

Eating Out

Every once and a while, we all need a break, just a time to unwind and relax from our hectic lives. For most of us, that involves going out to eat. For those of us watching our waistline, that means letting out the belt loop. Does it have to be that way? Whether you are sitting at a casual diner or running through a drive thru, there are certain choices that can be made so you can still fill-up without filling-out.

First, for the casual diners. Next time you go out to eat, try these tips. When checking out the menu, choose foods baked, broiled, stir-fried, grilled or steamed. Stay away from items that are breaded and/or fried. Ask for half portions. If you are unable to get half portions, get the 'doggy bag' at the beginning of the meal and divide in half. You can have the remainder for another meal. This also helps to stretch your food dollar. Share a meal with a friend. Choose salads with a fat-free dressing to feel you up before the entrée. If choosing an appetizer- share with the whole table. If bread is served endlessly, don't eat more than one serving.

Now we will turn to those who choose the fast food route. Choose healthier choices such as baked or grilled items. Choose a baked potato instead of the fries; just don't add all the sour cream, bacon bits and cheese to the potato. Choose low-fat or fat-free dressing for your salads. Take advantage of the new fruit choices offered by many fast food places. Select this instead of other dessert items like ice cream. Do not choose kid meals for adults. The calories and fat are not 'kid portioned'.

Next time you are eating out with your family or friends or just running through a drive thru, take time to think about your healthier choices. Use the tips given here so you don't have to expand your belt.