

# Two Sides to Debate over Nutritional Value of McDiet

By ACSH Staff — March 8, 2005

A March 8, 2005 article in the *Irish Times* describes people who ate exclusively at McDonald's to demonstrate, contrary to the film *Super-Size Me*, that it is possible to do so and lose weight. The article quotes ACSH's Dr. Ruth Kava:

*TechCentralStation contacted Ruth Kava, director of nutrition at the American Council on Science and Health (ACSH) and asked her to validate the results of Whaley and Weavers' McDiets.*

*The ACSH describes itself as an independent research body. Its associates include leading names in American nutrition and medicine. It receives funding from industry and foundations and seems primarily to have a role in analysing and commenting on research results.*

*According to Sourcewatch, a website that tracks the funding of research and campaigning news organisations, the list of funders at ACSH includes Burger King but not McDonald's.*

*Kava found that on the McDiet 39 per cent of Whaley's calories came from fat whereas the official recommended range is 20 to 35 per cent...*

*Weaver's nutritional profile was similar in many ways but off the scale in terms of cholesterol -- he consumed four times the average daily recommended level -- and yet his blood cholesterol profile improved. Kava puts this down to exercise.*

*The McDiet has yet to cause the kind of controversy it should. The fact that people are using it and improving their nutritional intake must tell us something about the quality of food in the average diet in the US and, perhaps, alert us to the possible nutritional problems in our own diets.*

*How far has McDonald's been involved in the McDiet, though?*

*Kava says: "I contacted McDonald's to ask for nutritional information about some items on their menu but they referred me to third-party analysts. So the answer is not much."*

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