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Former Subway pitchman Jared Fogle arrives at the federal courthouse in Indianapolis last fall.

By Matt Rocheleau

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Former Subway restaurant spokesman Jared Fogle has reportedly gained 30 pounds in just his first three months in prison. Such dramatic weight gain while locked up is not an unprecedented phenomenon, researchers have found.

Fogle is serving a sentence of more than 15 years for child pornography possession and having sex with underage prostitutes.

Before that, Fogle spent 15 years as the face of Subway, crediting his regular diet of the chain's sandwiches with helping him to lose 245 pounds. His weight loss relapse was reported this week by InTouch Weekly magazine.

But there have been other prominent cases of prisoners gaining weight. Serial killer Gary Lee Sampson was reported in 2014 to have gained about 150 pounds over the course of roughly 11 years behind bars. Singer Chris Brown reportedly gained 35 pounds after about three and a half months in prison.

Experts blame several factors, which can work in combination with each other.

Research has suggested that, along with spending large portions of their day confined to small areas, prisoners are often offered meals lacking fresh fruit, vegetables, or other options low in fat and sodium.

In addition to eating meals provided by the prison, inmates often purchase food at commissaries — markets inside the facility where inmates can buy goods using credit they earned from working in the prison or money sent to them by family and friends.

Much of the commissary fare, including snacks and junk food, is processed and contain high amounts of sodium and fat, according to one recent study, which looked at weight changes over several years among prisoners in one region of the country.

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The study also noted that, in addition to the frequenting the commissary, prisoners sometimes make trades with one another for food.

Prisoners can be a particularly vulnerable group because many had limited access to healthcare, low health literacy, and unhealthy behaviors before they were ever locked up, researchers noted.

The study also found that weight gain in prison seemed to be much more of a problem for women.

Even Guantanamo detainees have experienced significant weight gain while cooped up there, according to a story in 2003 by [Slate Magazine](#).

The article cited a nutritionist as saying that other factors contributing to prisoner weight gain can include depression, loneliness, and stress, particularly when inmates first arrive.

In prison, eating, particularly while socializing with other inmates, can also be one of the few pleasurable experiences of daily life, the nutritionist told Slate.

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