

EATING HEALTHY IN A FAST FOOD WORLD



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RUSHING TO EAT



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People's lives have become so busy and rushing around, that we no longer eat the way we should. In some places, there is a McDonald's on every major corner, if not some other fast food restaurant. Watching TV, you see a commercial for some kind of food place almost every time commercials are on, urging you to eat there because it's good and you can get it fast and cheap. With so many distractions and obligations, families have these days, how do you eat healthy in a fast food world? It's not an easy thing to do but is possible with planning and knowing what to look for. This isn't to say fast food can't be consumed occasionally, but it should be less often than people are doing it now. Not to mention that our food is so processed that it takes five minutes to cook and has high carbohydrates among other things that are not digested quickly. This is leading to obesity in the population.

THE TRUTH ABOUT WHOLE GRAIN



The Truth About Whole Grain

Because food is so processed these days to make it faster to cook, as well as more convenient for the way our lives have become, it is actually not as good for you as it once was. Recently the food administration even changed the food pyramid to coincide with how we eat these days and food is made. They are suggesting more whole grains than ever before, as well as vegetables. This may sound like what has been told to children for years, but even whole grains are deceiving on packaging these days. With all the new diets out there for low carb, no carb, low fat, no fat, etc., foods are coming out that say whole grain but are just as processed as its white counterpart. They are made with enriched wheat. This process takes out all the nutrients and other things that take time to digest for a healthy life. Reading the ingredient is a good way to find the real whole grain product. They are now more expensive than the over processed product because manufacturers could make the enriched version cheaper and faster. To eat healthy you have to read the labels of everything you consume.



Healthy Choices at Fast Food Eateries

The truth is that you really can't eat healthy at any fast food restaurant. They aren't designed for those trying or needing to watch what they put in their mouth. But you can make better decisions. Don't eat the bread if you can stand not too. It's along the lines of the South Beach Diet but that's where lots of your weight gaining properties are. Don't get anything fried, this includes French fries, onion rings, or even fried chicken. Get a diet pop, tea, or water. Avoid the desert and the salad, both have sugar in them and I don't just mean in the toppings. Watch "Super Size Me" for a real eye opener. The show is on McDonald's but you can bet that all fast food restaurants are basically the same. Limit how often you eat fast food to once per week, if that fast. Get a wrap at Subway instead of a toasted sub. Less bread and just as filling with all the fixings you want. When you get pizza, get vegetables on it so you aren't just eating bread, sauce, cheese, and pepperoni. Remember just how bad fast food is for you, your waistline, and your cholesterol. Even if you are fifteen, you should be thinking about how it will affect you later in life. Starting early will make it easier on your body as you age.



EATING AT HOME

Eating at Home

The best thing to do is find a way to cook meals most nights of the week. This can take planning and team work. Have at least one non-meat dish every week. It doesn't have to be fish or seafood either. Don't use fast cooking rich to go with your meals. Those are again loaded with carbohydrates, which take your body longer to break down and will make you hungry sooner than you should be. Plan weekly meals so that you can cook casseroles and other easy to reheat dishes early in the week for days you will not have time to cook. Utilize your crock-pot and get a recipe book for it. You can make just about anything in a crock pot these days and have a good meal when you get home. Have salad a few times a week with dinner, but watch how much dressing you put on it. Have desert, but make it Jell-O. Indulge once in a while to though and it won't feel like you are depriving yourself of anything.



MAKING THE RIGHT FAST FOOD CHOICES

Making the Right Fast Food Choices

Every now and then, even with the best of intentions, we find ourselves looking to a fast food restaurant for lunch or dinner. Maybe a lack of time or a lack of planning is to blame for forcing this upon us. Maybe something came up beyond our control that is making us resort to this as a last minute meal decision. Whatever the reason, you will be ordering your next meal by talking into a plastic clown from your car window.

The problem with this is, you know that fast food is notorious for very high fat content and very high calorie count while at the same time being very low in nutrition. Well, as luck would have it, there are actually some things that you can order from a few of the popular fast food places that are somewhat on the healthier side. The main thing is to stay away from the fat laden side orders like the fries and shakes, and go with the broiled and grilled items. Here are some examples of the better fast food choices:

At burger king, go with the BK broiler chicken sandwich or the broiled chicken salad. Also not too bad is the whopper, but it is imperative to order it dry and without cheese and add your own ketchup. All the

saucers on the whopper are where most of the extra fat and calories come from.

At KFC, stay with the tender roast chicken and go with the skinless white meat. Fried chicken from anywhere should be avoided like the plague.

At McDonalds, the grilled chicken deluxe and the grilled chicken salad are the best choices. Since just about everything else here is fried or deep fried, these are really your only good choices.

At subway you have a few good choices like the turkey breast sub and the sweet onion teriyaki chicken sub. Most anything from their "low fat" menu is good, but don't add cheese or fattening condiments like mayo and stick with the 6 inch ones.

At taco bell, the grilled chicken burrito and the grilled chicken soft taco are good choices. Any of their items made with grilled chicken are ok, just watch out for any added fattening sauces or fried items that might be used in the item.

At Wendy's, the grilled chicken sandwich and the grilled chicken salad are two very good choices. Here you can also get a baked potato on the side but watch what you fill it with.

As a rule of thumb, always avoid anything fried like French fries or onion rings as these items can add as much as 450 extra calories to your meal which is usually as much as or more than what their signature burgers pack. Items like the milk shakes also come with nearly as many calories

as the signature burgers so be careful not to order them as well. Always order your food without the dressings, sauces, mayo or cheese. These only add unwanted fat calories to your item. You can always ask for fat-free dressings and condiments like ketchup and add them yourself when you get your food.

All fast food is not completely off limits, even if you are making an effort to watch what you eat. Just make eating fast food an occasional thing and be aware of what you order when eating there. When in doubt, always go with broiled or grilled chicken items, and avoid most of the sides unless you know they are good choices like salads or baked potato's.