

Healthy on the Go

Healthful Choices When Eating Fast Foods

Dining out has become part of our fast-paced lifestyles. Controlling what you eat is easier at home, but you **can** eat out and enjoy delicious fast-food meals that are lower in calories, fat, and cholesterol. By planning ahead, fast foods can fit into a healthful eating plan.

When ordering food, don't be afraid to ask how an item is prepared, including what condiments are standard on the order. Simple requests such as substituting mustard for mayonnaise or deletion of cheese can turn a not-so-healthful choice into a healthier one.

As a general rule of thumb, kids' meals are better choices than regular meals. Kids' meals tend to be smaller portion sizes and often offer better "side" choices such as low-fat milk and fruit.

Here are some more tips for dining out at fast-food restaurants.

Breakfast

Breakfast items at many fast-food restaurants are chocked full of calories, fat, and cholesterol. However, many now offer dry cereals, skim milk, and low-fat yogurt. Plain pancakes and scrambled eggs are also healthier choices when compared to donuts, biscuits and gravy, and giant breakfast sandwiches.

Sandwiches

In general, sandwiches prepared with fish, chicken, or lean roast beef will be the lowest in calories and fat. Look for words like *grilled*, *baked*, or *broiled*—these are usually the healthier choices. Small or regular hamburgers without cheese or sauce are also good choices. Adding lettuce, tomato, onion, and pickles to a regular hamburger makes it look bigger without adding many calories. If available, choose buns made with whole grains.

French Fries

Let's face it . . . French fries are a standard side item at many fast-food restaurants. An occasional serving can be part of a healthful meal plan. When you opt for French fries, choose the smallest portion available, often the "child's meal-size" portion. A small serving of fries will give you 250 calories and 13g of fat. This is less than half the calories in a large serving and almost 2/3 less calories than the jumbo serving sizes available in many fast-food restaurants.

Salads

Salads sound so healthful, but watch out. They may be hiding high-fat and calorie-laden items that can sabotage an otherwise healthy choice. Most salad dressing packets offered at fast-food restaurants contain 2 ounces of dressing—that's 4 Tablespoons. If it's the full-fat version, this packet can add 200 to 300 calories, pushing some salads to more calories than some large hamburgers. Bacon bits, nuts, crispy rice noodles, croutons, and sunflower seeds are also high-calorie additions, so use sparingly.



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Arby's®

Junior Roast Beef Sandwich
272 calories, 10 g fat

Ham 'N Swiss Melt
275 calories, 6 g fat

Martha's Vineyard Salad
277 calories, 8g fat
Choose low-fat salad dressing

Subway®

Any salad with 6g fat or less
choose low-fat salad dressing

Any 6-in sub with 6g fat or less

Minestrone soup
80 calories, 1g fat

Tomato garden vegetable soup
w/ rotini
90 calories, 0g fat

Burger King®

Whopper Jr.®
(w/o mayonnaise or cheese)
290 calories, 12 g fat

Tendergrill Chicken Sandwich
(w/o mayo or sauce)
400 calories, 7g fat

Tendergrill Chicken Garden
Salad
240 calories, 9 g fat
Choose low-fat salad dressing

Dairy Queen®

DQ® Homestyle Hamburger
350 calories, 14g fat

Grilled Chicken Sandwich
350 calories, 16g fat

Grilled Chicken Salad
270 calories, 11 g fat
Choose low-fat salad dressing

Fazoli's®

Small Spaghetti w/ Marinara
450 calories, 3 g fat

Grilled Chicken Salad
100 calories, 1.5 g fat
Choose low-fat salad dressing

Minestrone Soup
90 calories, 2g fat

Hardee's®

Regular Hamburger
310 calories, 12g fat

Charbroiled BBQ Chicken Sandwich
415 calories, 5g fat

Long John Silver's™

Baked Cod – 1 piece
120 calories, 4.5 g fat

Shrimp & Seafood Salad
260 calories, 12 g fat
Choose low-fat salad dressing

Corn Cobbette – 1
90 calories, 3 g fat

McDonald's®

Grilled Snack Wrap w/ Ranch
270 calories, 10 g fat

Asian Salad w/ Grilled Chicken
300 calories, 10 g fat
Choose low-fat salad dressing

Fruit 'N Yogurt Parfait
160 calories, 2 g fat

Pizza Hut®

Medium Fit 'N Delicious™
(3 slices)
510 calories, 15 g fat

Thin 'N Crispy® Veggie Lovers
(3 slices)
540 calories, 21 g fat

Taco Bell®

Any "Fresco" Style Item

Grilled Steak Soft Taco
"Fresco" Style
160 calories, 4.5 g fat

Spicy Chicken Soft Taco
170 calories, 6 g fat

KFC®

Tender Roast Sandwich
(without sauce)
300 calories, 4.5 g fat

Oven Roasted Chicken Breast
(without skin or breading)
150 calories, 3.5 g fat

While these restaurants may have other options that are lower in fat and calories, these selections represent some of the healthier choices that are available.

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