

Healthy Choices for Eating Out

Simple ways to work with restaurant menus for healthy living.

Fast food: It's cheap.

It's quick. It's convenient.

But salt, fat and calories hide behind the fast food counter.

Tips for healthier fast food.

It's all a matter of choice.

- Choose a small or junior hamburger or sandwich instead of the deluxe or supersize sandwich. Half the size means half the fat and calories.
- Opt for smaller portions. A large order of fries has around 400 calories. A small order has 220, saving you 180 calories.
- Ask that sauces and mayonnaise be left off your hamburger or sandwich. One tablespoon of mayo is 100 calories. One tablespoon of mustard is 11 calories. Top your sandwich with low-calorie items like ketchup, mustard, relish, tomatoes, onions and lettuce. This is a great way to bypass fat and calories at the fast-food restaurant.
- Avoid fried fish and fried chicken sandwiches. A fried chicken sandwich can contain up to 400 calories and contains more fat than a small hamburger which, with lettuce, mustard and ketchup, runs around 260 calories.
- Choose water or skim milk over high-calorie, low-nutrient sodas and shakes. A large (32-ounce) cola has about 300 calories. Water has zero.
- Don't forget to review the nutrition information posted at most fast-food restaurants. It'll make healthier fast-food choices a lot easier.

Save money and eat healthy, low-calorie meals by taking snacks when you travel.

- Try a high-fiber muffin, milk, smoothie or fruit for breakfast.
- A low-fat cheese stick, carrots, celery and whole wheat or rice crackers make a great lunch.
- Try some pretzels, fruit or small cut-up veggies for a great, healthy snack.



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Decoding the menu. It's simpler than it looks.

- Make sure the restaurant offers a choice of low-fat and heart-healthy items. Don't be afraid to ask if it's not on the menu.
- Choose broth-based soups like chicken noodle, vegetable or minestrone instead of cream-based soups, which can be high in calories and fat.
- Broiled or grilled items are always a good choice. Low in fat and low in calories.
- Salads are a good choice, but avoid mayonnaise-based salads such as potato or macaroni. And beware of cream dressings and high fat add-ons like nuts, olives, seeds, cheese and bacon bits. Choose low fat dressings, add vegetables and try some fruit.
- Use caution at the buffet and salad bar. It's easy to pile your plate with food and then feel like you've got to eat it all.
- Ask for what you want. Substitute grilled for fried, or ask for your sauces or dressings on the side.
- Slow down. Enjoy your meal. Savor each bite. You'll end up eating less.

menu terms and what they mean

Here are a few terms found on any menu that mean high calorie and high fat. Being aware of these key phrases is a simple way to avoid ruining your diet or health plan:

- Au gratin
- Basted
- Batter dipped
- Breaded
- Broasted
- Buttered
- Cheese sauce
- Cream sauce
- Creamed
- Crispy
- Fried
- In gravy
- Pan fried
- Sautéed
- Smothered

Look for these healthier, tasty options instead:

- Baked
- Broiled
- Grilled
- In its own juice
- Marinara
- Poached
- Red sauce
- Roasted
- Steamed
- Stir fried
- Tomato base

Healthy desserts.

How to enjoy a sweet ending to any meal.

- Choose fresh fruit. It's nutritious and full of fiber.
- Try sorbet instead of ice cream. Just as tasty, fewer calories and often fat-free.
- Choose cake carefully. Avoid the high-fat, high-sugar, high-calorie chocolate cake. Opt for angel food cake instead.
- Share dessert with a friend. You'll eat less, and it's a nice treat.
- When it's time for coffee, use skim milk instead of whole milk or cream.

Portion control made easy.

- Don't clean your plate. A good rule of thumb is to leave about a third of your food on the plate.
- Eat slowly. When you feel you've had enough, stop. Ask for a doggie bag, and save it for lunch tomorrow.
- Avoid buffets. With their extra-large portions and large quantities of salt and calories, buffets can destroy any diet.



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