

Eating Right When Eating Out

Dining out can make it tough to eat right. Whether at a fast-food place, casual family diner or high-end restaurant, the typical American is faced with countless tasty, high-calorie dishes to choose from.

What makes restaurant food sooo tempting?

We Eat Out More Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Going out to dinner is no longer an occasional treat • It's part of the American lifestyle • We eat higher-calorie meals more often
Portions Are Large	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to overeating • Distorts our image of an appropriate serving size • Plays into the mindset to "get my money's worth" and "clean my plate"
We Get Free Appetizers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bread, chips and other "free" foods are brought to the table without asking • High-calorie appetizers and drinks are added temptations • Easy to consume a meal's worth of calories before the main entrée even arrives
Restaurant Cooking Adds Calories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food is typically prepared with high-calorie ingredients and cooking styles • Served with sauces and dips that add calories • Entrées paired with high-calorie side dishes • Lower-calorie options are hard to identify
One Word: Dessert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dessert is always offered and tough to turn down
All of Our Senses Are Engaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sight, smell and taste of food are everywhere, which makes it harder to choose wisely



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Basic Restaurant Survival

Below are some eat-right strategies that work well in most restaurants.

Never Arrive Hungry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat a healthy snack at least two hours before you head out <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reduces hunger and impulsive decisions – Helps you avoid appetizers and stick to a healthful entrée
Drink Water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink a lot of water or other zero-calorie beverages before, during and after your meal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Fluid is surprisingly filling – We often confuse thirst for hunger
Plan Ahead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose a restaurant with healthful options and plan your order ahead of time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Look up the menu online or call the restaurant – Plan your order and any special requests (salad dressing on the side, veggies steamed, etc.) – Tell others your plan so they back you up – Avoid looking at the menu and being tempted
Order First	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduces the temptation to change your mind
Eat When Others Eat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid using “willpower” (which may falter) and choose a healthier alternative instead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If other diners order an appetizer, order a plain side salad or broth-based soup – If other diners order dessert, get coffee or tea or fresh fruit
Rely on Go-To Choices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain salad with dressing on the side • Plain baked potato • Steamed vegetables • Grilled, steamed or broiled fish or chicken
Use the Menu for Ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the server to substitute a side, order double vegetables, ask for a different preparation or ask that your food be cooked without sauce or oil



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