



Wellness News Network™

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Your Healthy Guide to Dining Out

Presented by:

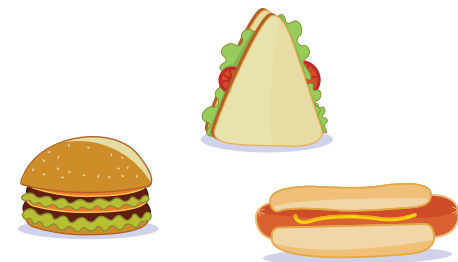
If you've added "eating better" to your list of goals, then you'll definitely want to review this Wellness News Network issue. We'll reveal tips and strategies to help you choose healthy options and keep off the pounds when you're dining out.

In our rapid-paced world, a trip to our favorite restaurant or fast food drive thru is a weekly occurrence for a lot of us. It can certainly be a time saver, but the impact of large restaurant meals and fast food is taking its toll.

In a three-year study that looked at fast food eating among women, researchers commented, "Over 3 years, increases in frequency of fast food restaurant use were associated with increases in body weight, total energy intake, percentage fat intake, intake of hamburgers, French fries and soft drinks, and with decreases in physical activity, dietary restraint and low-fat eating behaviors."¹

While scores of eating establishments are switching to healthier menu choices, the portion size of one restaurant meal can be as much as five regular meal servings. Endless refills of soft drinks are standard at a lot of restaurants, and this can swell your calorie intake.

Fast foods are frequently high in fat and low in nutrients. Many restaurants are eliminating or reducing trans fats in their foods. This is certainly a positive trend. But foods high in saturated fats continue to be a main staple on menus. The food is also often high in sodium, which is a risk factor for hypertension.



Eating Out Tips:

- Back away from the buffet
- Bank your calories
- Get it on the side
- Avoid fried, battered or breaded options
- Chicken should be undressed
- Watch the sauce
- Drink lots of water
- Dine in. But take half out
- Share en-tree's
- Take it slow
- Focus on your food, no TV while eating.

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Smart Dining Options

Even before you go to a restaurant, there are a couple of actions you should take:

1. See if the restaurant's menu is online. Knowing what is available ahead of time let's you plan a healthy meal in advance without pressure.
2. Eat a wholesome snack so you don't arrive with an empty stomach at the restaurant.

Here are some other tips ...

Back away from the buffet. Avoid buffet restaurants. The amount of food you eat is important too. A buffet practically begs you to visit it more than once, and this can be too big a temptation to resist. Even sticking to the salad section of a buffet can be deceiving as the various dressings can be high in calories and fat.

Bank your calories. Instead of eating three full meals daily, eat a couple of lighter meals and use your restaurant selection as your main meal of the day. Ask your server if the restaurant has a nutrition sheet on its menu items.²

Get it on the side. When you order salad with dressing, ask for the dressing to be put on the side. This way you control the amount used and can mix some extra calories.

Look for these labels. Be aware of meals containing foods that are fried, battered or breaded. These food choices are generally high in fat and calories.

Chicken undressed. When it comes to poultry dishes, choose skinless choices.

Watch the sauce. If you order soup or pasta with sauce, avoid cream-based ingredients as these can pack a wallop of extra calories and saturated fat.²

Drink water. Consuming water helps give your stomach a full feeling without adding calories. If you really don't like water plain, add a slice of lime or lemon to it.

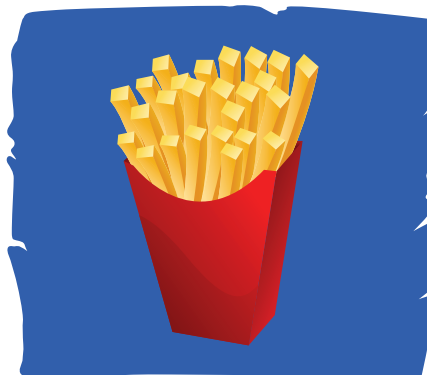
Dine in. Take out. You don't have to eat everything on your plate in one sitting. Take half of your restaurant meal home with you.

Food is for sharing. Another option is to share your entrée and dessert with a friend or family member.²

Coffee counts. If you like to fancy up your coffee drink with lots of whip cream, sugar or syrup, prepare to pay a high caloric price. Choose sugar free sweetening options or switch occasionally to clear tea.

Take it slow. Chew your food thoroughly and delight in each bite. By slowing down your eating, you give your body more time to alert you when it's full.

Focus on your food. Avoid eating while watching TV or engaging in other activities as this makes you less aware of how much food you're actually eating.



Quote of the Week

"You can set yourself up to be sick, or you can choose to stay well."

- Wayne Dyer

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References and Sources:

1. *Fast food restaurant use among women in the Pound of Prevention study: dietary, behavioral and demographic correlates - Int-J-Obes-Relat-Metab-Disord.* 2000 Oct; 24(10): 1353-9

2. *National Restaurant Association*

*Effects of Fast - Food Consumption on Energy Intake and Diet Quality Among Children in a National House-hold Survey - PEDIATRICS Vol. 113 No. 1 January 2004, pp. 112-118. * * **

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