

Making Healthy Choices When Eating Out



Research shows that the more often a person eats out, the more body fat he or she has. Try to prepare more meals at home. Eat out and get take-out foods less often. When you do eat away from home, try these tips to help you control portions:

- **Share your meal**, order a half-portion, or order an appetizer as a main meal. Examples of healthier appetizers include tuna or chicken salad, minestrone soup, and tomato or corn salsas.
- **Take at least half of your meal home.** Ask for a portion of your meal to be boxed up so you will not be tempted to eat more than you need.
- **Stop eating when you begin to feel full.** Focus on enjoying the setting and your friends or family for the rest of the meal.
- **Avoid large beverages such as “supersize” sugar-sweetened soft drinks.** They have a large number of calories. Instead, try drinking water with a slice of lemon. If you want to drink soda, choose a calorie-free beverage or a small sugar-sweetened soft drink.
- **When traveling**, pack a small cooler of foods that are hard to find on the road, such as fresh fruit, sliced raw vegetables, and fat-free or low-fat yogurt. Also, pack a few bottles of water instead of sweetened soda or juice. You can also bring dried fruit, nuts, and seeds to snack on. Since these foods can be high in calories, have small portions (1/4 cup) measured out in advance. If you stop at a restaurant, try to choose one that serves a variety of foods such as salads,



grilled or steamed entrees, or a plain baked potato. Consider drinking water or low-fat or fat-free milk instead of sugar-sweetened soft drinks with your meal. If you choose a higher fat option like French fries or pizza, order the small size or ask for a single slice of pizza with vegetable toppings such as mushrooms, peppers, etc.

Remember...

The amount of calories you eat affects your weight and health. In addition to selecting a healthy variety of foods, look at the size of the portions you eat. Choosing nutritious foods and keeping portion sizes sensible may help you reach and stay at a healthy weight.

Source: National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases, National Institutes of Health, Publication No. 03-5287, January 2003, Updated August 2006

National Diabetes Education Program materials:

www.ndep.nih.gov

www.yourdiabetesinfo.org

The 411 on Healthy Eating http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/411_On_Eating_Healthy.pdf

Buffet Table Tips http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Gen.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for African Americans http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_AfricanAm.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Asian American and Pacific Islander

http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_AsAm.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Chinese audiences http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Chi.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Filipino audiences http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Fil.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Hawaiian audiences http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Haw.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Indian audiences http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Ind.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Japanese audiences http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Jap.pdf

Buffet Table Tips for Korean audiences http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Buffer_Kor.pdf

Healthy Eating During Winter Gatherings for People with Diabetes

http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/NDEP_Healthy_Eating.pdf

Summer Eating Tips http://www.ndep.nih.gov/media/Summer_Eating_Tips_Gen.pdf

