

Some Tips to Eating a Healthy Diet

by Carlos Mirasierras



Eeat Intelligently

Eating correctly, controlling weight and exercising regularly will help to manage weight-related diseases successfully. The following guidelines are important for the control of such diseases.



Whole Grain Bread, Cereal, Rice & Pasta: These foods supply complex carbohydrates (starch), which are an excellent source of energy, and a good source of vitamins, minerals and fiber. Fiber can help lower cholesterol levels and control your appetite. These foods are naturally low in fat and cholesterol. Just

remember not to add extra fat.

Fruits and Vegetables: Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins and minerals such as vitamin A and C, potassium, folic acid, iron and magnesium. These foods are naturally low in fat and sodium, and can be a good source of fiber.



Meat, Poultry, Fish and Proteins: Meat, chicken and fish provide proteins, iron, vitamin B and zinc. Other protein foods of this group are good sources of vitamins and minerals. Choose lean cuts of meat and trim visible fat. Remove skin from chicken. Do not eat more than 3 or

4 egg yolks a week, the amount of egg white is unlimited.

Milk and dairy products: Dairy products provide proteins, vitamins and minerals. Derivatives are the best sources of calcium. Whole milk and high-fat cheeses are high in saturated fat and cholesterol, which are not good for the heart. The best choice in this food group is skim or nonfat milk, or low-fat cheese and nonfat yogurt. Remember that low-fat products contain all the vitamins that high-fat products contained originally.



Eliminate, or reduce, sugar from your diet: Choose a diet low in sugar. Sugars include white sugar, brown sugar, corn syrup, honey, molasses and other high-energy substances. Sugar provides calories and nothing else. Limit foods that contain high amounts of sugar such as cakes, cookies, candy, soft drinks, jellies and jams, because they add extra sugar to these foods so they can taste sweeter and be more attractive to lovers of sugar.

Eliminate fat from your diet: Eliminate the extra fat, and carefully choose products with a low level of fat. Eating too much saturated fat can raise the level of cholesterol in the blood, and it may increase the risk of a heart disease. Limit saturated fats, which can be found in meat, dairy products and some vegetable oils, such as coconut and palm kernel oil. If you use other types of fat, select oils made from safflower, sunflower, corn, soybean, cottonseed, olive, peanut or canola. Remember that all fats have more than twice the amount of calories, proteins and carbohydrates.

Healthful Cooking Tips

- *The use of sugar can be reduced between a quarter and a half in almost every recipe; likewise, the amount of fat can also be decreased by a quarter without affecting product quality.*
- *When making cakes, cookies, muffins or bread, use no more than two tablespoons of fat per cup of flour. In some baked goods you can use plain yogurt or low-calorie fruit puree instead of fat.*

- *Use vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg in recipes. The use of these condiments provide a sweet taste without adding sugar or calories.*
- *Use thin cuts of meat, poultry, fish and seafood. Use low-fat methods of cooking, such as grilling, baking or poaching instead of frying. Remember to remove all visible fat from meat.*
- *Remove the fat from homemade soups and stews by skimming the fat from the surface, thus let it cool down so the fat will emerge to the surface and will be more visible.*
- *When sautéing onions or green pepper for seasoning stews, soups and sauces use water, broth or very little oil in the pan.*
- *Use Teflon pans for sautéing and frying without fat.*
- *Do not cook vegetables with meat, as they absorb the remaining fat.*
- *Cook the stuffing outside the turkey or chicken, as it will absorb the extra fat.*
- *Fat-basted turkeys are high in fat. Select turkeys without added fat, or baste with some of the broth, apple juice, cranberry juice or cherry.*
- *Use herbs and spices instead of butter to enhance the flavor of food.*
- *When making salad dressings, use fruit juice to replace half of the oil in the original recipe. You can also use herbs and spices to add more flavor.*
- *Use creative fruit to give a sweet and nutritious meals.*
- *Cook the food you'll need. If you are the host of a social gathering, plan according to the number of guests, not the double amount of food. Family and friends come to keep us company and talk, do not come to satisfy their appetite. If you prepare a lot of food, share the leftovers with your family and friends, or freeze the leftovers.*

Tips for Eating at Restaurants

A healthy attitude toward food - Decide in advance if you can go to a restaurant and enjoy a healthy meal without destroying your diet plan. Many times, eating out is an excuse to eat more and capriciously. Develop a positive attitude so you can eat and enjoy a healthy meal when you go to a restaurant.

