

## Make Eating Out *Healthy* and Delicious

Seventy-three percent: that's how many adults say that they now try to eat healthier when eating at a restaurant (source: National Restaurant Association).

Here are some tips to help you identify healthier restaurant options:

**Keep portion sizes small:** You don't have to eat everything served on your plate. Share a main dish, or take home a "doggie bag." Order a low-fat appetizer as your main meal. Avoid buffets if you're concerned about portion control. To see how big a serving size *should* be, visit <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov/tools-resources/nutrition.htm#portions>.

**Choose healthier preparations:** Look for lean meats, fish, poultry, and vegetables prepared in a lower-calorie, lower-fat way—and avoid higher-fat preparations. Choose baked, broiled, and grilled items MORE often. Choose items that are fried, breaded, or in creamy sauces LESS often.

**Also watch the sodium:** Salt, or sodium, is often added during food preparation. For healthier options, you can ask that salt not be added to your meal. Yeast breads, chicken dishes, and pizza can be particularly high in sodium.

**Ask for dressings or toppings on the side:** Any dish—even vegetables or a salad—that's covered with oil, butter, gravy or high-calorie dressing is not the best choice. Asking for dressing on the side can help you limit the fat and calories you consume. But **you** still have to limit your portions!

**Hold the bread:** Bread baskets are tempting and can add a lot of calories to your meal (not to mention the fat from high-calorie spreads). Focus on the taste of your main entrée instead. If you do have bread, ask your server for whole-grain options.

**Select drinks with little or no added sugars:** Check out the surprising amount of sugar in sodas, fruit juices and other drinks at <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov/downloads/tip-sugar-in-drinks.pdf>. Water and fat-free or low-fat milk are healthy alternatives.

**If you have dessert, keep it light:** Rich desserts can send you into fat and calorie overload. Lower calorie options include fruit, sherbet, fruit sorbet, or fat-free frozen yogurt, but it's still important to keep portions small.

Lastly, remember that as the customer you can ask questions and make changes to your meal. You have more control than you realize!

For more strategies on how to eat right (as well as how to be more active and reduce screen time) visit the National Institutes of Health's **We Can!** program Web site at <http://wecan.nhlbi.nih.gov>. For additional information on eating healthy when eating on the go, check out the Maintaining a Healthy Weight Web site at <http://healthyweight.nhlbi.nih.gov>.