

Supersize Silliness

The millions of horizontally challenged Americans who frequent McDonald's restaurants will soon have to change their orders. Instead of asking for one "Supersize" fries, they'll need to request four regular-sized orders.

That's about the weightiest change we see coming from the fast-food giant's decision to phase out its trademark Supersize fries and drinks. But while McDonald's retreat from big won't slim America, it does 36 the forces of regulation and litigation.

McDonald's says its move is a matter of menu simplification. But what the Supersize dump is really about is the mau-mauing that the hamburger chain has received from the nation's food nannies for selling what increasingly overweight Americans love to eat. This 37 has led to a crush of trial lawyers, who've already started a tobacco-like assault on the food industry. McDonald's has seemingly thrown in the wrapper and moved to damage control.

Problem is, there's 38 that fast food has caused America's girth. Americans increased their overall daily diet by an average of 200 calories from the 1970s to 1990s. But while the daily intake of fast food grew by about 140 calories for men and 65 calories for women, home mealtime consumption went down by more than that – offsetting fast-food calories. So where *do* the extra 200 calories come from? According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture survey that tracks food intake, the cause is more snacking (though not on fast-food products). A more sedentary America 39 those nibbles.

America has an obesity problem, and we should all be concerned with the resulting health woes. But if we want the country to resemble Jennifer Aniston rather than Boeing 747s, we first have to face up to 40.

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