

NUTRITION NEWS & NOTES

Healthy Tips Help You Eat Smart When Dining Out

(NAPSA)—With the rising popularity of carb-conscious diets, many fast food establishments and restaurants are “stepping up to the plate” to make it easier for people to find healthy options, but it can still be challenging making a menu work in the real world.

According to national health and wellness expert, Ann Kulze, MD, successfully navigating through a menu to make healthful choices is now more important than ever.

“Chronic illnesses like diabetes and heart disease are all affected both positively—and negatively—by your diet choices. Eating out is a part of our lifestyle, and there are ways to eat smart when you do.”

Dr. Kulze tells her patients to use these strategies.

Review your “rules.” Not everyone is on the same diet plan. The best restaurants have menu options that meet the needs of many kinds of dieters. Concentrate on what you **can** eat.

Ask your server. Don’t be timid about asking for information about menu items or how the food is prepared. Ask that foods be steamed or baked instead of fried, or for a vegetable substitution to rice or potatoes. Make sure the restaurant is cooking with canola oil.

“Canola is trans-fat free and heart healthy. Unfortunately, most restaurants are still frying with oils full of trans-fat. This is an important question to ask!”

Eat half. Don’t feel obligated to clean your plate. Ask for a “doggie” bag and halve your dish before you even start eating to minimize temptation.

Find a restaurant with a salad bar. Load up on the fresh vegetables and fruits, but limit toppings like cheese and nuts. Choose oil and vinegar instead of creamy dressings.



Choose healthy carbs. Refined sugars or white flour (like the kind found in most breadbaskets!) aren’t as good for you as whole grain breads, wraps or vegetables.

More than 20 million people have tried diets that call for a lower carb intake, and many restaurants are responding to the demand for low-carb options. One of those restaurants is Ruby Tuesday, which has introduced a “Smart Eating” menu that includes more than 30 low-carb and lower-fat options.

“I’ve been developing menus and recipes for more than twenty years, and the Smart Eating incorporates the best of healthy eating with good taste,” says Julie Reid, culinary director for Ruby Tuesday. “People who are watching their carb intake will like that we have whole grain tortillas instead of bread, a creamy cauliflower alternative to mashed potatoes and even a low-carb cheesecake. We are also the only national casual dining restaurant that is currently cooking with canola oil and has a salad bar.”

For a “Smart Eating Survival Guide” with tips on how to eat out and eat healthfully at any restaurant, or for more information about the Smart Eating menu, go to www.rubytuesday.com.