

Real Guidelines for Real People: Ten ways to eat out healthfully

If you're a typical American, you probably spend more than half of your food dollars eating away from home. And, like most people, you are probably being served huge, super-sized portions in every type of restaurant you visit - fast food to fine dining.

Since restaurants are a regular part of our hectic schedules, it's important to make healthful choices wherever you eat. Here are ten tasty tips for getting the best nutrition value from restaurants meals.

1. *Eat a light snack - like a fruit or veggie - before you go out to eat.* A snack will take the edge off your hunger and make it easier to eat sensibly.
2. *Drink plenty of water along with your meal.* Alcoholic drinks add extra calories, while water is refreshingly calorie-free.
3. *Ask the server to hold the bread or chips until your meal is served.* It's easy to fill up on bread or rolls - before you even get to the main course.
4. *Start with a veggie soup or fresh salad instead of a fried appetizer.* Both count towards "5 A Day" - and recommended 5 daily servings of produce.
5. *Order an appetizer as an entrée.* The portion size is usually just about right - plus you'll save money on the bill.

6. *Share an entrée with one, or even two, other people.* One entrée with an extra side dish is another way to save money and calories.
7. *Plan ahead for leftovers when you order your meal.* Consider which entrée might taste great as part of a sandwich or salad tomorrow.
8. *Ask for dressings, sauces and toppings to be served on the side.* This is a great way to get the flavors you enjoy - without overdoing it.
9. *Divide a dessert (or two) among everyone at the table.* One dessert + several forks or spoons = sensible indulgence.
10. *Tear up your membership in the Clean Plate Club.* Listen carefully to your stomach - and stop eating as soon as it says full.

Source: Eat Right Montana

