

Health Bulletin

NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

#86 in a series of Health Bulletins on issues of pressing interest to all New Yorkers



Eating Out, Eating Well

How to make smart choices



- Available in Spanish, Chinese and other languages: call 311 or visit nyc.gov/health
- Disponible en español: llame al 311 o visite nyc.gov/health
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There are a lot of dining options in New York City.

Big portions, too many calories and too much salt can make ordering a challenge.

- **Portions** at sit-down restaurants and take-out places are often too large for one meal.
- **Extra calories** put you at risk for obesity and diabetes.
- **Excess salt** can raise blood pressure and lead to heart attack and stroke.
- **Too many high-fat foods** increase your risk of heart disease.

Small changes can make a difference.

Instead of this



Sweetened tea or lemonade

Choose this



Water or seltzer

Instead of this



Meats high in salt and fat (like bacon, ham and sausage)

Choose this



Leaner meats (like chicken, turkey and fish)

Instead of this



Fried foods

Choose this



Foods that are grilled, broiled and baked

Instead of this



Creamy salad dressing

Choose this



Oil and vinegar on the side

How to Make Smart Choices

When Eating Out or Grabbing Food on the Go

Downsize! Eat smaller portions.

- Don't *supersize* anything. Order the small size whenever you can.
- Eat only half, and take the other half home for another meal.
- Share a main course with a friend.
- Let your server know that you're passing on the bread basket or chips.



Eat more fruits and vegetables.

- Choose fruit with your meal instead of chips or pretzels.
- Ask for a side of vegetables or a salad with dressing on the side.



Drink water, seltzer or other low-calorie beverages.

- Skip soda and other sugary beverages, such as sports drinks, "energy" drinks, sweetened tea and lemonade.
- Compare calories on menu boards. Many coffee and tea drinks are high in calories.

Cut the salt.

- Ask for sauces and dressings on the side.
- Choose soy sauce with less sodium.
- Cut down on cheese and meats, such as bacon, ham and salami.
- Ask for your meal to be prepared without added salt or MSG. You can always salt to taste.



Avoid high-fat foods.

- Choose baked, grilled or broiled items instead of fried.
- Skip the cheese on sandwiches and salads.
- Choose chicken (without the skin), fish and lean cuts of beef and pork.
- Choose broth-based soups instead of cream-based soups.



True or false?

1 It's not worth asking for smaller portions.

False. Many restaurants now offer "small plates" and half portions for less money. It is definitely worth asking.

2 I can't go wrong with a salad.

False. It depends on what's in it. Some salads may not be as healthy as you think. Watch out for seasoned croutons, cheese, bacon, ham and creamy dressings. Take your dressing on the side.

3 Chicken is always healthier than beef.

False. Preparation is important. For example, fried chicken can have more fat and calories than a lean cut of grilled beef.

4 Soda and other sugary drinks are a major cause of weight gain.

True. Americans consume 200 to 300 more calories a day than we did 30 years ago – with the largest increase due to sugary drinks.

More Information and Help

New York City Health Department
nyc.gov/health or 311

Health Bulletins
nyc.gov/health or 311

- #51 How to Lose Weight and Keep It Off
- #73 Are You Pouring on the Pounds?
- #76 Good Fats/Bad Fats
- #82 Cut the Salt!

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
cdc.gov/healthyweight/healthy_eating/energy_density.html

American Heart Association
www.heart.org; Search: "Dining out"

U.S. Department of Agriculture (dietary guidelines)
www.choosemyplate.gov

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311**

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