

Dining Out Strategies



Don't Go Famished

Arriving at a restaurant when you're way-too-hungry can lead to poor choices and overeating. Go with an appetite, but not so hungry that you'll feel out of control. If need be, have a light snack before eating out.

Drink Smart

Save money and calories by skipping beverages as often as possible. Soda, sweet tea, juice, and alcohol all add empty calories (especially with free refills!) Choose unsweetened tea or water (no charge!)

Customize

Ask questions how menu items can be modified. You might be surprised at what changes can be made. Sauce or dressing on the side? No butter on the vegetables? Leave off the croutons or mayo? Substitute a healthier side?

TIP 1

Do Your Homework

Look at menus and identify healthier picks before you go. If you go with a plan, you are more likely to follow through with good intentions.

TIP 2

When making plans, suggest restaurants you know have more nutritious options to choose from.

TIP 3

Watch the "Extras"

Use caution with bread and chip baskets. Decline them or keep them out of arm's reach. When possible, skip meal deals that add low-nutrient things like chips, cookies, and drinks (it sounds like a deal, but is it really?). Order a la carte to create a meal of your choosing.

TIP 4

TIP 5

Stick to the Basics

When reviewing the menu, try to spot whole grains, fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats. These are the nutrient-dense foods that can satisfy your hunger *and* your taste buds.

TIP 6

TIP 7

Watch Portions

No matter what you decide to eat, portion control is key (restaurant portions are huge!) Share an entree with your companion, or look for smaller portions (often called "lunch," "light," or "half" portions). Ask for a box when your food is served and put half in the box before you start eating.