



Ordering Takeout the Healthy Way

Fast-food chains and restaurants can make their dishes look, smell, and taste delicious all at an affordable cost. But, when ordering takeout, are you making the most nutritious food choices? Next time you order takeout, try these strategies to help you stick to a healthy meal pattern.

1) Plan it out

Do some research before you decide what to eat. Many fast-food chains have their menu available online. When possible, use the nutrition facts label to compare food choices. If ordering from a restaurant that does not have nutrition facts, pick a place that has plenty of healthy options.

2) Visualize a healthy portion

Takeout options can lead to overeating because you don't have control over the portion size. It can be helpful to compare portion sizes when you receive your meal. Your hand can be a great visual to measuring food.

Thumb	1 Tablespoon	Butter, Oils, Cheeses, Dressing, Sour Cream, Nut Butters
Handful	1-2 Ounces	Pretzels, Crackers, Nuts
Palm	3-4 Ounces	Meat, Fish, Cooked Veggies, Pasta
Fist	1 Cup	Fruit, Raw Vegetables, Salad, Cereals, Soup

Do not supersize! Pass on hamburgers with two or three patties. Instead, choose a regular or kid-size burger, which can save you around 500 calories.

To pair with a burger, ask for a small fry, or a side salad with a light dressing, instead of a large fry. Making this choice can save you around 200 calories.

3) Find a healthy side

Only 1 in 10 adults get enough fruits and vegetables in their diet. Make it a goal to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables. Instead of thinking about foods you shouldn't eat, why not add a portion of what you need more of. Scan the side menu for a fruit or vegetable, or ask what fruit or vegetable options are available.

4) Curb your hunger

To prevent hunger, try small, healthy snacks throughout the day. If you get to the point of being extremely hungry when sitting down for a meal, start with a light cup of soup or small salad to curb your hunger and prevent overeating.

5) Decipher the description

Notice key words when browsing the menu. Choose meals with a cooking method that does not add extra fat. Grilled, steamed, or broiled options are healthier than fried and breaded options. If you are ordering a dish that has sauce, ask for it on the side.

6) Go Green

Salad can be a great option on the menu, but you have to be mindful of what you are ordering. Many salad dressings are high in fat and add on extra calories. Make sure when ordering a salad, the dressing comes to the side so you can control the portion. Remember 1 tablespoon of dressing is about the size of your thumb.

7) Choose Water

Many beverages are high in calories and sugar. A large soda averages to 290 calories and 80g (6.5 tablespoons) of sugar! Instead drink unsweetened tea, sparkling water, plain or flavored water and save yourself the extra calories.

Resources:

<https://www.eatright.org/-/media/files/eatrightdocuments/nm/healthyeatingontherun.pdf?la=en&hash=FA974432130CD445655FBDA235D90BE2B6817FDC>

<https://www.eatright.org/health/weight-loss/eating-out/7-tips-for-healthy-dining-out>

<https://www.nm.org/healthbeat/healthy-tips/nutrition/handy-guide-to-serving-size>

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2017/p1116-fruit-vegetable-consumption.html>