

# Ordering lunch from a menu

When eating in a restaurant or cafeteria, think about the food choices you will look for before you open the menu. Read through the menu to find the most nutritious items that appeal to your tastes.

If you are dining in a restaurant that you have been to before, you may be surprised at the healthy/tasty choices that have been added!

**Remember your five basic food groups and look for options that:**

- Use whole wheat (or whole grain) bread for sandwiches.
- Have steamed, grilled (skinless and boneless) or broiled sandwich meats instead of those that are fried, sautéed, or prepared in sauce.
- Include side dishes that are full of vegetables that are not fried or prepared in sauce.
- Include lots of vegetables as sandwich toppings.
- Use mustard instead of mayonnaise.
- Offer salad instead of a sandwich; ask for grilled chicken, steak or fish on top
- Offer lean meats or beans with steamed vegetables.
- Offer good beverage choices including water, fat-free or low-fat milk, unsweetened tea, or other drinks without added sugars.
- Provide low-fat/low-calorie salad dressing on the side and use only as much as you need for taste.
- Add little or no butter to your food.
- Include fruits and/or low-fat yogurt as your dessert.

- Prepare foods using low-fat cooking methods. Look for terms like:
  - steamed
  - in its own juice (au jus)
  - garden fresh
  - broiled
  - baked
  - roasted
  - poached
  - lightly sautéed or stir-fried.

Ask for what you want! Most restaurants will honor your requests.

- A number of chefs are very mindful of their customers' desire for tasty and nutritious lunches. If it is challenging for you to navigate through the menu and find choices that you are looking for, ask your server to ask the chef to recommend something for you. You usually can also make special requests, such as "I would like my lunch prepared without any butter, oil or sauces." **You Are The Customer.**

- Ask questions! Don't be intimidated by the menu. Your server will be able to tell you how foods are prepared or suggest substitutions on the menu.
- To reduce portion sizes, order appetizers as your main meal or share an entrée.
- Ask for half of your lunch to be served and the other half boxed so you can have it for lunch the next day.

Most importantly, don't get discouraged. There are usually several healthy choices to choose from at most restaurants.

## Lunch Well Challenge:

\*\* If you are having lunch with a friend, start a Lunch Well challenge. See who can find the tastiest, most nutritious menu items that also include the five basic food groups:

- whole grains
- fruit
- vegetables
- milk
- meat/beans.

Remember to watch portions too!