

SESSION 15: Eat Well Away From Home



Session Focus

Eating well away from home can help you manage your weight.

This session we will talk about:

- Some challenges of eating well at restaurants and social events
- How to plan for and cope with these challenges

You will also make a new action plan!

José's Story

José's is trying to change the way he eats. José has a healthy breakfast and dinner at home each day. But lunches are another story.

José is a building contractor. During the day, he's always on the go from one job site to another. He gets his lunch at a fast-food drive-thru. He usually has a burger, fries, and soda.

José loves getting together with his family. But he finds it hard to eat well at these events. He has trouble finding healthy choices.

And his mother always pushes her empanadas on him. He doesn't want to hurt her feelings, so he takes just one.

José decides to make better choices when he eats away from home. He tries to pack a healthy lunch the night before. If he buys his lunch, he orders a turkey sandwich with a side salad. Instead of drinking soda, he now drinks water. José is also getting better at saying, "No, thank you" to his mother's empanadas.

You are more likely to find healthy choices at:

- Places with a salad bar
- Sit-down restaurants
- Vegetarian restaurants

You are less likely to find healthy choices at:

- All-you-can-eat buffets
- Burger restaurants
- Most fast-food restaurants
- Pizza restaurants

On menus, look for the words:

- Baked
- Broiled
- Diet
- Grilled
- Healthy
- Light
- Low-fat or fat-free
- Steamed
- Vegetable oil
- Whole grain or whole wheat

To find out if an item is healthy, ask:

- How is this made?
- What ingredients are in this?
- What kind of oil is this cooked in?

To make a healthy swap, ask:

- Can I have this baked/steamed/broiled/grilled instead of fried?
- Can I have extra veggies on my sandwich instead of cheese?
- Can I have the dressing/sauce/gravy/sour cream/ butter on the side?
- Can I have a baked potato instead of fries?
- Can I have a salad instead of coleslaw?
- Can this be cooked in vegetable oil instead of lard/butter?
- Can I have some fruit instead of dessert?
- Can the fat be trimmed from the meat before it's cooked?
- Can the skin be removed from the chicken before it's cooked?
- Can I have skim milk with my coffee instead of half-and-half?
- Can I have water with lemon instead of soda?

To make sure you get a healthy amount, ask:

- Can I get the smallest size of this item?
- Can I have an appetizer instead of a main course?
- Can my friend and I share this item?
- Can I get a to-go box when you bring my meal? (Then you can box up half of it before you start eating!)

To prepare for social events:

- Have a healthy snack at home so you won't be too hungry. This will help you make healthy choices at the event.
- Tell the hosts about your eating plan. Ask them to support your efforts.
- Suggest some healthy choices.
- Ask if you can bring something healthy.
- Practice saying, "No, thank you."

To eat well during social events:

- Allow yourself a small treat.
- Ask about ingredients and how dishes were prepared.
- Eat the healthy dish you brought.
- Fill up on non-starchy veggies or a broth-based soup.
- Keep a glass of water in your hand.
- Limit alcohol.
- Say, "No, thank you."
- Stay away from the buffet.
- Tell other guests about your eating plan, and why you are following it.