

## Snorlax: The Unhealthiest Pokémon?

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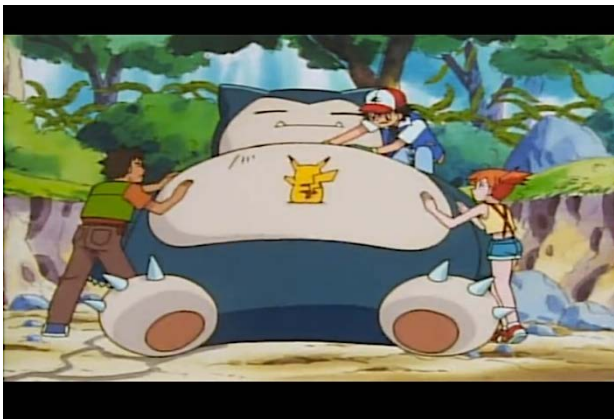
### Abstract

This paper investigates the health of the average wild Snorlax, popularly known for being one of Pokémon's laziest and heaviest species. Snorlax has a calculated BMI of 104, which is well above the value for the Obesity Class III. The anime shows Snorlax to have a diet that is both excessive and unbalanced, resulting in excessive daily calorie intake as well as potential deficiencies in key nutrients. Furthermore, Snorlax's sedentary lifestyle would not properly balance out the daily calorie intake and could potentially lead to issues with mental health.

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### Introduction

Snorlax is a Normal-type Sleeping Pokémon and is one of the original 150 Pokémon, having been introduced in the first Generation [1]. Snorlax is a well-known Pokémon and appears in the comics and anime and games regularly, comically depicted as lazy and gluttonous.



*Figure 1) The first appearance of Snorlax in the Pokémon anime, Season 1 Episode 41: Wake Up Snorlax! The gang encounter a wild Snorlax in a period of sleep and are unable to wake or move him [2].*

In the anime, Snorlax's Pokédex entry states that "Snorlax is the heaviest species of all known Pokémon, with some weighing more than 1,000 pounds" and that "Snorlax's hunger isn't satisfied until it consumes 900 pounds of food. Then it goes back to sleep" [2]. Indeed, Snorlax was the heaviest Pokémon in the first generation but has since been surpassed by several other new Pokémon species. However, it is not just Snorlax's weight which places

him as the prime contender for The Unhealthiest Pokémon, but also his sedentary lifestyle and lack of variability in his diet.

### Diet

In the Generation II games, it is stated that Snorlax's stomach is so strong, it is not affected by eating mouldy or rotten food [1]. This suggests that Snorlax does not have a particular diet and will eat whatever is available to him. We know that Snorlax is a lazy Pokémon that rarely moves; if Snorlax is regularly eating in the same place for extended periods of time, this may result in over- or under-consumption of certain nutrients which may not be good for health. Specifically, in the wild, fruits and vegetables are much easier to come by which might mean that Snorlax is not getting enough fats, protein and carbohydrates in his diet. For example, a low-carb diet might result in hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar levels) because carbohydrates are a main source of glucose [3].

Assuming Snorlax consumes only grapefruit each day (Episode 94 shows Snorlax's love of grapefruit [4]), we can calculate his daily calorie intake. If 1 ounce of grapefruit contains 9 calories [5], then Snorlax must consume 14400 ounces of grapefruit a day to satisfy his hunger, equalling 129600 calories. While Snorlax undoubtedly requires more calories due to his size, this is an extraordinary amount. Furthermore, when considering Snorlax's daily activity levels, this amount of calorie intake is just plain excessive.

## Exercise

The Pokédex entries suggest Snorlax partakes in the minimum amount of physical activity possible, and will only move from his position if there is no longer any food nearby. A lifestyle void of proper and regular exercise can become a contributing factor to cardiovascular disease later on in life. Furthermore, lack of exercise has been known to affect the mental health of many people and can lead to anxiety and depression [6].

Snorlax's set of moves reflects the lack of exercise he gets daily. Many of his moves, especially at lower levels, are non-offensive such as *Defense Curl*, *Rest* and *Snore*. Even his powerful offensive moves such as *Giga Impact* require a turn of rest upon performing the move. Furthermore, Snorlax often possesses the special abilities *Thick Fat* and *Gluttony* [1].

Despite this, a well-trained Snorlax that participates in regular Pokémon battles would get much more exercise and would be much healthier than the average wild Snorlax.

## Body Mass Index

Body Mass Index, or BMI, calculates a value based on height and weight to give an indication of body fat percentage (equation 1; table 1). It is important to note that a BMI value does not give a firm indication of a person's health; for example, those that are heavier due to extra muscle might be classed as overweight, which may not be strictly true.

$$BMI = \frac{Mass (kg)}{(Height)^2 (m)} \quad (1)$$

## References

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- [2] Tajiri, S. (1998) "Wake Up Snorlax!", Pokémon, Season 1 Episode 41. First Broadcast April 23, 1998
- [3] Sheehan, J. (2016) *What Can Happen From a Lack of Carbohydrates?*. Demand Media. [Online] Healthyeating.sfgate.com. Available at: <http://healthyeating.sfgate.com/can-happen-lack-carbohydrates-5999.html> [Accessed 08/03/2016].
- [4] Tajiri, S., (1999) "Snack Attack!", Pokémon, Season 2 Episode 94. First Broadcast April 29, 1999

At a height of 2.1 m and weighing 460 kg [1], Snorlax has a BMI of 104 which is Obesity Class III.

BMI	Category
0-18.5	Underweight
18.5-25	Healthy Weight
25-30	Overweight
30-35	Obesity class I
35-40	Obesity class II
40+	Obesity class III

Table 1) BMI values and the correlating descriptor of a person's health based on this value [7].

While BMI is often not entirely accurate, such an extreme BMI value is definitely cause for concern. High BMI generally indicates a high percentage of body fat which is a risk factor for several diseases such as coronary heart disease, type 2 diabetes, osteoarthritis and a stroke [8].

## Conclusion

Lack of exercise and high BMI are important risk factors commonly associated with cardiovascular disease in humans. Furthermore, lack of exercise is also known to have negative effects on a person's mental health. Combined with Snorlax's excessive, yet unbalanced diet, it is obvious that such a lifestyle is not at all healthy and is likely to present problems later on in life.

While there are other similar Lazy and Sleeping Pokémon, as well as Pokémon heavier than Snorlax, none come close to the overall unhealthy lifestyle Snorlax leads. It is important to note, however, that a trained Snorlax would be much healthier.

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- [6] Ströhle, A. (2008). *Physical activity, exercise, depression and anxiety disorders*. Journal of Neural Transmission, 116(6), pp.777-784.
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