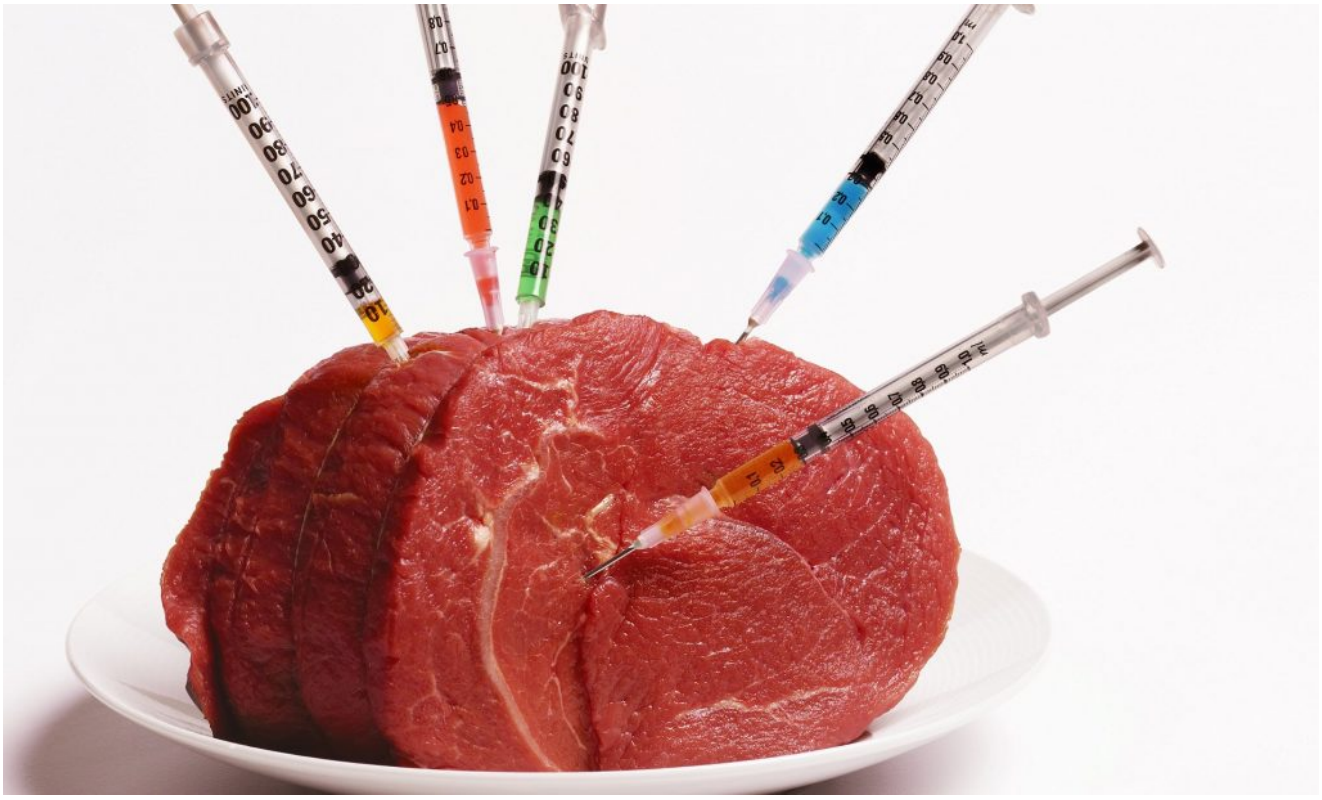
HOME

These 5 Major Fast-Food Chains Are Still Using Antibiotics In Their Meat

By bestfolkmedicine · 27/01/2023 · 5 min read



Like it or not, you have to accept the fact that a lot of meat contains antibiotics. That sounds pretty scary, right? Doctors have warned us for years about the dangers of antibiotics overuse, so how can it be safe to consume antibiotics via meat and poultry? It isn't. That's why so many fast food chains, like Chipotle or Panera Bread, have strong policies when it comes to making sure their meat is antibiotic-free. Other massive chains, like Subway, Dunkin', and McDonald's are also jumping to a no-antibiotics policy. But these policies are mostly connected to their poultry products.

