

# Nutrition News

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## Tips for Healthful Eating in Restaurants

If you eat in restaurants, look over the menu items carefully to make healthful choices. Whether it's carry-out or in a food court, office cafeteria or sit-down restaurant, there are smart choices everywhere.

*Here are some tips to help you eat healthfully when eating out.*

- If you're planning a special restaurant meal during the evening, have a light breakfast and lunch.
  - Menu terms that can mean more fat and calories include batter-fried, pan-fried, buttered, creamed, crispy and breaded. Choose these foods only occasionally and in small portions.
  - Avoid eating bread, chips and other things offered before your whole meal arrives. Hold those until your meal is served to keep calories in check.
  - Order the regular or child-size portion. Mega-sized servings probably are more than you need. For a lighter meal, order an appetizer in place of a main course.
  - It's OK to make special requests; just keep them simple. For example, you can ask for a baked potato or side salad in place of french fries or the request might be for no mayonnaise or bacon on your sandwich or sauces and dressings served on the side.
  - Split your order. Share an extra-large sandwich or main course with a friend or take half home for another meal.
- Boost the nutrition in all types of sandwiches by adding tomato slices, lettuce, peppers or other vegetables.
  - A baked potato offers more fiber, fewer calories and less fat than fries if you skip the sour cream and butter. Top your potato with broccoli and a sprinkle of cheese or salsa.
  - In place of fries or chips, choose a side salad, fruit or baked potato.
  - At the sandwich shop, choose lean beef, ham, turkey or chicken on whole-grain bread. Ask for mustard, ketchup, salsa or low-fat spreads. And don't forget the veggies!
  - Enjoy ethnic foods such as Chinese stir-fry, vegetable-stuffed pita or Mexican fajitas. Go easy on the sour cream, cheese and guacamole.
  - At the salad bar, pile on the dark leafy greens, carrots, peppers and other fresh vegetables.



*Read restaurant menus carefully for clues to fat and calorie contents. Some restaurant menus may have a special section for "healthful" choices. Menu terms that can mean less fat and calories include baked, braised, broiled, grilled, poached, roasted and steamed.*

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- Lighten up on mayonnaise-laced salads or salad dressings and high-fat toppings. Enjoy fresh fruit as your dessert.
- Eat your lower calorie food first. Soup or salad is a good choice. Follow up with a light main course.
- Ask for sauces, dressings and toppings to be served “on the side.” Then you control how much you eat.
- Pass up all-you-can-eat specials, buffets and unlimited salad bars if you tend to eat too much.
- If you choose the buffet, fill half of your plate with salads and vegetables and use the small plate that holds less food. After that, don’t make any more trips to the salad bar or buffet.
- Load up your pizza with vegetable toppings. If you add meat, make it lean ham, Canadian bacon, chicken or shrimp.
- Build a better breakfast sandwich by replacing bacon or sausage with Canadian bacon or ham and order your sandwich on a whole-grain English muffin or bagel.
- Be “size wise” about muffins, bagels, croissants and biscuits. A jumbo muffin can have more than twice the fat and about half the calories you need to consume all day.
- Try a smoothie made with juice, fruit and yogurt for a light lunch or snack.
- Refrigerate carry-out or leftovers if the food won’t be eaten right away. Discard any foods kept at room temperature for more than two hours.
- You can get inexpensive meals from the supermarket deli. Select rotisserie chicken, salad-in-a-bag and freshly baked bread. Or try sliced lean roast beef, onion rolls, potato salad and fresh fruit.
- For portable, nonperishable foods on the go choose peanut butter and crackers, granola bars, a piece of fresh fruit, trail mix, single-serving packages of whole-grain cereal or crackers.
- For desktop dining, keep single-serving packages of crackers, fruit, peanut butter, soup, or tuna in your desk for a quick lunch.
- If you are tempted by dessert, choose sherbets, if available, or other fruit or dairy based desserts.

Source: *American Dietetic Association*

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