

## **Healthy Eating, “To Go Please”**

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Here you go again. Early morning flight and no time for breakfast until you reach the airport. Layover and then another meal on the go. Finally, you reach your destination by dinner and with the time change you are either starved or too tired to eat. Forget eating anything healthy, just not a possibility. Or is it?

What are your options when you are traveling from airport to airport and city to city? Can you still find healthy choices? By asking the right questions and looking at all your options, you can.

First things first: never skip a meal. Eating small meals throughout the day helps you to adjust to time changes during travel. Missed meals result in increased feelings of hunger which usually leads to overeating at the next meal. If possible, plan ahead and bring your own meal or healthy snacks, such as fresh or dried fruits, pretzels, bagel, energy bars, mini carrots or trail mix.

So, what’s for breakfast? You stop at the airport coffee specialty shop prior to your flight. That large Mocha with whipped topping and a blueberry muffin is going to cost you approximately 950 calories and 48grams of fat. Try a cappuccino using nonfat milk and a bagel instead, which brings you to 430 calories and 1 gram of fat. Many restaurants also sell fresh fruit, which will round out your meal and start you on your way to eating more fruits and vegetables.

You’ll also want to look at the portion sizes of the food. That bagel alone is probably about 2 or 3 times the suggested serving size for a petite female. If you don’t have a friend to share with, you can always choose to eat half now and save the rest for a snack later that day when you are really dragging.

If you have been traveling you have probably noticed some changes in the “fast food” establishments. Most of them offer many more options than in the past, such as smaller menu items and some leaner choices. For example, most have a grilled chicken sandwich, but don’t be fooled by the fried or “crispy” chicken sandwiches that can be laden with fat. Ask for whole grain breads and choose lean meats; load it with various vegetables to add flavor rather than mayo or dressing. Try choosing a small side salad or fruit instead of fries. Entrée salads can be a good alternative, but beware of some that can contain items like bacon. Use a vinaigrette or even salsa on your salad over the creamy dressings. And of course, always avoid the “supersized meal!”

When choosing your beverage, try water or a sugar free option in place of the soda; or how about a milk? If you are trying to lose weight, incorporating more dairy products *may* be of benefit.

Now you are at your destination. It is time to choose a restaurant. Before venturing out, ask your hotel for a copy of the menus from local restaurants.

Then try these tips when dining out:

- Don’t be afraid to ask questions about the food preparation.
- Choose items that are grilled, broiled, baked, poached or steamed.
- Include a salad with your meal and leave part of your entrée.
- Avoid heavy cream or butter sauces.

- Request condiments on the side, such as ketchup, BBQ sauce, dressing, mayo, sour cream, or guacamole. .
- Look around at the portions being served. If they are big you can ask for a smaller portion, or if traveling with others, share an entrée.
- You do not need to finish everything on your plate. If you have a refrigerator in your hotel room, save some for lunch or a snack the next day. Otherwise, leave it on your plate!
- If you are trying to lose weight, ask for the “doggie bag” before eating and avoid the temptation of nibbling on the food left on your plate after you are done.
- For dessert, try a sherbet or sorbet and mix in pieces of your favorite fruit. Refreshing and you just added another fruit serving to your day.

Eating on the go does not mean your healthy eating habits have to be thrown out. There have been many positive changes in the various restaurants and if you continue to request healthier menu options, restaurants will continue to offer them. Although “there is no place like home,” healthy menu choices can follow you to your destination.