

Health-Full Eating & Nutrition



Eating Out

Every day, we make a choice whether or not to have a heart healthy breakfast, a lean green lunch, and a nutrient packed dinner. On occasion, we chose to eat out and instead of sticking to our diet, we indulge in a treat. We should absolutely treat ourselves but how do we, without feeling guilty? With so many tasty food options, it can be hard to resist temptation. Restaurant food is meant to look, smell and taste great which can sometimes mean that the calorie count skyrockets and the nutritional value diminishes. Here are some simple tips that you can follow to enjoy your dining experience without feeling like you are sabotaging your healthy lifestyle efforts. Apply one tip or combine a few for a pleasant and guilt free dining experience.

Cut It In Half

When ordering your meal, keep in mind that the portion sizes tend to be more than enough for one person. Go ahead and order the meal that you desire but ask for a half portion. This is easier than trying to stop yourself after you eat only half of what is on your plate. Alternatively, order the full portion but split the meal with someone or ask that a to-go box be brought out with your meal so

that you can put half of it away before you begin eating. Another benefit is that you get to enjoy your favorite dish again the next day. This tip saves you some calories and you have a meal already prepared for lunch or dinner the next day.

Restaurant Research

Sometimes we make a last minute decision on a restaurant, so planning ahead is not always possible. However, if you know where you are dining, use your smart phone to look at the menu ahead of time. Better yet, search for and choose a restaurant that offers tasty and healthy meal options. You can even find calorie and nutrient content for many meals.



If you do your research and make up your mind before getting to the restaurant, it can save you time and effort rather than waiting until you get there. Many restaurants will even offer lighter-fare options. These menu items are typically prepared with less sodium and fewer calories than the rest of the menu.

Savvy Swapper

Consider the way food is prepared when making a selection. This can have a significant impact on the amount of calories it contains. To keep calorie count to a minimum, look for food that has been steamed, grilled, roasted or poached. Dishes that are fried, crispy, crunchy or sautéed will usually contain more fat and more calories. Here are a few simple swaps that you can make to decrease the caloric count of your meal:

- Order a calorie-free beverage such as water or unsweetened tea.
- Skip the pre-dinner bread basket and eat a light and healthy snack ahead of meal time.
- Cheese soups and cream based sauces can be calorie dense while providing very little nutritional value; instead, choose broth based soups and tomato sauces.

- Choose veggie based side items, which are low in calories, over French Fries or cheesy sides. Be sure to watch how the vegetables are prepared.

It is important to keep things balanced and in moderation. By implementing these tips, you can enjoy a bit of an indulgence without completely overloading on calories.



References:

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