

## UW HEALTH - ONLINE HEALTH FACT

### Tips for Healthy Eating Out

We are eating out more than ever. When dining out, it is easy to eat more calories and fat as well as food that is less healthy. Try these ideas for healthy dining-out.

#### Dining Ideas:

1. No matter where you're eating, practice eating small portions. Take half the entrée home or split the meal with your friend. Order an appetizer as a main course instead.
2. Skip parts of the meal you like less. Have an "I can eat that food any old time" approach.
3. Go to places where you can order healthy, lowfat meals.
4. Ask to substitute high fat items like french fries for a baked potato or side salad instead. Request items be made without butter or oil.
5. Eat a little less at noon to save for a special dinner later, but don't skip meals. This can lead to eating too much.
6. Eat something 30 minutes before your meal to help be in better control of your choices. Eat a piece of fruit or have a glass of water with lemon.
7. Avoid buffets, and all-you-can-eat specials.

#### Menu Choices:

- Breaded, batter-dipped, and tempura all mean fried food, which is heavy in fat. Look instead for lower fat, grilled, broiled and flame-cooked. Other good choices include entrees that are steamed, poached, roasted, or baked in their own juices.
- Avoid croissants, biscuits, potpies, quiches, and pastries. Pick hard rolls, bread sticks (if not brushed with butter), french bread, or whole-wheat buns.
- For sauces, stick to wine, or thinned, stock-based sauces. Avoid thick butter sauces, béarnaise, Mornay or sauces that sounds creamy. If you're unsure, ask the waitstaff.
- Choose salads made with rich dark greens like spinach and romaine rather than pale iceberg lettuce.
- Order a baked potato instead of french fries or have a side salad, steamed vegetables or a cup of broth-based soup.
- Skip the mayonnaise and special sauces and ask for extra lettuce, tomatoes, onions and mustard on sandwiches.
- If ordering pizza, ask for extra vegetable toppings and forget the meats and extra cheese.
- We often forget to count alcohol calories as part of our eating. It is very high in calories and can prevent us from making healthy food choices.

#### What to Order When You're Eating Out...

Here are some hints on how to order from menus. Ask if you can get nutrition facts for menu items.

### **Steakhouse**

- Trim the fat from broiled meat and order without sauces or gravy.
- A filet, flank, or London broil steak is the leanest cut.

### **Salad Bar**

- Be careful about potato and pasta salads, bacon bits, marinated vegetables, olives, fruits in heavy syrup, and seeds or nuts.
- One ladle of creamy salad dressing can be about 300 calories.
- Select dark, leafy greens, raw vegetables and fruits, lean ham or turkey and cottage cheese.
- Use fat-free dressing or low-fat dressing in small amounts.

### **Chinese/Oriental**

- Many menu items can be made to order. Request no oil (ask for broth or stock instead) or ask for only a small amount of oil.
- Choose items with large portions of vegetables.
- Avoid wontons, egg rolls, sweet and sour choices, fried rice, fried dumplings, sesame noodles, egg foo young, and tempura.

### **Italian**

- Pasta with red sauce (marinara, red clam, or marsala) is a great choice unless the sauce has high fat meat such as sausage.
- Avoid cream sauces such as Alfredo or butter sauce as well as parmigiana, beef lasagna, cheese sauce or filling, pesto, carbonara, sausage dishes and garlic bread.

### **Pizza**

- Vegetable pizzas can have half the calories of the “works” type.
- Ask for extra vegetables to replace the meat on pizza.
- You can request ½ of the cheese as well.

### **Mexican**

- Chicken fajitas, tortillas and Spanish rice without sour cream and guacamole are often OK choices.
- Go easy on chips and rich/fried items on the menu such as chili rellanos, nachos, chorizo, chimichangas, flautas, and taco bowl salads.

### **Fast Foods**

- Choose BBQ or broiled and grilled chicken sandwiches as well as a regular hamburger or roast beef sandwich instead of jumbo burgers and fried sandwiches.

If you have more questions please contact UW Health at one of the phone numbers listed below.

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