



DINING OUT MADE SIMPLE

With the convenience of eating out and a restaurant available around every corner, it is becoming less appealing to go home to cook a meal. Luckily, for those who eat out frequently (2 times a week or more), eating out can be made healthy and tasty when following a few simple rules.

When eating out, the primary objective should *always* be portion control. Portion control acts as a tool to manage calories consumed throughout the entire day. Ask for a doggy bag or split the food with your companion when eating out to control portions and calories consumed. Better yet, ask for a child's size plate or ask the waiter/waitress to only give you half of the food and bag up the rest before you receive it. Portion sizes are generally about the size of the palm of your hand and should be the first thing on your mind when eating out.

Another rule of thumb when eating out is never go out to eat on an empty stomach. If this occurs, chances are you may not only order an entrée, but have an appetizer, too! To control hunger, begin by having a light snack (i.e. ½ bagel with 4 oz of skim milk, piece of fruit, bowl of cereal, etc.) before going out to eat. When at the restaurant, instead of reaching for the appetizer, try drinking fluids such as water or diet sodas to curb your appetite. Finally, when your entrée does arrive, try to eat slowly. Did you know it takes about 30 minutes for your stomach to signal to your brain that you're full? Try chewing your food (about 10-20 times per bite) to savor the taste. This will psychologically satisfy you and may prevent you from reaching for more.

Just as important as the tactics discussed above are the types of food you order...especially if you eat out frequently. Below are some basic guidelines for the most commonly eaten foods.

In the Chinese Restaurant:

- Ask for less oil to be used in your stir-fry and lift the food out of the sauce as you eat.
- Pick dishes with plenty of vegetables and be sure meats are not breaded.
- Ask for minimal peanuts, almonds, and cashews or leave them out completely.
- Remember that noodles (i.e. chow mein or lo mein) are fried.
- Use steamed rice rather than fried rice. One cup of fried rice has 13 grams of fat!
- If you must have an egg roll, be sure to wrap it in a napkin to absorb the excess grease.
- Order a clear soup first to curb your appetite before the entrée.

In an Italian Restaurant:

- Ask for less cheese on a pizza and add more vegetables.
- Try to limit yourself to two slices.
- Order tomato-based pasta sauces. Creamed-based are very high in fat and calories.
- Ask that the breadsticks are unbuttered.

In the Mexican Restaurant:

- Fajitas (with grilled meat) are a better choice as you can control what you put on them!
- Use fresh salsa as your condiment instead of sour cream or guacamole.
- Try the soft shell tacos instead of the hard (fried) shells.
- Ask for corn tortillas instead of flour, as they are lower in fat and higher in nutrients.
- If you order a salad, don't eat the fried shell!
- Leave off the cheese, sour cream, and guacamole or have them on the side.
- Watch out for the tortilla chips. Each chip has about 1 gram of fat!

Remember, eating out should be enjoyable, but can be healthy, too. Using the tactics above,

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you can still lose weight when eating out and enjoy yourself in the process! Contact the Health and Wellness Center (HAWC) and to get more information on dining out the healthy way!

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