



Healthy Meals at Restaurants Cheat Sheet

Many restaurants will adjust their menu and/or cooking methods if you simply ask them. Remember, you are the customer and the one who is helping keep them in business. They want to make you happy!

1. **Restaurants Chinese** – This is a tough category since many of their sauces contain monosodium glutamate (MSG), which is an excitatory neurotoxin. MSG is also used to increase body weight in mice for obesity studies. Ask for your meats and vegetables to be steamed and no sauces be applied. Alternatively, ask for vegetables that are less absorbent such as broccoli, snow peas and peppers and ask for light oil to be used in the preparation. Eggplant is best to be avoided since it tends to be sponge-like and absorb sauces and oils extremely well.

2. **Italian** – Italian food is typically very carbohydrate dense. Skip bread and choose an appetizer such as marinated vegetables or salads like an antipasto salad. When selecting your entrée skip the cream-based sauces and opt for the marinara-based ones. In terms of pasta, many places now offer gluten-free options as well as plant based noodles such as zucchini noodles. Ask for less cheese or if given the option skip it all together. Avoid thick crust pizza and opt for the thin crust with more vegetables on top. If having dessert go with the lighter versions such as a sorbet.

3. **Indian** – Tandoori meats are grilled and make a great option. Kebabs are another option if available. Grab a plate of veggies and skip some (or all) of the rice. Avoid the fried items like pakora and samosas. Pass on the items that have a gravy sauce since they tend to be heavy in butter. Make sure to ask the server about the flours used in the sauces since they sometimes contain wheat flour. For those who want to skip the meat, lentils and chickpeas provide a protein option when combined together.

4. **Japanese** – Tempura is the equivalent of deep-frying so skip it and ask for grilled meats and veggies instead. Many places will offer reduced sodium soy sauces for dipping, but beware that some may still contain MSG so double check the ingredients. You can also get gluten-free soy sauce. Use chopsticks! Not only does the extra sauce fall off, but also using them will slow down your eating which often equates to smaller portions.



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5. **Mexican** – Choose healthier options by avoiding the battered/fried menu items and go for grilled. Swap out the cheese and sour cream for salsa and guacamole and ditch the tortillas. Turn that taco into a salad.

6. **Mediterranean** – With such amazing salads as the Greek Salad, how can you go wrong eating here? Ditch the pita bread, ask for the dressing on the side so you can control the amount and if you don't tolerate dairy ask for no Feta.

7. **Peruvian** – Stick with grilled meats and fish, quinoa, and vegetables. Avoid the fried foods and high sugar desserts. Peruvian foods are very high in quality spices and flavor. Ceviche is a fresh quality option for an appetizer or an entrée.

8. **Sushi** – Stick with sushi or sashimi. Both of these contain raw fish that has been thinly sliced. Avoid any of the rolls that have tempura or fried options on top.

9. **Thai** – Smart choices include the summer rolls that are meat and veggies wrapped in rice paper, Satay (grilled meat skewers), hot and sour soup, and papaya salad. Cashew chicken or mixed veggies with tofu are also healthy options.

Healthiest Fast Food Choices:

Chipotle – Sustainable food choices, hormone-free meats, local produce with a customizable menu. Choose salads or hard shell tacos, skip the burritos since the large tortillas pack a hefty amount of processed carbohydrate and fats.

Wendy's - Even salads can be very calorie dense, but Wendy's has salads that are almost perfectly balanced. The Berry burst and Apple Pecan chicken salad are both great options. A great easy on the go snack is their grilled chicken wrap.

Subway – Their salads are the healthiest option. The more veggies you eat the better.

Burger places – Consider swapping out the bun for a lettuce-wrapped version, ditch the fries and order a side salad, and drink water.



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Panera – This restaurant has a lot to offer in terms of healthy options such as salads and lettuce steak wraps. If you are really craving a sandwich go with a half sandwich on their sourdough bread and pair it with a half salad or soup.

Starbucks– Grab yourself a cup of coffee without creamers or sweeteners. You get the full effect of antioxidants this way without the extra calories. A 12-ounce cup of black coffee contains only 5 calories. However, once sweetened and flavored that same 12-ounce cup of coffee can jump all the way up to 210 calories. Unsweetened tea is also a good option. For food the egg white cups are a great idea for breakfast if you really had to grab it on the go. The Spinach, feta and egg white wrap is also a great lunch item. A very balanced item.

Tim Horton's - The Chipotle cheddar chicken wrap and chicken salad wrap are very balanced. They both give you enough calories for breakfast. No need to add on. The wrap snackers are a great grab if you are on the go and hungry between meals. For breakfast the english muffin egg and cheese (egg white options) and egg cups are great for quick grabs as well. The breakfast sandwich is very balanced and not the best choice for breakfast with the carbs but not bad at all.

A few quick tips for eating on the fly:

1. Cut out the rich sauces. Or ask for it on the side and only use a very small amount.
2. Make sure you get meats that are grilled not fried.
3. Get a baked potato or rice instead of fries. Make sure the potato is plain and add only a small amount of butter.
4. For salads keep them simple. All the adds to a salad can make them more calorie dense than a burger and fries. Choose veggies, protein and fruit avoid a ton of carbs or crisps, nuts and seeds. Not that it isn't healthy but regardless it is still calories in versus calories out.
5. Avoid all the burger add ons. Go for the plain jane burger and get salad on the side or go bunless and switch the fries for rice.
6. Eat half and take it home with you.
7. Share a meal.
8. Avoid sugary desserts
9. Eat your biggest meal at lunch. Go light for dinner.
10. If you are having some drinks use the How to booze guide for best choices and