Trimming Restaurant Portions

Eating away from home can present challenges when trying to watch your weight and choose healthy foods, particularly since portion sizes in many restaurants tend to be large and distorted. Some portions are large enough to provide enough food for at least two people! Whenever possible, plan ahead and target restaurants with healthy choice options, keeping in mind that portion control should always be an important objective. By following a few tips, dining out can be a fun, healthy and tasty experience!

- Plan ahead and use caution when eating at "all you can eat" buffets. Take a small portion of the higher calorie foods you really want and fill up on lower calorie foods. Waite 10 minutes before going back for seconds
- Take food home or split the meal with a friend
- Ask for a child's size portion or ask to have only half brought to you and have the other packaged to go before it comes to the table
- Appetizer portions are often smaller; consider ordering them a main meal
- Request substitutions such as salad, baked potato, or steamed veggies for chips or fries
- Ask to have meal prepared with less oil, less or no cheese, baked, not fried, etc.
- Ask for any salad dressing, gravies, or sauces to be served on the side. This way you have control over how much you consume.
- Avoid eating out when overly hungry
- Eat a healthy snack before you arrive at the restaurant. Examples include: half a bagel with 4oz skim milk, a piece of fruit, a small bowl of cereal, or low fat yogurt.
- Seek out healthy options, ask your server about low fat alternatives.
- Drink water or diet soda
- Eat slowly, it takes about 20 minuets for your stomach to signal your brain that your full
- Try chewing each bite of food 10-20 times while savoring and enjoying the flavor
- Ask for any salad dressing, gravies, or sauces to be served on the side. This way you have control over how much you consume

For more information on ways to eat out and stick to your eating plan, contact your local **Health and Wellness Center (HAWC)** or **Dietitian**.

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