

How to keep it healthy when eating out.



At some point during your busy work week, more than likely you are going to eat out at least once. We are known as the “fast food nation” right? For many, this will mean a quick run through your favorite fast food drive-up, and for others perhaps you will find the time to sit down in a restaurant. Everyone knows that fast food is not the healthiest option but it is the quickest and cheapest. Fast food tends to be high in calories, fat, sodium, and sugar and usually lacks many important vitamins and minerals. Although eat-in restaurants may provide you with more vitamins and minerals they can be equally unhealthy. Don’t be fooled by what may appear to be a healthy side dish. Restaurant food not only tends to be high in calories, fat, sodium, and sugar but the meal portions in most cases are too large, as well.

Many fast food chains are making big strides towards improving their menus to include healthier items these days. If you find yourself frequently eating out, go online and look up the nutrition information for your favorite fast food restaurant. It won’t take more than 5 minutes and may shock you. Just because you’re eating a salad or a chicken sandwich doesn’t mean you’re eating healthy. Many salads are low in protein and high in sugar. People tend to feel safe by eating a salad and go overboard with the toppings they put on it. Your favorite chicken sandwich may be healthy in itself but once you add the “special dressing” you might as well be ordering a burger. Leave the mayonnaise and special dressing off! If you’re getting a salad it is important to get light dressing and request it on the side. By getting it on the side you can control the portion size. Also be sure to add some source of protein to your salad if that’s all you’re eating such as diced turkey. If you are going to get a sandwich or wrap be sure to ask for whole wheat bread. To help keep your fast food meal healthy, some good options for sides dishes are baked potato with vegetables (no sour cream, cheese, or butter), fruit, or salad (dressing on the side). From there don’t go and ruin your meal by drinking a large soda. A large soda in most cases may contain over three hundred calories. Try to stick with low fat milk, water, or at least a diet soda. Some of the more unhealthy fast food items you should try to avoid are chicken nuggets, fried chicken or fish, fries and onion rings.

It is possible to eat healthy when eating out just follow these guidelines:

- Be cautious of condiments
- Control portion sizes (sharing is a great way to do this)
- Get dressing on the side
- Choose wheat bread
- Grilled not fried
- Drink low fat milk or water
- Take the time to research nutrition facts for your favorite restaurants