Plan ahead - Choose a restaurant that offers healthy options. Before you get to the restaurant consider the healthier options that the restaurant can provide.

Order for you - When you read the menu be careful not to order high fat foods with creamy sauces, or dishes that have been fried or have a lot of fat accompaniments. Have small portions, as big ones are more likely to be finished just for the fun of it.

Be creative when ordering-Order a soup and a salad, or a snack as a starter. Share, if the restaurant allows it, the starter with someone at the table, and do the same with regard to the dessert.

Make requests-If your request is practical, many restaurants will be happy to help. Order a baked potato instead of fries. Many restaurants can serve dressings, butter, gravies or cream separately, and also have low-fat and low-calories seasonings and milk products. Maybe these items are not on the menu but if you ask for them, they may possibly be served.

Take into consideration how the food will be prepared-Think about the way the food is prepared. If it will be baked, roasted, fried, breaded, sautéed, or cooked au gratin. Be careful with the consumption of cheese, cream, butter, and some sauces and gravies. Do not be afraid to ask how the food was prepared, or what ingredients have been used to cook it.

Knowing when to stop - Many of us eat all on the plate. Stop and leave some parts, it is not impolite to leave some food on the plate. Have a container and take it home, it may be enough for another meal.

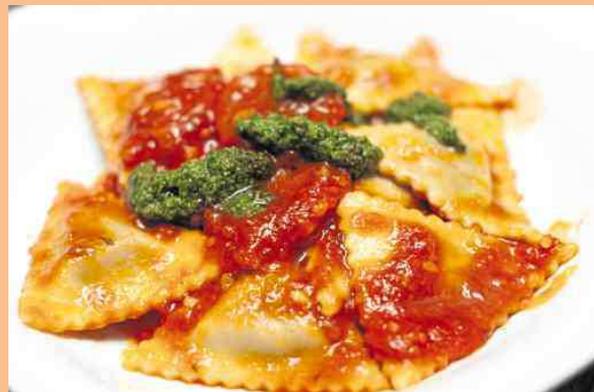
Eat with Variety

Many people enjoy a healthy and varied diet based on ethnic food. A great variety of ingredients can be used without sacrificing taste at all, which is an important part of its culinary heritage.



***French:** French cuisine usually uses fats and sauces to add more flavor to preparations. A good alternative can be a bordelaise sauce, which is made of wine and is not high in fat or cholesterol. When possible order the sauce on the side. Labeled foods as gratin usually contain a lot of cheese and butter.*

***Italian:** The Italian food is associated with bread and pasta. Pasta is an excellent choice when they are not abundant with cheese or meat high in fat, or containing butter or sauces made out of cream. Good choices include marinara sauce, made with tomatoes, onion and garlic,*



and marsala sauce, which is made out of wine, olive oil, mushrooms, beef stock, salt and pepper. Other good choices include chicken and fish and they do not use an extra amount of fats to prepare the dish. Dishes like scallops or veal with parmigiano cheese are prepared with extra fat.

***Southwest:** Southwestern food is a mix of Mexican, American Indian and Hispanic cultures. Beans, beans, tortillas and cereals are basic; also, Mexican cuisine uses lard or bacon to cook. The tortillas are low in fat and are a good choice; however, tacos are deep-fried in oil, so the amount of fat becomes too high. Chicken and roast beef are good choices. Thin slices*

of beef or chicken, beans (with no extra fat), burritos, enchiladas and tacos (if they are not fried) are a good choice. Use sauces made with low-fat products. Use little cream, guacamole and shredded cheese.



Oriental: Oriental food usually contains large amounts of vegetables and rice, which do become an excellent option. Choose foods that are baked, steamed, sautéed, grilled or lightly fried. Do not eat meals that

are fried, or are made with sweet and sour sauces.

Greek: Pita bread is very low in fat. Chose those dishes prepared with small amounts of olive oil. Order salad dressings separately. Choose kabobs as a starter, which are a type of skewer grilled and served with vegetables and rice. Desserts made with puff pastry are high in fat.

How to eat low-fat preparations at Restaurants



Appetizers: Select snacks, such as fresh fruit and vegetables, vegetable juices, unsweetened fruit juices, broth- or tomato-based soups, broths and seafood cocktails cooked in their own juices.

