

## Guidelines for Eating Out

Eating out can be difficult when trying to manage calories. The key is to be mindful and not adopt an ‘all or nothing approach’. Here are my top tips that could help you cut calories when picking your meals without leaving you feeling deprived!

- If having a 2 course meal, try to have a starter and a main rather than a main and a dessert as this will typically be lower in calories.
- Split your carbohydrates and fats e.g. do not choose a meal that is high in both carbohydrate and fat. Instead choose either a High-Carb, Low Fat (HCLF) meal or a Low-Carb, High Fat (LCHF) meal. Examples of each can be found below.

HIGH CARB, LOW FAT	LOW CARB, HIGH FAT
Roasted chicken risotto served with butternut squash and wild mushrooms	Grilled salmon served on a bed of wild rocket, avocado and red peppers drizzled with a lemon and herb dressing
Lean turkey breast served with sweet potato wedges and roast vegetables	8oz premium Sirloin steak with melted garlic butter and mixed assorted vegetables
Smoked haddock fillet served with steamed rice and a side dish of glazed carrots and green leafy vegetables	Warm chorizo salad served with crumbled brazil nuts, mozzarella cheese, beetroot and spinach leaves
Lemon and garlic prawn stir fry served with steamed basmati rice	Ham & three cheese omelette served with dressed side salad



Dishes to try and limit (typically high carbohydrate and high fat) include pizzas, chips, deep fried food, creamy pasta dishes (go tomato-based instead!), creamy Indian dishes if accompanied with rice/naan bread etc. If you opt for these, take a mindful approach, see below.

### Additional Tips

- Ask for extra vegetables or salad instead of the carbohydrate option.
- Check the menu before leaving home so you know what to expect. If you can't see a healthy option – choose a different restaurant!
- Skip the bread basket.
- Order a jug of water and continually sip throughout the meal to help with feelings of fullness.
- Eat normally throughout the day keeping protein and fibre intakes high so that you are not starving when you get to the restaurant as this will make it more likely to choose a bad option/overeat.
- It may also be worth eating a high-protein snack such as a whey protein shake before getting to the restaurant. Example below:

Breakfast	Lunch	Snack	MEAL OUT
Omelette with Vegetables	Chicken & Couscous Salad	Whey + Water	HCLF or LCHF Meal

- Alternatively, choose an intermittent fasting approach i.e. do not have breakfast or lunch meaning you have a greater calorie allowance for your meal in the evening! Just ensure that you don't let yourself go too hungry if you do choose this approach, perhaps consider a high protein snack beforehand.
- Stick to low Calorie drinks e.g. water with sliced lemon, diet coke, diet lemonade, slimline tonic etc. Try not to drink alcohol as this will increase calorie intake and also reduces willpower! If you must drink, aim to drink spirits with diet mixers. These will be significantly lower in calories than wine or beer.



- Be savvy – options that are **creamed**, **breaded**, **sautéed** or **fried** are likely to be higher in calories. Stick to grilled, steamed or baked where possible.

- Beware of salad add-ons – croutons and mayo can send calories in a Caesar salad through the roof!
- Ask for dressings and sauces on the side – that way you can control how much you pour over your dish.
- Check your cut of meat. Breast has fewer Calories than thighs & rump has less than rib eye.
- Eat the amount you would eat at home – just because it's in front of you, it doesn't mean you have to eat it.
- Sorbet and frozen yoghurt are better options than chocolate fudge cake so if you need to satisfy a sweet tooth maybe choose one of these.



### **Being Mindful**

The above strategies are great ways to practically keep calories in check when eating out but in reality, sometimes we do just want something that is high in calories and that is absolutely fine – the healthiest diet is one that allows flexibility!

The key is to make sure that you remain conscious and mindful when you do so. Try asking yourself:

- Do I really want this?
- Would I REALLY enjoy it?
- Am I really hungry for it?
- Am I still enjoying it?

You could also employ the following strategies to help you enjoy a little bit of what you fancy:

- Eating at a slower pace, taking the time to taste and savour your food.
- Chewing each mouthful well, at least 15 times.
- Stop eating when you are full; you do not need to clear your plate.
- Focus on how the food you are eating makes you feel.

Ultimately, eating out should be stress free and enjoyable! These ideas are aimed to help you achieve this without leaving you feeling deprived.

Flexibility is at the heart of any sustainable nutrition plan, if yours doesn't allow this then please get in touch!

Let's find an approach that truly suits YOU so you feel amazing and have more time and energy to spend on the things in life that really matter.

