

Making Healthy Choices When Eating Out

Eating out can be a nice treat once in a while, or a convenient option when you are busy or far away from home. Restaurants, cafeterias, grocery stores, or fast-food places offer a variety of options when eating out. The saturated fat, sugar, sodium, and calories can often add up quickly in these foods. Making healthy choices when eating away from home is possible and important.

How to make healthy choices

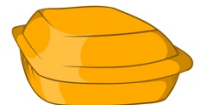
Ask how the food is prepared

- Choose foods that are baked, steamed, grilled, roasted or stir-fried as a more health conscious option.
- Choose foods that are deep fried, breaded or battered less often. Foods prepared this way are often higher in unhealthy fats and calories.
- Get sauce on the side. Condiments, dressings and sauces can often increase the sodium and unhealthy fat content of your meal. Choose tomato-based sauces or get the sauce on the side and add to your personal taste. Choose sauces that are made with cream, soy sauce and sugar less often.



Manage portion sizes

- Portions sizes when eating out are often bigger than what you would eat at home.
 - Ask for a smaller size (lunch size is often smaller).
 - Share your large meal with friends or family.
 - Take half of your meal home to enjoy for lunch or dinner the next day.
- If you love dessert, order one and ask for extra spoons to share with your friends/family! Fresh fruit and frozen yogurt are great dessert ideas for a healthier choice.



Beverages

- Pass up on the sweet drinks. Drink water, or a glass of milk instead of beverages high in sugar like pop, iced tea/lemonade or milkshakes. Sparkling water with lemon/lime, unsweetened iced tea or sugar-free/diet drinks are good choices.



Ask for more vegetables

- Ask for extra veggies in your wraps, on pizzas, in burgers and sandwiches for more fibre and beneficial nutrients.
- Choose salads or cooked vegetables as your side instead of fries.



Choose whole grains

- Many places now offer whole wheat or whole grain options. Request whole-wheat buns, wraps, pasta or pizza crust when choosing sandwiches, burgers or mains.
- Whole grains like quinoa, brown rice, barley or oats are good choices.



Tips for eating out

1. **At the burger place:** Choose the kid's meal, a grilled chicken sandwich, or a salad with low fat dressing. Pair it with a baked potato, salad, or fruit instead of fries.
2. **At the pizza place:** Ask for whole grain (or whole wheat) crust. Instead of the extra cheese and pepperoni, get a slice loaded with veggies and grilled chicken.
3. **At the sandwich shop:** Ask for whole grain or whole wheat bread and choose as many veggies as you can. Lean meats like turkey, chicken, ham, or roast beef are also good choices. Have the smaller sandwich size with a salad on the side.
4. **At the coffee shop:** Those creamy drinks are tempting, but the sugar and fat can add up quickly. Order a small or regular sized coffee or plain latté/cappuccino. Ask for your drink to be made with low fat or skim milk and skip the whipped cream topping.
5. **At the Asian eatery:** Good choices are steamed dumplings, steamed buns and veggies. Cold salad rolls, sushi, and soups can also make for a healthy and quick lunch. Avoid the deep-fried veggies, noodles and spring rolls.
6. **When picking up a snack on the go:** instead of items like chips, cookies, donuts, chocolate, try fruit with low fat cheese, yogurt and berries, unsalted nuts/seeds, whole grain crackers with peanut butter, or hummus and a veggie tray.
 - Plan ahead for when you will be out for a while. Pack a lunch or carry snacks from home so you won't be tempted to buy something from vending machines, coffee shops, or fast food restaurants.

References: www.unlockfood.ca