Drinks: Choose alcohol-free beverages, such as coffee, tea, skim milk, diet sodas, unsweetened mineral water. (Many mineral waters do

contain an extra amount of sugar or fructose syrup).

Salads: Order vegetable or fresh fruit salads. Use lemon, vinegar or a small amount for dressing the salad (remember to order the dressing elements separately).

Vegetables: Order vegetables raw, boiled, steamed, roasted, stewed or baked. Do not select either glazed, or fried vegetables, not sweet and sour sauces. If you order a baked potato, order it plain, with butter and cream separately.

Starters: Choose meat, poultry or seafood that are cooked, roasted, stewed, smoked or lightly fried. Remove the excess of fat, and order sauces or other gravies to be served separately, or without them if it does not change the preparation in excess.

Starches: Choose mashed potatoes, baked or boiled potatoes; cooked rice, noodles or corn (corn cob).

Breads: Order breads that are not glazed or may contain high amounts of fat. The majority of biscuits, muffins and croissants are high in fat.

Sandwiches: Order sandwiches with small amounts of meat. Select fillings like sliced turkey, lean ham, roast thin, or vegetables. Restrict the use of sauces, mayonnaise, margarine and butter. Many of the special sauces are made from mayonnaise, which is 100% fat; replace those flavors by those found in the mustard, tomato and lettuce.

Desserts: Choose fresh fruit, low-fat frozen yogurt, sherbet ice cream, or low fat cakes.

Fats: Ask for margarine, butter, salad dressings, mayonnaise and cream separately. Use them sparingly. If you see a dish on the menu with special names ask the waiter what does it contain and what how is it prepared. If a food is not listed, ask for it. Restaurants have skim milk, diet sodas and other low fat foods available. Choose low-fat foods for the rest of the day, and if you order a dish high in fat then try to get rid of it by increasing your bodyweight exercises.

Terms used in Restaurants for preparing some dishes



It is difficult to know the way that restaurants cook dishes and the terminology they use to describe them. Below is a list of some of the terms and what they mean.

King's style: *Served with a sauce made from cream with green pepper, red pepper and mushrooms.*

Mode: *When this term is applied to desserts means you will be served with ice. Boeuf á la Mode means a piece of beef cooked slowly in water with vegetables.*

Newberg style: *To turn a sauce into a cream by adding egg yolks, and by flavoring it with cherries.*

Bittersweet: *Sugar and vinegar used in combination in sauces.*

Al dente: *Pasta that is cooked to the point that it is still firm to the bite.*

Almandine: *Served with almonds.*

Antipasto: *Appetizer made of vegetables, fish or cold cuts (luncheon meats).*

Aspic: *A gelatinous liquid or gravy with gelatin.*

Gratin: *Breaded with breadcrumbs, scallops. It usually refers to a dish with cheese.*

Bernaise: *A sauce with melted butter, vinegar, egg yolks, onion and spices.*

Béchamel: A cream sauce made with equal parts of chicken broth and cream or milk.

Bordelaise: A brown sauce made with Bordeaux wine and various spices.

Cacciatore: Cooked with tomatoes, onions, garlic and other seasonings.

Coq au Vin: Sofrito sauce made with red wine and brown sauce with onions and mushrooms.

Creole: A combination of spicy foods containing meat or vegetables, such as tomatoes, peppers and onions.



—**What is a brown sauce?**

Brown sauce is mainly made from meat stock, which is thickened by the addition or reduction of a browned roux. It is very common in Scandinavian dishes, and it is normally thickened using a variety of products, such as flour or cornstarch. —

Curry: A highly seasoned spice from India.

Scalloped: View scallops.

Florentino: Food that contains or is placed between spinach.

Fricassée: To cook in very little fat until it turns brown, then thrown into steam or stew. Normally used with beef or poultry.

Dutch Sauce: Sauce made with eggs, butter, lemon juice and seasonings.

Jambalaya: A spicy mix of rice, tomato, green pepper, onion, okra (okra) and seasonings, usually cooked in oil.

