

Keeping Healthy When Eating Out

Eating out with your family can be a fun way to enjoy a meal. Unfortunately, the kids' menus at most restaurants provide portion sizes that are two or three times the recommended amount and are higher in calories, fat and sugar than a typical meal eaten at home. Most restaurant meals do not provide enough fruit and vegetables.

Limit how often your family eats out to help avoid the extra fat and calories that are found in most restaurant meals. Knowing your options will help you make smart choices to provide your children with healthy foods when you do choose to eat out.



BEFORE YOU GO...

Do some research. Many restaurants have their nutrition information available online. This will help you select a restaurant with healthier options.

Plan ahead. Use the nutrition information to select menu items that are lower in calories, fat and sugar. Let your children pick which foods they want from these options.

Be informed. Check out their websites to see which have healthier options available on their menus.



Stay balanced. Provide meals and snacks that are light and nutritious such as fruit and vegetables on days when you eat out. Or, bring fruit and vegetables with you for a side-dish.

WATCH YOUR PORTION SIZES !

- ✓ Choose the smallest size available or plan to take half of your meal home.
- ✓ Order salad with low fat dressing. Skip the rolls/bread or just keep it to one piece.
- ✓ Avoid super sizes - they add extra calories, fat and sugar.
- ✓ Your child does not have to clean their plate. Take leftovers home for another meal.
- ✓ Children's menus provide smaller portions, but the foods are often fried – try for pasta with tomato sauce or grilled chicken options.
- ✓ Cut pizza in half, so one piece becomes two.

TIPS FOR MAKING HEALTHIER CHOICES



 CHOOSE...	 INSTEAD OF...
veggies, ketchup, mustard, salsa and relish to garnish and flavor food	special sauces, mayonnaise, gravy and spreads.
low-fat salad dressing and vinaigrettes on the side	salads dressed with bleu cheese, Caesar or other creamy dressing.
whole grain bread, pizza crust and pasta	white bread, regular crust and pasta.
grilled chicken without the skin, lean meat or fish	chicken tenders or nuggets and high-fat beef.
colorful vegetable pizza with low-fat cheese	cheese pizza with pepperoni.
baked potato, salad, cut up veggies or a stir-fry	French fried or mashed potatoes.
fresh fruit, yogurt, frozen yogurt, ice milk or fruit sorbet	cookies, cake, pie and ice cream.
poached eggs, toast or yogurt with fresh fruit and granola	high-fat breakfast items including muffins, waffles, pancakes and donuts.

Choose water, low-fat milk or 100% fruit juice instead of soft drinks and fruit drinks, such as lemonade or fruit punch.



Websites to visit for more information:

Center for Science in the Public Interest
www.cspinet.org

Healthy Dining Finder
www.healthydiningfinder.com

Children's National Medical Center
www.dcchildrens.com