

HEALTHFUL TIPS

HEALTH AND FITNESS TIPS FOR YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY



OUT TO LUNCH

Packing your lunch saves both time and money. We can all use both of those these days. It can also be more nutritious and portion control is a cinch. Use the time you save standing in the cafeteria or driving to a restaurant to walk around the office and watch those steps add up. Here are some ideas to get you out of the lunch box rut or away from the fast food lines.

Plan ahead. Make a list of some of your favorite healthy foods and put them on your calendar. When you go to the grocery store make sure to put the ingredients on your list. If you are packing for other family members, enlist their help in planning and preparation.

Pack you lunch the night before so you can enjoy preparing lots of healthy treats to enjoy the following day. Or take a week's worth of lunches to stock the work refrig.

Utilize healthy pre-packed foods available from the grocery store. Individual packs are both convenient and have the added advantage of controlling portions.

You can find tuna, cottage cheese, string cheese, yogurt, fruit cups, crackers, raisins, soup, and many other options.

Interesting sandwiches are a welcome change from the ordinary. Think wraps, chicken salad (made with fat free Miracle Whip), a pita stuffed with chopped turkey, lettuce, tomato and low fat Italian dressing, or cut your sandwich into small strips to remind your self to take small bites and chew well.

Soup can help to increase your daily servings of vegetables. Choose a lower fat option filled with chunky veggies and lean meat. Some will find that soup only satisfies for a short time—if that is the case—go for more solid lunch options.

Watch out for calorie disasters like fat laden salads, potato salads and some pasta salads. Use lower fat dressings when preparing these foods.

Spice it up with baked chips and a refried bean dip. Add salsa, fat free sour cream and taco seasoning to fat free refried beans for great Mexican flair or wrap a tortilla around the dip for a bean burrito.

Hummus and pita bread make an interesting change of pace. Remember to pack sugar free gum if you have an afternoon meeting.

Make a salad with your favorite toppings. Be sure to include lean meat or tuna, and lots of veggies for a healthy treat. Top with your favorite low sugar, low fat dressing or salad spritzer.

For an extra zing without calories, use plain or spicy mustard.

Add a few olives, sun-dried tomatoes, gherkins, alfalfa sprouts, tomatoes or some seeds such as sunflower or pumpkin.

Cook extra servings on the weekend when you have more time and then pack lunch portions into small containers and refrigerate or freeze until needed.

Frozen entrées can be a big help when in a crunch—just look for the lighter options and watch the sodium content.

Live well. Eat well. Enjoy lunch.

