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**The real 'fast-food nation'? Not U.S., survey says**

Nanci Hellmich, USA TODAY,

The United States has been dubbed the fast-food nation, but that may be changing at least in one respect.

About 44% of people in the USA say they like the taste of fast food too much to give it up, but 68% of people in Bulgaria feel that way, according to a February survey of 10,300 people in 12 markets around the world. The survey was conducted by Synovate, a market research firm.

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On the other end of the spectrum, only about 19% of people in Sweden and 20% in Malaysia say they like the taste of fast food so much they wouldn't stop eating it.

Greg Chu, senior vice president of health care for Synovate in North America, says people in the USA have "a love-hate relationship" with fast food. "We love the convenience. We love the taste. We love the assurance that you can count on it. But we know it's not good for us."

Other countries, such as Bulgaria, are in their honeymoon stage with fast food. "They like it so much they don't want to give it up," Chu says. Other findings in the survey of Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, India, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the USA:

- Overall, 29% of respondents say they tend to eat junk food when feeling down. Those numbers are higher in the USA; 45% say they do so (54% of women and 35% of men).
- 37% say they exercise to make up for other bad habits, such as eating potato chips. In the USA, only 26% move more to compensate. In China, 71% say they do that.
- 55% of all respondents say they eat whatever they want, whenever they want. But in the USA, only 37% acknowledge doing that.
- In the USA, 12% say they weigh themselves daily; 11%, once every few days; 14%, once a week; and 15%, when their clothes are getting too tight. Twenty percent weigh themselves only when they remember to, and 4% don't step on the scale at all.
- When taking into account the respondents from all the markets, 5% weigh themselves daily; 10% once every few days; 13% once a week; 7% whenever their clothes are getting too tight; 32% whenever they remember; 19% don't weigh themselves.

**READERS: How often do you eat fast food? Think you could give it up?**

[http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/weightloss/2009-06-03-fastfood\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/weightloss/2009-06-03-fastfood_N.htm)