

Learning to Eat Healthily Away From Home



Prevention and Health Education Unit
Prepared by Licensed Health Educators

Objectives

Mention the benefits of healthy eating.

Identify recommendations for selecting healthy foods.

Provide recommendations based on the food pyramid.

Healthy Eating

- Healthy eating is about choosing a variety of foods that provide the nutrients your body needs to stay healthy, feel good, and have energy. These nutrients include protein, carbohydrates, fats, water, vitamins, and minerals.

Healthy Eating When Eating Out

The pace of work, school, and daily routines often leads us to eat away from home, frequently in fast-food restaurants. These places typically offer larger portions and foods that are higher in saturated fat and sodium. However, it is still possible to make healthier choices. Below are some alternatives to help you choose nutritious and delicious options when eating out.



Advantages of a Healthy Diet



Improves cardiovascular health

Strengthens the immune system

Better weight management

Improves mental health and daily energy

Help prevent some chronic diseases such as hypertension

Improves digestion

Strengthens bones and teeth

Improves quality of life



**Recommendations for
Selecting Foods**

1. Know the number of calories you need

As a general guideline, an adult typically needs around 2,000 calories per day. However, calorie requirements vary based on factors such as age, sex, and level of physical activity. For personalized recommendations, consult your dietitian to determine the appropriate daily calorie intake for you.



2. Look for information about nutrition facts

Nutrition information can be found on restaurant menu boards and on the establishment's website.



Nutritional Facts

Serving size

bold, larger font;
some amounts
have been
updated to reflect
more realistic
serving size

Added sugars

new addition

Nutrition Facts

4 servings per container

Serving size 1 1/2 cup (208g)

Amount Per Serving

Calories 240

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 4g 5%

Saturated Fat 1.5g **8%**

Trans Fat 0g

Cholesterol 5mg 2%

Sodium 430mg 19%

Total Carbohydrate 46g 17%

Dietary Fiber 7g **25%**

Total Sugars 4g

Includes 2g Added Sugars **4%**

Protein 11g

Vitamin D 2mcg 10%

Calcium 260mg 20%

Iron 6mg 35%

Potassium 240mg 6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Calories

significantly
larger font

Daily values (DV)

reflect new
recommendations

Micronutrients

potassium and
vitamin D added;
vitamins A and C
removed; actual
amounts, as well
as DV%, declared

3. Choose the Most Convenient Option

Add-ins can significantly increase the calorie content of a meal. Choosing options such as salads or vegetables that are steamed, grilled, or roasted provides lower-calorie alternatives. If you choose to have sauces or dressings, ask for them on the side so you can control the amount you use.



4. Plan your meals and snacks ahead of time

Have a plan

Avoid skipping meals

Maintain regular mealtimes throughout the day





**What Options
Should You
Choose at a
Restaurant?**

How to Choose Healthy Options at a Restaurant

Foods described as creamy, fried, breaded, battered, or buttered are generally higher in calories than those described as baked, roasted, steamed, or grilled.

Have control over portions at places with unlimited options, such as buffets and all-you-can-eat salad bars.

Keep in mind that the calories in drinks can add up quickly. You can choose low-calorie options by checking the nutrition facts.



What Options to Select in a Restaurant?

Eat your meals close to your usual times to help keep your blood sugar levels stable.

Avoid skipping meals, as this can increase the risk of blood sugar levels becoming difficult to control.



What Options to Select in a Restaurant?

If you decide to indulge in an unhealthy food craving, do so in moderation, then return to healthy eating at your next meal. Try to avoid giving in to cravings too often.

Eat slowly and stop eating before you feel full. It usually takes about 20 minutes for your body to recognize that it's satisfied.



What Options to Select in a Restaurant?

If you're eating dinner later than usual, opt for an appetizer rather than a large entrée to avoid overeating.

If you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, remember that they can be high in calories. Lower-alcohol options, wine, and sparkling wine generally contain fewer calories than stronger drinks.



The New Food Pyramid (2025–2030)



- Take into consideration the recommendations of the **New Food Pyramid (2025–2030)**. This updated version presents an **inverted** structure, placing greater emphasis on high-quality proteins, natural fats, and vegetables. The focus is on real, minimally processed foods and nutrient-dense choices.

Key Changes in the Food Pyramid

Inverted Structure: The base of the pyramid, previously focused on grains and carbohydrates. Now highlights **proteins, dairy, and healthy fats** as the primary foundation.

Priority to Proteins: The recommendation for protein intake has increased, emphasizing foods such as meat, fish, eggs, and legumes.

Focus on "Real Food": Emphasize eating unprocessed, whole foods while minimizing ultra-processed products and added sugars.

Paradigm Shift: The new model moves away from traditional low-fat dietary guidelines, allowing for full-fat dairy and emphasizing the inclusion of healthy fats as part of a balanced diet.

Additional Recommendations



Limit highly processed products and reduce added sugars to support better overall health and stable energy levels.

Incorporate natural, nutrient-dense fats such as olive oil and fats from whole foods like nuts, seeds, and avocados.

Opt for full-fat dairy products without added sugars, enjoying them in moderate portions as part of a balanced diet.

Choose whole-grain options, which are naturally rich in fiber and support better digestion and blood sugar control. Limit refined grains whenever possible.

Aim to keep your sodium intake under 2,300 mg per day to support heart health and reduce the risk of high blood pressure.



Water Consumption

Water is essential for life and plays a vital role in keeping the body healthy.

Every day, we lose water through breathing, sweating, and natural elimination processes (urinary and gastrointestinal), as well as through metabolism.

How Much Water Should We Drink?

There is no single fixed amount that applies to everyone, nor a universal daily average. Your water needs vary from day to day depending on environmental conditions (such as heat or humidity) and physical factors (such as activity level, health status, and diet).



Practical Tips for Staying Hydrated



Choose the Temperature You Prefer: Drink water at the temperature that feels most enjoyable to you—cold, room temperature, or warm.

Start Your Day With Water: Begin each morning with a glass of water to rehydrate after sleep.

Add Natural Flavor if Needed: If you prefer flavored water, add slices of lemon, orange, cucumber, berries, or fresh mint leaves.

Use Tea as a Hydration Source: Herbal or caffeine-free teas can contribute to your daily fluid intake.

Drink Water Before Eating Out: Have a glass of water before ordering food. Sometimes thirst can be mistaken for hunger.

If You Like Carbonation: Choose club soda or sparkling water. Many options are calorie-free and available with or without natural flavors.

Stay Consistent: Once you make hydration a habit, you may notice improvements in your skin, digestion, weight regulation, and elimination processes.

Questions or Comments



References

- <https://www.breastcancer.org/es/organizar-la-vida/dieta-nutricion/en-que-consiste-comer-saludable>
- <https://www.fallbrookmedicalcenter.com/es/beneficios-de-una-dieta-equilibrada-para-tu-salud/>
- <https://www.fda.gov/media/146646/download>
- <https://www.glucerna.abbott/cr/blog/aprende-a-comer-fuera-de-casa.html>
- <https://wic.pr.gov/assets/pdf-web/material-recursos-adicionales/general/Importancia%20del%20consumo%20de%20agua.pdf>



Social and Emotional Aspect

For tips, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or call the following hotlines:

Available Service Lines

Medical Advice Line

24 hours a day/ 7 days a week


1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

Customer Service

1-844-347-7800

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7805



Thank
you!



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