Instant foods or fast foods—

Some convenient foods are instant foods. Because these are prepared instantly they are called instant or fast foods. Ex- pizza, burger, chowmein, sandwich, cake, pastry, etc.

These instant foods are influenced by western culture and are increasingly becoming popular in children and are becoming part of their daily diet.



Figure : 18.2 (Fast Food)

Fast foods are also known as junk foods. Junk means rubbish or scrap. These foods are made up of refined flour or starch and so other nutritional elements and fibers are lacking in them. The amount of calories or energy is excessive especially in cake, pastry, wafers, etc. which increases the level of cholesterol in blood to the of heart ailments. Tomato ketchup, soya sauce, chilli sauce, vinegar used in these foods are made up of chemicals. These invite obesity, high blood pressure, cholesterol in children and consequently children face problems of heart attack and diabetes.

A study in Australia has revealed that not only junk food is harmful for body but also the brain which affects the decision making power. Stress and depression are collateral effects of junk food.

Thus, we can conclude that not only cold beverages, instant foods mess with our health but being expensive they also affect our budget. We must stay away from them as far as possible.

IMPORTANT POINTS:

1. Cold drinks- lemon juice, fruit juice, buttermilk, and milkshakes- provide relief from hot weather and also increase freshness, provide nutrition, energy and strength.
2. Carbonated cold drinks have no nutritional value.

3. Many of the processes required for convenient foods before cooking are done by the manufacturers.
4. Many convenient foods are a part of instant foods.
5. Consumption of past foods daily increases weight and cause heart ailments (diseases).
6. Pizza, burger, chowmein, wafers, cake, etc. are fast or junk foods. These are prepared instantly but they only provide energy and have no nutritional quality.

EXERCISE:

1. Choose the correct option–

- (i) Carbonated drinks are
(a) Nutritious (b) Cheap
(c) Expensive (d) Healthy
 - (ii) Which of the following is not a junk food?
(a) Sandwich (b) Chowmein
(c) Pizza (d) Lentils-Chapatti
 - (iii) Which of the following is ready to cook?
(a) Idli batter (b) Germinated cereals
(c) Kurkure (d) Maggi
 - (iv) Fresh juice is — in comparison to bottled juice.
(a) Nutritious (b) Moistening
(c) Cheap (d) All of these
2. What is junk or fast food?
 3. Define convenient foods.
 4. Differentiate between fresh drinks and carbonated drinks.
 5. How does instant or fast foods affect our health? Explain.

ANSWERS:

- (i) c (ii) d (iii) a (iv) d