

Chip – a great snack or a human mistake

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When one thinks about a great snack that both kids and grown ups adore there has to be two main distinct ideas that pop into his head. For those “sweet members” of the society it would have to be the idea of candy, particularly chocolate. And for those who crave salt with every primitive desire in the body it’d have to be the idea of Potato Chip.

A potato chip is a thin slice of a potato that is either deep fried or baked until it is crisp.

The first time a potato chip made it’s way from the kitchen to being only greasy fingers. But in the summer of 1853, Native American George Crum was employed as a chef at an elegant resort in Saratoga Springs, New York. One dinner guest found Crum's French fries too thick for his liking and rejected the order. Crum decided to rile the guest by producing fries too thin and crisp to skewer with a fork. The plan backfired. The guest was ecstatic over the browned, paper-thin potatoes [1].

There is a little consistency in the English speaking world for names of fried potato cuttings. American English use “chips” and sometimes “crisps” for the same made from butter, and “French fries” for hot crispy batons with soft core. In the UK “crisps” are the brittle slices eaten ay room temperature and “chips” refer to the hot dish.

90% of people in the UK eat chips, the majority at least once a week. British can be rather patriotic about them. Americans even celebrate National Potato Chip Day on March 14. Over half a billion meals containing homemade chips are eaten each year. The chips eaten in Great Britain each year come from potatoes weighing the equivalent of nearly 2.9million Formula 1 cars.

It is necessary to mention some health effects caused by potato chips.

Experts of Aston University of Life and Health Science have delver deeper to uncover just why people love chips so much. The study revealed that after eating chips people increase in calmness and cheerfulness.

Nutritionist Fiona Hunter said: “Chips give vitamin C which is an important element believed to help protect against certain types of cancer. People who eat food rich in vit. C are less likely to suffer from cancer of stomach and breast”.

A portion of chip shop chips contains less fat than a prawn mayonnaise sandwich and oven chips will provide a third of your Recommend Daily Amount of vitamin C.

But when eaten in large quantities chips are considered “junk food”. All kinds of chips are harmful for babies. Their presence in British schools has contributed to the poor diet of some children [2].

One of the dangerous ingredients is salt. Naturally the amount of salt we get from grains fruits, meat. That is enough for our bodies daily requirement.

Besides the salt there is another dangerous element – acrylamid. It is formed when starchy food is baked or deeply fried. It is a cancer causing element and it’s amount in chips is huge.

“Snack food is a billion dollar business that does little good for our health. A better snack is a peace of fruit”, said Dr. Jane Klaur from the Obesity Research Center.

The choice is up to everyone to enjoy chips everyday or simply snack occasionally. Just remember – they can be quite addictive.

Bibliography:

1. Jones, Charlotte Foltz (1991), *Mistakes That Worked*. Doubleday – Origins of potato chips
2. *The Potato Chip Difference*, by Michael A. Goodman
3. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Potato_chip