



Tips to Reduce Sodium in Restaurant Menu Items

Sodium is a mineral found in salt. Most of the sodium in our diets comes from processed, packaged foods and restaurant foods. On average, Canadians consume 3400 mg of sodium per day, more than double the recommended amount of 1500 mg. Too much sodium can lead to high blood pressure and other health problems.

1 teaspoon of salt = 2400 mg of sodium

1 tablespoon of salt = 6900 mg of sodium

Here are some tips to help reduce the amount of sodium in your restaurant's menu items:

WHEN ORDERING FOOD FROM YOUR SUPPLIER

- Order fresh or frozen ingredients instead of canned foods whenever possible.
- If recipes require canned goods, choose "No Salt Added" or "Low Sodium."
- Use "Reduced Sodium" condiments (e.g., soy sauce) in recipes.
- Limit the use of pre-seasoned products (e.g., poultry, French fries).
- Request nutrition information (Nutrition Facts Table) from supplier before ordering.
- Use unsalted butter or margarine

WHEN PREPARING FOOD

- Gradually reduce the salt used in recipes.
- Replace some of the salt in recipes with herbs, spices, fresh lemon or lime juice, garlic, onions, leeks, vinegars, fruit juices or fresh hot chili peppers.
- Serve sandwiches with low-sodium toppings such as fresh vegetables rather than pickled vegetables or olives
- Use a smaller amount of prepared condiments such as ketchup, bbq sauce, soy sauce, plum sauce, salsa, gravy or make your own.

Remember: Simply reducing food portion sizes will lower the amount of sodium in your menu items.



Tips to Reduce Calories in Restaurant Menu Items

Calories are a measure of the energy in food. Calories come from the fats, carbohydrates (including sugars), proteins and alcohol in food.

Fats: provide more calories per gram than carbohydrates, proteins and alcohol. For this reason, cutting back on the amount of fat in a recipe is a good way to reduce the calories in a menu item. Oils, such as olive oil, canola oil and sunflower oil, are healthy choices, but remember that all oils have the same amount of calories in them.

1 tbsp oil, butter or margarine = 100-120 calories

Sugar: Another way to reduce the calories in menu items is to use less sugar and sweeteners. White sugar, brown sugar, icing sugar, maple syrup, and honey all provide roughly the same number of calories per gram.

1 tbsp sugar = 50 calories

Here are some tips to help you reduce the amount of fat and sugar in your dishes:

WHEN ORDERING FOOD FROM YOUR SUPPLIER

- Choose leaner cuts of meat with less visible fat, and meats that are not breaded or coated in sauces.
- Choose lower fat milk ($\leq 2\%$ M.F.) and milk products (cheese with $\leq 20\%$ M.F.)
- Choose reduced-fat products (e.g., mayonnaise, cream cheese, peanut butter).
- Request nutrition information/ Nutrition Facts Table from supplier before ordering.

WHEN PREPARING FOOD

- Grill, poach, steam or bake rather than fry.
- Trim visible fat and skin from meat/poultry before cooking.
- Instead of fried side dishes, offer a green salad as the standard.
- Use lentils, beans and tofu in dishes rather than meat.
- Use salad dressings, sauces, coconut milk, ghee, and cheese sparingly within recipes.
- Use less butter on cooked vegetables. Season with herbs and spices instead.
- Cut back on the extras. Toppings such as frosting or whipped cream look lovely but add lots of extra calories or fat. Eliminate, cut back, or find a healthier replacement.

Remember: Simply reducing food portion sizes will lower the amount of calories in your menu items.