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Choosing Healthy Restaurant Meals

Going out to eat is enjoyable, but restaurants often serve large meals, which can be high in calories, fat, and salt. Don't be afraid to ask how items on the menu are prepared and request substitutions.

Here are a few tips from *Go4Life* to help make your meal both delicious and nutritious.

- Order a salad with lean meat, low-fat or fat-free cheese, and other healthy toppings. Choose low-fat or fat-free salad dressing, and ask for the dressing on the side so you can control how much you use.

- Choose foods that are baked, broiled, braised, grilled, steamed, sautéed, or boiled. Avoid fried food.

- Hold the "special sauces." Ask the kitchen not to top your dish with butter or whipped cream.

- Select foods with a tomato-based or red sauce instead of a cream-based or white sauce. Tomato-based sauces usually contain more vitamins, less fat, and fewer calories.

- Use portion control: Skip the "large" or "super sized." Ask for "small," or share a portion.

- Ask for food to be prepared without added salt, and don't add salt at the table.

- Drink water, fat-free or low-fat milk, or other drinks without added sugars.

- Instead of fries, try a small baked potato, side salad with low-fat or fat-free dressing, or fruit.

- Order an item from the menu instead of heading for the "all-you-can-eat" buffet.

- If you take home leftovers, get them into the refrigerator within 2 hours—sooner if the temperature outside is above 90°F.

✔ *Quick Tip*

For more ideas on healthy eating, read *What's on Your Plate? Smart Food Choices for Healthy Aging.* **www.nia.nih.gov/health**

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