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Perils of Eating Out: Buffets and Fast Foods



We all want a good deal. Buffets, places where you can eat all you want, or super value fast food meals grab at our thrifty spirit! They are especially appealing when we go in hungry and want to eat a lot of food at a good price. There is something in us that thinks the more we eat the better deal we got today! We think, "What a good buy!"

However, what may seem like a good financial deal is a poor health deal.

After eating one of these "deals," we may have a bad stomachache from eating too much, or feel the need for a long nap from feeling so full.

Avoid Excess Calories

All of us need a certain number of calories each day to keep our body going. If we eat more calories than we need, those calories turn into fat and cause weight gain. An extra 3500 calories equals one pound of fat. Having one less soft drink per day can cause one pound of weight loss in 25 days or 14 pounds in 1 year!

Watch Portion Sizes

We can make great food choices, but if we do not watch how much we eat, the calories still add up and keep us from losing or even maintaining our weight. Choose foods you enjoy but limit the portion size and eat *slowly* to fully enjoy the amount you have.

Use the following tips to help make good decisions when eating out.

MY GOALS:

EATING AT BUFFETS

- Limit portions to 1 plate with 1 layer of food—no heaping or seconds!
- Taste the foods; do not fill up on them. A good measure of whether you are eating too much is to check how you feel when the meal is over. Are you comfortably full or stuffed? Feeling satisfied, not stuffed, is the goal of successfully going to buffets and not over-eating.
- Avoid sweetened beverages (sweet tea, Kool-Aid, soft drinks)—you can drink a lot of calories and never feel full! Always have unsweetened drinks or water with your meals.
- Have one small piece of dessert, like ½ cup of ice cream or small piece of cake, pie, cobbler, etc. This will give you a sample of one of the sweet choices offered, but not too much.

Tip: Do not go back for seconds!
Once through the line is enough!

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EATING FAST FOOD

- Eat healthier choices—like a salad or fruit cup instead of fries
- Order grilled or baked meat instead of fried
- Ask for their list of “Nutrition Facts” and compare the calories and fat when choosing
- Leave cheese off of the sandwich
- Leave sauces off of your order
- Avoid sweetened beverages
- Order a child's meal—yes, even an adult can do this!
- Avoid super-sizing any of your order

Tip: Many restaurants have choices other than fries, like fruit cup, baked potato, salad or vegetables and dip.

MINDLESS CALORIES

Large servings

1/3 cup nuts = 244 calories 1 cup = 732 calories

Salad dressing

2 Tbsp ≈ 100 calories 4 Tbsp ≈ 200 calories

French fries

Small = 210 calories Large = 450 calories

Cheese on hamburger

No cheese = 270 calories Cheese = 320 calories

Soft drink

Diet drink = 0 calories 1 can ≈ 140 calories

Sweet tea

Unsweetened = 0 calories 8 oz. ≈ 100 calories

Sports drinks

12 oz. = 70 calories 32 oz. = 200 calories

Chicken nuggets

4 piece = 170 calories 10 piece = 420 calories

PORTION SIZES

Use measuring cups and serving size examples for a week or two to help you learn the size of a serving that is listed on a package.

<u>Serving</u>	<u>Size</u>	<u>Serving</u>	<u>Size</u>
2 to 4 oz. meat	Deck of cards	1 oz. cheese	4 dice
1 cup	Hands cupped	1 Tbsp	2 thumb tips
½ cup	Tennis ball	1 tsp	Thumb tip