



## Eating Out - Wisely

In a fast paced world, we often find ourselves saving time by eating our meals out. The good news is that restaurants are now more aware of peoples' desire for convenient, yet healthy choices. Unfortunately, we may be *tempted* by the high fat/calorie choices available, or even *unknowingly* make the wrong choices believing they were healthy. Below provides some guidelines to use when dining out.

### General Guidelines

**1) Read the Menu Descriptions:** The way restaurants describe a food item tells us a lot.

<b><u>Green Light Words</u></b> (Low Fat/Low Calorie)	<b><u>Red Light Words</u></b> (High Fat/High Calorie)	<b><u>Yellow Light High Salt</u></b> <b><u>Caution Words</u></b>
baked broiled garden fresh grilled poached roasted steamed in its own juices "loin" "round" 92% lean meats	au gratin      basted braised        buttered casserole      creamed crispy          fried hash hollandaise    scalloped pan-fried       parmigiana pot-pie         rib meats sautéed (oil)	au jus in broth (many restaurants use a commercial meat base) in cocktail sauce in tomato base pickled smoked teriyaki meat in its own juices

**2) Remember Portion Sizes: Super-sized meals provide more – more food, more fat, more calories, and more sodium. Consider the following:**

- ▶ Order "a' la Carte". It lets you order what you want, with a more appropriate serving size.
- ▶ Choose plain items; menu items labeled "jumbo", "giant", and "deluxe" are more than a person needs at one sitting.
- ▶ When ordering an entree, try splitting it with a friend or request a take-home container and put half in it immediately after the food arrives. This removes the temptation to over-eat.
- ▶ Look at meat portion sizes listed on the menu; consider choosing the *4-ounce* tenderloin instead of the *12-ounce* porterhouse.

**3) Ethnic Eating: Variety is good; hidden fats are not.**

<b><u>Asian</u></b> <b><i>Green Light Words</i></b>	<b><u>Italian</u></b> <b><i>Green Light Words</i></b>	<b><u>Mexican</u></b> <b><i>Green Light Words</i></b>
non-fried noodles hot-and-sour soup steamed potsticker (vegetable) stir-fry            steamed poached          tofu	marinara      red clam sauce marsala        ravioli tortellini      primavera gnocchi        tomato sauce	black beans    pinto beans tostada        enchilada salsa            baked tamale Cheviche cheeseless burrito steamed corn/flour tortilla Fish a la Veracruzana
<hr/> <b><i>Red Light Words</i></b>	<hr/> <b><i>Red Light Words</i></b>	<hr/> <b><i>Red Light Words</i></b>
fried (rice, wantons) szechuan (fried in oil) hunan (fried in oil) soy sauce (high salt only) egg rolls	cheese stuffed meat stuffed cream sauce butter sauce parmigiana scaloppini	refried guacamole sour cream cheese <i>deep fried</i> corn/flour tortilla

**4) Survey the Selections: Scan the selections to make the best meal choices.**

- ▶ **Appetizers** can take the place of a meal; they are often smaller servings than entrees.
  - Good selections include vegetables, fruits, broth soups, and tomato juices.
- ▶ **Soup** can be combined with either a half sandwich or a salad to make a satisfying meal.
  - Broth or tomato based soups, such as consommé and minestrone, are good selections.
  - Creamed soups, chowders, and pureed soups often contain (high fat) heavy cream and eggs.
  - Remember some soups may be high in sodium.
- ▶ **Vegetable salads** can be wonderful option.
  - Lettuce or spinach make a superb base; add a variety of your favorite vegetables.
  - Exercise caution on higher fat salads: Caesar, Greek, coleslaw, egg/tuna/chicken/macaroni, and taco salad. Ask for reduced fat or fat free.
  - Chef salads can also be high in fat because of the addition of cheese, eggs, and fatty meats they may contain; ask for these items on the side to control the amount that you add.
  - ALWAYS ask for dressing (and cheese) on the side. Request low-fat dressings if available. Dip the tongs of your fork and then your salad to help control the amount of dressing used.
- ▶ **Breadbaskets** often set you up to over-eat.
  - Consider requesting the waiter to forgo the basket. Otherwise ask for one roll only.
  - Good selections include whole/cracked wheat bread, crackers, and bagels with little to no added butter. Muffins, croissants, and garlic toast are high in fat.
- ▶ **Side dishes** can often make or break a meal.
  - Choose baked or broiled potatoes, steamed rice or vegetables, or fresh fruit.
  - Ask that no fat be used to prepare these items. Most restaurants will honor these requests.
- ▶ **Menu entrees** described with the green words are healthier selections.
  - Keep in mind entrees are usually at least double a normal serving size.
  - Skinless poultry and roasted meats are typically the better selections.
  - Breaded, battered, and fried meats; meat or cheese stuffing; and sauces with bacon, butter, cream, or eggs should raise a red flag to indicate high-fat selections.
- ▶ **Desserts** may be calling your taste buds, make sure your stomach answers.
  - Wait at least 15 minutes before ordering dessert. This allows your body to decide if it is actually still hungry.
  - Fresh fruit, poached spiced fruit, angel food cake with fruit puree, sorbet, gelatin, and low fat sherbet or yogurt are good options.
  - Order one dessert, and share it or take one-half home to eat at another time.

**If you are unsure how *any* item is prepared- ASK!**

**5) Consider the Condiments: Adding “extras” can mean adding calories, fat, and salt.**

- ▶ Keep in mind that well prepared food needs minimal adjustments.
- ▶ Be very wary of “special sauces”- these are most likely to add unneeded fat and calories.

Condiment	Calories	Carbohydrates (g)	Fat	Sodium (mg)
2 slices bacon	80	5	6	236
2 Tbsp BBQ sauce	50	15	0	254
1 Tbsp butter/margarine	100	5	15	123
1 oz cheese	110	5	9	176
2 Tbsp ketchup	30	10	0	356
1 Tbsp mayonnaise	100	5	11	105
2 Tbsp regular salad dressing	140	5	16	428
1 Tbsp sour cream	26	0	2.5	6
2 Tbsp soy sauce	20	5	0	520
2 Tbsp sweet & sour sauce	60	15	0	380
2 Tbsp tartar sauce	140	5	16	380