

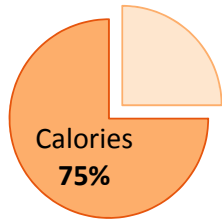
Nutritional quality of menus at full-service restaurant chains

Summary recommendations for restaurants



Calories and nutrients on full-service menus

Drexel University analyzed the nutritional value of foods listed on 21 full-service restaurant chain menus.



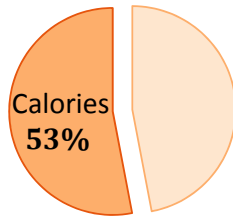
Adult meals on menu averaged 75% to 100% of calories for an entire day*

Calories and Nutrients on Adult Menus

	Calories	Sodium	Saturated Fat
Adult daily recommended limits	2000 kcal	2300 mg	20 g
Average meals displayed on menus (adult entrée + side dish + ½ appetizer)	1500 kcal* (75%)	3510 mg (153%)	28 g (140%)

(Values as a percent of daily recommended intake)

Average adult meals on menu exceeded daily recommended levels of sodium & saturated fat



Children's meals on menu averaged 53% of calories for an entire day

Calories and Nutrients on Children's Menus

	Calories	Sodium	Saturated Fat
Children's daily recommended limits	1400 kcal	1610 mg	14 g
Average meals displayed on menus (children's entrée + side dish + beverage)	690 kcal (49%)	1380 mg (86%)	10 g (71%)

(Values as a percent of daily recommended intake)

Average children's meals on menu had over 70% of daily recommended levels of sodium & saturated fat

* When adult meals displayed on menus included ½ appetizer, entrée, side dish, ½ desert + beverage, then average calories totaled 2020 kcal or 100% of calories for an entire day.

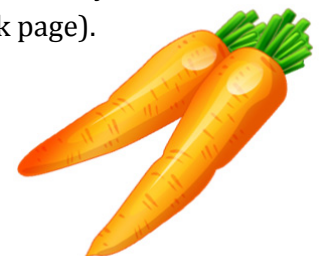
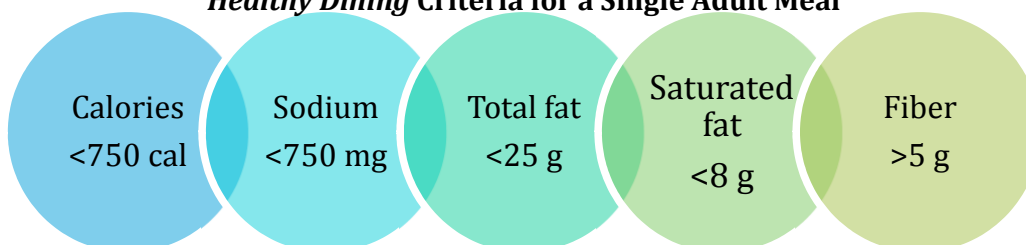
Healthier choices on menus

Only half of the 21 full-service restaurant chains included in this study offered "healthier choice" menu options, and among those restaurants, only 10% of a la carte entrees were tagged as such. At seven outlets of one full-service chain restaurant, 13% of customers purchased a "**healthier choice**" item and those customers were more likely to be middle-aged (40 years or older) and have attended graduate school.



While criteria for "healthy choices" varied, most emphasized lower calories rather than a broader suite of nutrients. "**Healthy choice**" items were lower in calories and fat than other items, but sodium far exceeded healthy levels and fiber was low. Average sodium in a "healthy choice" a la carte entree was 1565 mg or 70% of sodium for an entire day. To better identify "healthy choice" items, restaurants can utilize the *Healthy Dining* criteria (see resource list on back page).

Healthy Dining Criteria for a Single Adult Meal

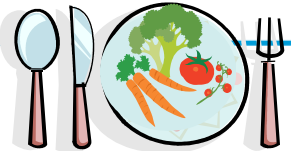


Opportunities for improvement

Include nutrition information for each menu item



Reduce portion sizes of regular entrees



- Reduce portion size to enhance health benefits
- Offer small portions of regular-sized items (e.g., small-plates, half-portions)

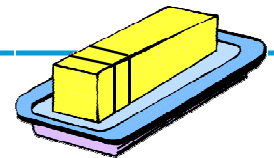
Reduce salt used in food preparation



- Prepare more menu items from scratch in order to control sodium
- Join the U.S. National Sodium Reduction Initiative & commit to lowering sodium
- Tag menu items that are lower in sodium (FDA defines "low" sodium as ≤ 140 per 100 grams which translates to < 600 mg sodium for 15 ounces of food)

1 teaspoon of salt = sodium for *entire day*

Offer more meals that are low in saturated fat



- Reduce use of saturated fats (solid fats) including cheese and cream
- Avoid cheese as a default topping & charge extra for adding it
- Offer & promote vegetarian entrees that have low/no dairy

2 tablespoons of butter = saturated fat for *entire day*

Guarantee that children have healthful meal options

- Exclude sugary drinks from children's menus
- Adopt criteria from the National Restaurant Association's Kids LiveWell menu (see last page for reference)



Enhance appeal to health-conscious customers

- Increase fiber to improve satiety while decreasing calories
- Increase "healthy choice" items & promote these items in menu pictures
- Ensure "healthy choice" items meet criteria for calories, sodium, and saturated fat. At minimum, use criteria from the restaurant industry's Healthy Dining (see last page for reference).



Resources

Philadelphia Menu Labeling

Information for Consumers

<http://www.foodfitphilly.org/menu-labeling/>

Information for Philadelphia Food Establishments

http://www.phila.gov/health/services/Serv_MenuLabeling.html

Full-Service Restaurant Menu Evaluation.

Information on the restaurant menu analysis, methodology, and results.

<http://www.pages.drexel.edu/~aha27/index.html>

Full-Service Restaurant Customer Evaluation.

Information on the customer intercept study, methodology, and results.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24237912>

Focus Group Research

Information on the focus group study, methodology, and results.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23388204>

Daily Recommended Intake Values.

<http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/dietary-guidance/dietary-reference-intakes>

Healthy Eating Tips.

Guides to facilitate healthy eating, portion control, and nutrition awareness.

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>

National Salt Reduction Initiative

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/diseases/salt.shtml>

Healthy Dining Nutrition Criteria (website accessed October 2013)

<http://www.Healthydiningfinder.Com/about-this-site/nutrition-criteria>

<http://www.Healthydiningfinder.Com/sodium-savvy/ss-criteria>

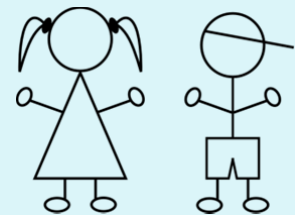
<http://www.Healthydiningfinder.Com/blogs-recipes-more/ask-the-dietitians/best-restaurant-dishes-high-in-fiber>

National Restaurant Association's Kids LiveWell menu

<http://www.restaurant.org/Industry-Impact/Food-Healthy-Living/Kids-LiveWell-Program>

Recommendations for Kid's Meals

<http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/cspi-kids-meals-2013.pdf>



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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: Drexel University School of Public Health.

<http://www.pages.drexel.edu/~aha27/ExecSummaryForRestaurants.pdf>

The image on the front cover is by Gert Lavsen <http://500px.com/lavsen>