



# Nutrition Fact Sheet

## How To Eat Healthier When Eating Out

Occasionally eating out can be a nice treat, or it can be a convenient option when you don't feel like cooking. But, we can easily take in extra calories, saturated fat, sugar and salt, than we realise. In this fact sheet, we explore a range of practical tips to eat healthier the next time you eat out.

### WHY EATING OUT FREQUENTLY CAN BE A PROBLEM FOR OUR HEALTH?

#### Unhealthy Fat

- Unhealthy fat (saturated fat) is found in commercial burgers, pizza, deep fried foods, cakes, pastries and pies, etc.
- High saturated fat intake can increase blood cholesterol levels, which is a risk factor for stroke and heart disease.

#### Added Sugar

- Added sugar is found in soft drinks, cordials, sugary drinks, desserts, etc.
- High sugar intake can lead to weight gain and tiredness in the short term, and increase risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease in the long term.

#### Salt

- High amount of salt is often added to restaurant meals and takeaway foods to enhance flavour.
- Eating too much salt can lead to high blood pressure, which again is a risk factor for stroke and heart disease.

### PRACTICAL TIPS FOR HEALTHIER EATING OUT

#### Manage your portion sizes

1. Keep it small. When eating out, portion sizes can be larger than what you normally eat at home. Share a large meal with a friend.
2. Split up the dessert. If you love rich desserts, share one with your friends to avoid overeating.

#### Make healthier choices

3. Go for whole grains. Look for dishes made with whole grains such as whole wheat/whole grain pasta, wraps or buns, quinoa, brown rice, barley or oats.
4. Avoid fried, battered and crumbed choices; choose steamed, pan fried, braised, poached, baked, roasted or grilled options instead.
5. Add more vegetables. Ask for extra vegetable toppings on wraps, burgers, pizzas and sandwiches. Salads and vegetables are healthier side dishes than chips.
6. Ask for sauces and salad dressings on the side and use them sparingly.
7. Use salsa and mustard instead of creamy sauces such as mayonnaise.

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8. Order a soup or salad to start.
9. Choose water as a drink. Try to avoid or drink less sugary drinks and soft drinks.

### Mindful eating

10. Go slowly. Listen to your body, eat slowly and savouring every bite. It takes about 20 minutes from the time you start eating for your brain to send out signals of fullness.

### Think about your whole diet

11. It is always important to consider how a meal fits into your overall diet. We all have times when we would rather eat our favourite food and not worry about whether it is healthy or not. If you are following a healthy meal pattern most of the time, go ahead and treat yourself.

## EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY SWAPS WHEN EATING OUT

SWAP THIS...		FOR THIS...
Fried chicken burger		Grilled chicken burger
Hot chips		Salad wrap, baked wedges
Sausage rolls, hot dogs		Lean meat kebab with salad, toasted sandwich, wholemeal or multigrain rolls
Mac n cheese		Tomato pasta
Spring rolls		Rice paper rolls
Fried eggs and bacon on white toast		Poached eggs and salmon on whole grain toast
Creamy soup or laksa		Broth based chicken noodle soup with vegetables

### For more information, please visit:

Association Between Frequency of Eating Away-From-Home Meals and Risk of All-Cause and Cause-Specific Mortality  
[https://els-ibs-prod-cdn.ibs.elsevierhealth.com/pb/assets/raw/Health%20Advance/journals/jand/jand\\_ft\\_121\\_4.pdf](https://els-ibs-prod-cdn.ibs.elsevierhealth.com/pb/assets/raw/Health%20Advance/journals/jand/jand_ft_121_4.pdf)  
 Mitigating the Health Risks of Dining Out: The Need for Standardized Portion Sizes in Restaurants  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4025680/>

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