

Average percentages of nutrients in typical meals consumed in the USA.

SAMPLE ESSAY

NOTES

INTRO

The pie chart illustrates the distribution of three key nutrients—sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar—across four typical meals consumed by Americans, highlighting the potential health concerns related to excessive intake.

OVERVIEW

Overall, it is evident that sodium, saturated fat, and added sugar are present in all four meals, while dinner accounts for the largest share of sodium and saturated fat, snacks are a major source of added sugar, raising concerns about their impact on health.

DETAIL 1

When comparing the intake of these three nutrients, both sodium and saturated fat share a similar pattern, with dinner being the largest source and breakfast contributing the least. Specifically, 43% of sodium and 37% of saturated fat come from dinner, while breakfast accounts for only 14% and 16%, respectively. Lunch ranks second for both nutrients, with 29% of sodium and 26% of saturated fat—5% more saturated fat than snacks, which provide 21%. Interestingly, sodium intake from snacks mirrors that of breakfast, both standing at a modest 14%.

DETAIL 2

However, the consumption of added sugar contrasts sharply with the other two nutrients. While dinner remains the dominant source of sodium and saturated fat, snacks become the primary contributor to added sugar intake, representing a significant 42%. This figure is nearly double that of dinner (23%) and more than twice that of breakfast (16%), which again ranks the lowest. Lunch holds an intermediate position across all three nutrients but is particularly notable for its sodium intake, which is more than double that of breakfast. This comparison reveals that while sodium and saturated fat are concentrated in main meals, added sugar consumption is driven primarily by snacking.