Tips for Making Healthy Choices When Eating Out

In today's busy world, Americans eat and drink about one-third of their calories from foods prepared away from home. Here are three steps for making eating out choices that are healthy and delicious.

1. **Find out YOUR calorie needs.** A total intake of 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice. However, your calorie needs may be higher or lower and vary according to age, sex, and physical activity. Find your personal daily calorie needs at **https://www. fda.gov/downloads/Food/LabelingNutrition/UCM606203.pdf**.

2. **Look for calorie and nutrition information.** Calorie information can be found on menus or menu boards of restaurants and other food establishments that are part of a chain of 20 or more locations and additional nutrition information is also available upon request in those restaurants. Many chain restaurants also include nutrition information online, so you can also check restaurant websites for nutrition information before going out.

3. **Make the best choice for you**. Comparing calorie and nutrition information can help you make better decisions before you order.

- Side dishes can add many calories to a meal. Steamed, grilled, or broiled vegetables and fruit are often lower-calorie options. With calorie information, you can make the best choice for you.

- Calorie information can help you decide how much to enjoy now and how much to save for later.

- Asking for sauces or salad dressings on the side lets you choose how much to use.

- Foods described with words like creamy, fried, breaded, battered, or buttered are typically higher in calories than foods described as baked, roasted, steamed, grilled, or broiled. Use calorie information to help you make the choice that is right for you.

- Calories from beverages add up quickly. With calorie information, you can find lower-calorie options.