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Eating Out

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1

Eating Out


- Weight loss can be challenging when you eat out often
 - Larger portion sizes
 - Viewing high calorie options may trigger your desire to eat more
 - Dining out may be stressful, leading you to order increased alcohol, dessert, appetizers or overeat on bread or chips
 - The cost of the meal may cause you to overeat

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2

Eating Out Stats


- American households spend more than 40 percent of their total food budget on foods prepared outside of the home, up from 25 percent in 1970s
- Researchers and policymakers speculate that eating out leads to excess caloric intake and poor diet quality
 - Restaurant meals are on average 20 percent higher in fat, also higher in sodium, sugar and much lower in calcium, dietary fiber and iron

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3

Tips for Eating Out


- Plan what to order before going to the restaurant
- Call ahead or look at the website to find your best choices
- Eat a small, protein-based snack or drink a calorie free beverage before going to the restaurant
- Avoid skipping meals in anticipation to "splurge" which can lead to over-eating


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4

Tips for Eating Out

- Substitute fruit or vegetables for potato chips or fries
- Order salad dressings and sauces to be served on the side and use in moderation
- To help limit carbohydrates, ask to order half of the rice or pasta and then order extra protein and vegetables




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5

Tips for Eating Out

- For salads dressings, ask for vinaigrette, balsamic, olive oil/lemon juice or homemade dressing
- Monitor sources of fat:
 - Sandwiches or burgers may have extra cheese, bacon, sauces
 - Salads may have several toppings like bacon, olives, cheese, avocado, candied nuts
 - Limit creamy based soups, choose broth based

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6

Tips for Eating Out

Ask your server how foods are prepared
 Look for healthy cooking methods:

- Baked, steamed, broiled, braised, rubbed, seared, grilled, sauteed, spiced, roasted, poached

Limit items with the words:


- Fried, breaded, escalloped, butter sauce, melted cheese on top, loaded, stuffed, glazed, sweetened

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7

Tips for Eating Out

- Ask for a to go box and place half of your meal in the box before eating
- Consider saving dessert for special occasions such as birthdays or share a dessert with a friend/family member




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Tips for Eating Out

- Choose low calorie beverages like unsweetened iced tea, club soda, diet soda, water
- Wine spritzer, light beer, mojito may be a better option vs sugary cocktails
- Practice mindful eating and eat slowly
- Meal planning once a week can help decrease how often you eat out



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9

Restaurant Ideas:

- **Fast food:** bun/bread less sandwiches or burgers, protein or grain bowls, salads, skip the super-sized and ask for the kid's option
- **Brunch:** omelet with vegetables and half the cheese or eggs, breakfast meat, breakfast potatoes or fruit/whole wheat toast for your carb source
- **Asian:** broth-based soups, steamed rice and dumplings, spring rolls, edamame, ask for sauces on the side, Hibachi dinner with steamed rice vs fried rice, ask for low sodium soy sauce

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10

Restaurant Ideas:

- **Mexican:** tacos with corn tortillas or 2 small soft shells, fajitas - be mindful with your carb choices (chips, tortilla shells, rice and beans) and fat sources like guacamole, sour cream, cheese, sauces
- **Italian:** choose tomato-based sauces vs alfredo, grilled protein options with a salad, ask for half serving of pasta with extra protein and vegetables, limit bread sticks

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11

Travel Tactics


- Bring food with you
 - Pack healthy snacks: protein bars, Greek yogurt, cottage cheese, cheese sticks, hard boiled eggs, half of a sandwich, fruit, vegetables, protein shakes, beef jerky or meat sticks, nuts/seeds, protein balls, edamame
 - Pack a lunch whenever possible
 - Keep emergency stores of non-perishable foods at your office and in your car as able
 - Prioritize balanced meals of protein, fiber and healthy fats

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12

Eating Out Keys

- Be prepared and be kind to yourself
 - Plan ahead
 - Rehearse your plan
 - Don't beat yourself up if you have an overeating event
 - Get back on track the following meal



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13

Questions

14

Thank you!

15

References

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- Allina Health: Medical Weight Management Manual
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- [Incorporating MyPlate at Fast Food Restaurants \(eatright.org\)](#)
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16