

TIPS FOR EATING OUT

Given the hectic pace of life and our need for convenience, the average American eats away from home in restaurants about 8 times per month. A study at Tufts University in Boston found that the more often people eat out, the fatter they become. Here are a few tips to help you balance the need for convenience and still maintain a healthy diet plan while eating out.

- **Control portion sizes.** Restaurants of all types give you more food than the normal portion to create the appearance of price value. To combat this, share an entree with a friend or box half and take it home for another meal. You don't have to clean your plate to get your money's worth.
- **Drink water with your meal** and cut calories and cost. The average glass of soda or sweetened tea has about 150 calories and 40 carbohydrates.
- **Avoid the "urge to splurge"** each time you eat out. If you only eat out once a month, dessert is a fine part of an overall healthy eating plan. But with most of us eating out twice a week or more, it becomes more important to pass on the high calorie, high fat and high sugar treats each time. If you must have a dessert, order one and share it with others in your party.
- **Get it on the side.** Dressing, gravy, and sauce can add a lot of carbs and calories. Order these on the side to better control the amount you eat.
- **Ask lots of questions** about your selection. How is it cooked? What is served with it? Choose meats that are steamed, grilled, baked or broiled instead of fried. Trim visible fat from meat or skin from poultry.
- **You can't go wrong** with plain grilled meat or fish and salad or free vegetables.
- **Eat slowly and talk more.**