

Let's Eat Out! Healthful Fast Foods

Does your family eat fast food often? If so, try to be smart about fast food choices. Here's why.

Most fast food meals and snacks are:

- **High** in fat, calories, sodium.
However, you need to limit these.
- **Low** in fiber, calcium, other nutrients.
However, you need to get enough of these.
- **Short** on fruits, vegetables, or calcium-rich foods (like milk).
However, you may need more of these.

Super-size fast foods may not be a good deal!

Instead, big portions may:

- Overwhelm young children, who have small appetites.
- Provide more than your family needs.
- Encourage people to eat until they feel stuffed, not just satisfied.
- Set the stage for overeating and weight problems. With big portions, children lose their natural ability to follow hunger signals and their appetite.



Check (✓) what you do already.
Circle ○ what you can try right away.
Add your family's ideas.

Choose smaller portions.

- Look for small and regular-size foods. For a young child, even a small portion may be too much.
- Decide how to handle the portion before ordering. Split it with your child.
- Skip value meals. They may provide more food than your family needs.

Choose more bone-building calcium.

- Drink milk with fast food.
- Order cheese on a burger or sandwich.
- Buy yogurt if your family likes it.

Choose less added sugars.

- Skip soda. Order milk, juice, or water.
- Order a regular, not super-sized, soda.
- Skip fruit pies. Bring an apple, banana, or grapes for something sweet to eat.

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Choose more fruits and vegetables

- Ask for tomato, lettuce, and other vegetables on sandwiches.
- Get salad, not fries.
- Load pizza with veggies.
- Order fruit juice to drink.



Choose less fat

- Order regular-size burgers, burritos, and tacos, not deluxe-size.
- Split a small order of fries, or skip them.
- Order grilled chicken, not fried.
- Skip extra cheese on a pizza.
- Go easy on mayonnaise, tartar sauce, special sauces, sour cream, and butter.



Try this:

Pick a fast food place with a playground.
Give your child time to play.