

Healthier Restaurant Choices for Students

It is inevitable that a college lifestyle leads to fast-paced meals and a fair amount of restaurant food. Although it is very tempting and convenient to eat out the nutritional implications aren't so good. Restaurant foods, especially 'fast foods', are usually high in unhealthy fats, sodium and unnecessary calories and lack fiber and important vitamins and minerals. Follow these guidelines to help you make healthier restaurant choices.



Don't rely on restaurant foods more than 3 times a week in order to keep your nutrition in reasonable shape. If you choose to eat out more often,

however, try to bring side dishes with you to add nutritious choices to the meal. For example, bring fruit, baby carrots with low-fat ranch dressing dip or whole grain crackers to have with a burger instead of the fries.

Choose grilled chicken sandwiches or other grilled chicken dishes. Try honey mustard or barbecue sauces instead of mayonnaise. Always ask for sauces and dressings on the side, that way you can use just what you need.

Have salads with dressing on the side. Put just as much dressing as you need. Substitute a salad for the fries, for example. If you choose a salad as a meal, make sure that it has a protein source (chicken, eggs, beans, etc.). Add a slice of bread or a roll to the salad to make a more filling and well-balanced meal.

Order a hamburger rather than a cheeseburger. Unfortunately, the cheese adds more unhealthy saturated fat to an already high fat choice. It also considerably increases the sodium content in an already salty meal. If you want a calcium source, consider a low fat yogurt or frozen yogurt for dessert instead.



Choose burgers that come with lettuce and tomato. This helps add a vegetable to your meal. Try low-fat toppings such as catsup or barbecue

sauce too.

Avoid fried foods such as French fries, onion rings, fried fish or chips. The fat used to fry foods in most restaurants is unhealthy. Usually the meal has plenty of fat anyway, so adding a fried food may contribute to, too much fat and excess calories too. If you want, add some baked chips or pretzels to the meal or lower fat choices such as *Sun Chips*®.



Don't supersize your fast food meals.

The extra calories are probably unnecessary. You'll also add more unhealthy fats (from the fries) and nutritionally useless sugar (from the larger soda). Add a salad instead. If you're still hungry, have low fat milk (or chocolate milk), a low fat frozen yogurt or a fruit after the meal.

Choose water or skim milk as your beverage instead of sodas or iced teas. Water is free so you'll save on the cost! Milk or even chocolate milk will give you a more nutritious beverage without the caffeine or carbonation, both of which can be unhealthy for you.

Choose vegetable toppings for your pizza and skip the extra cheese. Typical



pizza meats such as sausage or pepperoni add additional unhealthy fats to an already high-fat meal. By adding vegetables you'll be adding a little extra nutrition.

Enjoy deli sandwiches with lean meats & lots of veggies. The lowest fat meats are turkey/chicken breast, roast beef and ham. Always include lots of fresh veggies on the sub and a sprinkle of oil and vinegar or mustard instead of the mayo.

Choose a soy or bean meal once a week. Try vegetarian meals like Subway's® Veggie patty sandwich or bean burritos from Taco Bell®.