

# Dine out with Confidence

February 23, 2023



## Concepts Taught:

- Learn how to dine out keeping health goals in mind.
- Discuss how to choose healthier meals at restaurants.
- Identify healthier meals when dining out.

## Benefits to dining out:

- Variety of meal options, quick when in a time crunch, easier than cooking for self, used as a treat, socializing, time spent with friends/family, celebrating special events - birthdays, anniversaries.

## Challenges to dining out:

- Feeling like there are less healthy options, larger portions, more calories and fat and sodium, feeling like less control over ingredients.

## Don't forget the basics:

- Remember the basic structure of a healthy plate:
  - Use heart-healthy oils, like olive oil, for dressings or roasted vegetables.
  - Make half your plate vegetables or mostly vegetables with small portion of fruit.
  - Choose whole grains - wild rice, brown rice, whole grain roll or legumes - black beans or pinto beans.
  - Choose lean proteins - chicken breast, salmon, tuna, pork loin - that are roasted, baked, or grilled.

## Examples:

**Breakfast:** oatmeal, fruit or veggie omelette, whole grain toast

**Lunch:** Pick 2 - 1/2 sandwich, salad or 1/2 soup, salad

**Dinner:** 6 oz salmon, wild rice, broccoli or chicken fajitas or 6 oz steak, asparagus, pico, avocado

## Tips for choosing healthier meals:

### Plan ahead:

- Review websites for chain restaurants to review nutrition information before going to restaurant.
- Helps make informed choices for your health goals.
- Less impulse decisions.
- Be the first to order in your group so not to be influenced by other orders.

### Key words:

- Review menu for a "lighter" section or use calorie count as a guide.
- Look for words like grilled, roasted, poached, steamed, or baked.
  - Avoid ordering meals with words like fried, sauteed, or smothered.

### Say "no thanks":

- Decline offers for larger portions for just a few dollars more, appetizers, sugar-sweetened beverages like soda or sweet tea, and alcohol.
- Start meal with a garden salad instead of appetizer.
- Choose water or unsweetened tea.

### Ask for "it" on the side:

- Ask for extras to be on the side so you have control over how much to add to your meal - these extras often have extra calories and fat.
- Can I have that on the side please?
  - Dressings, butter, sauces, dips, cheese, gravy.

### To-go containers:

- Ask for half of your meal to be put in a to-go container before it is served to you or ask to have a to-go container brought to the table with the meal so you can divide it yourself. Leads to less pressure to "clean your plate".
- Split or share your meal with another person. This is also a cost-savings approach.

### Have a snack:

- Don't go to the restaurant hungry, but instead have a protein-rich snack before may lead to eating less.
  - hard-boiled egg, string cheese, nuts or seeds, peanut butter, Greek yogurt.

### Eat mindfully:

- Relax and take time to enjoy sight, smell, and taste of food.
- Chew thoroughly may lead to eating slower and eating less.
- Put down utensil and take a sip of water between bites.