Juliana: *Vegetables or other foods grated or finely chopped*

Kiev: *Stuffed with seasoned flour and butter, usually submerged in oil to get cooked.*

Kippered: *Lightly salted and smoked fish.*

Lyonnaise: *Cooked with onions and butter.*

Marinara: *A sauce made from tomatoes with garlic, onions and other seasonings.*

Mornay: *A sauce made from cream, grated cheese and sometimes egg yolk.*

Parmigiana: *Covered with bread crumbs and parmesan cheese, sautéed or stir-fried in butter and served with tomato sauce. It typically includes mozzarella.*

Remoulade: *Salsa made from boiled eggs, mustard, oil, vinegar and seasonings.*

Scallops: *Meat fillets covered with a liquid or sauce, breaded or not, and then baked. The meat pieces and the sauce can be mixed first or put into different layers in a baking dish.*



Scallopini: *Very thin meat fillets, floured, and roasted or sautéed in wine sauce.*

Sauté, stir-fry: *Cook in a small amount of hot fat.*

Fry, Mix: *Cooking quickly in hot oil, stirring regularly and lightly.*

Thermidor: *Cream-based sauce flavored with wine, herbs and mustard.*

Tournedos: Small round pieces of beef, or veal meat.

Eating in the Fast Food Lane



Encounters with fast food is a challenge. The menus are full of high fat foods, and one of the big problems is that they tend to provide large amounts of calories, saturated fat, cholesterol and sodium. Some restaurants are responding to consumer demand for healthier options, but it can be difficult to identify such

options. Below are some points to consider when dining at fast food establishments.

Burgers: *Select those with less meat. Cheese on burgers increases fat content and calories: $\frac{3}{4}$ of an ounce of cheese provides 83 calories and 7 grams of fat. Special sauces add fat because they are made from mayonnaise.*

Mustard and ketchup (tomato sauce) are relatively low in fat, but they also add calories.



Chicken and Fish:

Chicken and fish can be a very good choice if they are not deep-fried. Chicken sandwiches and fried fish can provide between 400 and 700 calories and can contain

between 4 and 7 tablespoons of fat. Crispy chicken absorbs a lot of fat and contains even more fat and more calories. The best choices are chicken breasts grilled or baked fish. Use cocktail sauce (15 calories per teaspoon) or lime (0 calories) instead of tartar sauce (70 calories per teaspoon).

Sandwiches: *There is a variety of sandwiches made with meat cuts that can be cooked more healthily, such as roast beef, turkey, ham and cheese and many other meat types. Always choose small sandwiches. Use mustard instead of mayonnaise-based dressings. If you include bacon or cheese, you are adding fat to the sandwich. Hot dogs, especially large or jumbo, are high in fat.*

Potatoes: *A single baked potato is an excellent choice. Beware of toppings, such as butter, margarine, cream, bacon and cheese, as they can add between 30 and 40, or more, grams of fat. Choose a simple potato with low-fat dressing or low-fat yogurt and add vegetables to keep the fat at low levels. Potato chips are high in fat. A half order of fries contains 17 grams of fat on average. Limit chips for special occasions, and share the order with someone, or order a small portion.*

Pizza: *Pizza can be a good and nutritious choice; however, it has high fat levels and provides a lot of calories. When ordering a pizza do not order too fat ingredients, such as extra cheese, pepperoni, sausages, olives and anchovies; choose veggies instead.*



Tacos and Burritos: *When ordering tacos or burritos select those which are not fried or are high in fat. Limit the amount of cream and guacamole. Tomatoes are low in fat, so use as many you want. Beans are naturally high in fiber and protein, but if they are fried they can be high in fat.*



Salads and Serve-yourself salads: They can offer a healthy option for eating out, or they can be a nightmare, it all depends on the choices you make. Use little dressings, bacon, cheese, sunflower seeds and salads made from mayonnaise and potato

salad or coleslaw. Instead, choose salads with lots of vegetables and low-fat dressings, or you can stop using dressings.

Soups: Soups and chili (stew made of beans and spices) can be a good low fat option when deciding to eat out. Soups made from creams may sound very healthy and may even have vegetables, but many times these soups can be made with whole milk, cream and butter.

Breakfast: Fast food breakfast can be very high in fat. Eggs, bacon, sausage, biscuits, cakes and croissants are some of the high-fat options for breakfast. Instead, try bagels, muffins, pancakes (watch how much butter and syrup the pancakes contain, or how much cream cheese you add on the bagel). Have low fat cream cheese and low calorie syrup.