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On the other hand, there are still numerous restaurants in the food industry that are trying to sell you overpriced meat products that were antibiotically treated. To understand why this is such a big problem, and if you should avoid eating at these places, let's first talk a bit more about the use of antibiotics in livestock. Later, I'll give my own two cents on this topic, and give you a list of fast-food chains that I would personally avoid.

Antibiotics and meat

If you do your own research on this topic, you'll find out that all meat, poultry, and dairy foods that are sold in the US have to be free of antibiotic residues, as required by federal law. But just because your meat is free of antibiotic residues doesn't mean that it wasn't treated with antibiotics. Just a few years ago, many farmers across the US used antibiotics to "fatten" their animals, and therefore make a better profit off of them. Since then, the laws have changed, and antibiotics should only be used if the animals become sick with respiratory, gastrointestinal, reproductive, and other bacterial infections.

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Sure, using antibiotics only to treat a sick animal shouldn't be too much of an issue. But the problem goes deeper than that. For now, there isn't any scientific research that proves that antibiotic-free meat is safer than the alternative. But let's just think about it differently – if you know that the animal you are consuming was never treated with antibiotics, you also know that it was never sick with an infectious disease. That means that it lived a healthy and happy life and that the farmer did the best he or she could to ensure that the animals are kept in appropriate conditions.

How much of a problem is it?

As I have already explained, there are many unanswered questions left when it comes to animal products and antibiotics. We have to look at it from an ethical standpoint as well. The misuse of antibiotics in the agricultural industry also contributes to the proliferation of antibiotic-resistant germs. Bacteria resistant to antibiotics cause over 2.8 million infections in the United States every year. 35,000 of the infections will end up in deaths. The overuse of antibiotics has been a global health problem for decades, and it seems to only be getting worse.

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That's why I wouldn't recommend supporting food chains that haven't adopted any antibiotic policies at all. We have to change our philosophy when it comes to meat. I'm aware of the fact that fast food isn't a healthy option, no matter if the meat in your burger contains antibiotics or not. But the truth is that most of us like to indulge in a cheeseburger and some fries from time to time. So why not, at least, make sure that the beef, chicken, or pork you are eating wasn't antibiotically treated? And while Chipotle or Panera Bread can be considered safe, these five fast-food restaurants still need to work on their antibiotic policies.

Burger King

Burger King has only limited antibiotic rules when it comes to their chicken products and almost no policies regarding their beef and pork products. Things get even scarier when you consider the fact that this massive fast-food chain has received an "F" on the latest Consumer Reports 2021 Chain Reaction industry survey. So think twice the next time you want to order a "Double Whopper."

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Taco Bell

To be fair, Taco Bell does have a policy limiting the use of antibiotics in chicken. However, they still use beef and pork meat that was treated with antibiotics. According to some of the plans that they have laid out in 2019, the use of antibiotics in their beef supply will only see a reduction of 25% by 2025! That's just not cutting it, Taco Bell. So if you still want to enjoy one of their iconic tacos from time to time, I would strongly suggest staying away from any red meat options.

Five Guys

Five Guys may not be as big of a fast-food chain as Burger King or Taco Bell, but it's still pretty popular in certain areas. This is another burger chain that virtually has no policies regarding the use of antibiotics in any of its red meat products. In addition to that, it seems like they aren't even considering changing this anytime soon. Just like Burger King, Five Guys also received an "F" on a 2018 Chain Reaction VI report.

Domino's

This will sadden all of you pepperoni pizza lovers out there! But the largest pizza chain in the world, Domino's, doesn't have any policies that limit the use of antibiotics in their beef and pork supplies. They have, however, taken certain steps to limit the use of antibiotics in poultry supplies. On a positive note, the pizza chain has shared a notice on their website claiming that they plan to switch to antibiotic-free meat at some point in the near future. But they did not specify when.

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Dairy Queen

Just like all the other, previously mentioned, fast-food chains Dairy Queen has limited the use of antibiotics in their poultry. But they do not have any policies when it comes to any type of red meat. So the next time you go to Dairy Queen, stick to their Oreo Blizzard and don't go anywhere near their cheeseburger. But to be honest, I would even reconsider the Oreo Blizzard, especially knowing that Dairy Queen received a failing grade on Consumer Report's most recent survey.

Sources:

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