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Surviving the Summer Blockbuster Season

POSTED: Thursday, July 12, 2007

The summer movie blockbuster season is in, and all the papers have reviews of the latest and greatest shows. But have you noticed that no one reviews movie theater snacks? Maybe that's because their nutritional value (or lack thereof) is scarier than any horror film! Here's how you can minimize the movie snack damage.

Portion Distortion: Large = Ginormous!

Popcorn

Popcorn is considered a [whole grain](#), so it contains many beneficial nutrients, like B Vitamins and [fiber](#). It's one of the healthiest snacks available at the movie theater - but not if it's drowning in butter or caramel! Three cups of popcorn is counted as one Food Guide Pyramid serving. But the large popcorn you're getting in your value combo is a whopping 170 oz (at least 21 cups) of popcorn. That's 1500 calories - within 2 hours! It is still gigantic even if you split it with your movie buddy.

Soda

If you don't mind gulping down more [empty calories](#), that large soda from your value combo gives you 80 g of sugar (equivalent to 16 tsp). Ordering a diet version will save you from drinking empty calories, but it is still no better to drink 32 oz of artificially flavored and colored water.

Candy


While most food manufactures are rolling out [100-calorie portions](#), the movie pack or concession-sized candy is getting bigger. A concession-sized candy package is loaded with about 440 calories per box! To put that in perspective, for 440 calories, you could have easily eaten a whole meal - like a signature Subway Club 6-inch sandwich (320 calories) plus a large banana (120 calories).

Surviving the Blockbuster Season

- **Skip the Value Combo**
You don't gain more value by packing more fat around your waistline. So order your snacks with the smallest portion possible.
- **Love your Gum**
If your mouth is busy chewing gum, you won't have time to munch on anything else.
- **Be a Sneaker**
Although it's against movie theater rules, try sneaking in small snacks and drinks that are healthy to munch on. Examples include
 - Trail mix
 - Low-fat granola bars
 - Baked chips
 - Fruit
 - Real fruit juice
 - Low-fat milk
 - Bottled water

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