



DALLAS AQUATIC MASTERS

Fun, Fitness and Competition

Super Sized

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While preparing for a talk I'm giving at the Vail Camp I came across some shocking information. We all know the problem obesity causes in this country, over half of the population is over weight. Researchers have spent millions of grant dollars trying to figure out why Americans keep getting fatter. In truth the answer isn't really that complex. We eat way too much and move around way too little. The "Cliff Notes" version is: we are fat, and we are lazy.

While Nutritionists have labored over what is the perfect diet and education program, researchers, and marketing experts for McDonald's, Burger King and the fast food industry have spent billions to figure out ways to keep you coming back for more of the less than perfect diet they offer. In fact Ronald McDonald is the most recognizable character around the globe, ahead of Mickey Mouse and Santa Clause. Believe me these people know their stuff.

One of the most effective marketing plans has been to "SUPER SIZE". It seems that consumers are more attracted to larger sizes than they are to lower prices. Typical of our society more is always better. Most shocking to me was when I learned that the average meal from McDonalds, when they first opened in the fifties, was made up of a hamburger, fries, and an eight-ounce Coke. The meal was around 400 calories. Compare that with today's average "super size" meal, still a burger, fries, and a Coke, and you find yourself dining on a 1400 calorie "light lunch". But remember it was a good deal.

A recent article published in the American Journal of Public Health, showed that portion sizes today are at least twice the size of what they were just 20 years ago.

The lesson here is simple: If you like to dine at Mickey D's be sure to order the regular burger a small coke, skip the fries altogether, and enjoy your meal. Or order the "super size" and plan on swimming 10,000 meters just to burn off your lunch. I guess there is a third option eat the "super size" meal and sit your "super size" backside on the sofa and become part of the growing, or should I say expanding population.

See you at the pool.

Bobby