

Eat This, Not That

Which food do you think is better for you?

- Ham, cheese and egg on an English muffin or a bran muffin?
- Chicken Caesar salad or grilled chicken on mixed greens?
- Ham sandwich or a tuna melt?
- Chicken wrap or grilled chicken sandwich?
- Sirloin steak or turkey burger?
- Fruit smoothie or 100% fruit smoothie?
- Cheese and crackers or granola bar?
- Pasta salad or egg salad?
- Plain yogurt with fresh fruit or yogurt with fruit on the bottom?
- Bagel with cream cheese or cheese omelet?
- Pasta primavera or 2 slices of veggie pizza?
- Fresh fruit or dried fruit?
- Fish sandwich or chicken sandwich?
- Whipped butter or stick margarine?

Eat This, Not That

These are some suggestions of ways to eat more healthy foods.

Some foods that we think are good for us, may not be.

1. Bran muffin

- 420 calories
- 20 g fat

Eat this instead: Ham, egg and cheese on an English muffin

- 300 calories
- 12 g fat

Bran muffins have two things your body doesn't want in the morning. They have sugar and refined flour. Both make your blood sugar go up. This tells your body to start storing fat. In the middle of the morning, you will feel tired. A bran muffin also has only a little bit of fibre.

The breakfast sandwich is great way to start your day. It has fewer calories, fat, and carbs. It also gives you about 20 grams of protein. This is what you really need to get going in the morning.

2. Chicken Caesar salad (dinner-size portion)

- 900 calories
- 60 g fat

Eat this instead: Grilled chicken on mixed greens

- 400 calories
- 20 g fat

Caesar salads have a high fat dressing. The cheese and croutons are also not good for you. Even a Caesar side salad before a meal has up to 500 calories.

It is better to eat grilled chicken breast on a bed of mixed greens. Use oil and vinegar dressing on top. This has less calories.

3. Tuna melt

- 900 calories
- 50 g fat

Eat this instead: Roast beef or ham sandwich

- 500 calories
- 15 g fat

Plain tuna out of the can is healthy. But a tuna melt has mayo, melted cheese and dressing. This is not healthy.

Both ham and roast beef have lots of protein. They are also very lean. They don't have much fat. And they will satisfy your hunger.

4. Chicken wrap

- 700 calories
- 35 g fat

Eat this instead: Grilled chicken sandwich

- 375 calories
- 15 g fat

The wrap itself is the real problem. It has lots of carbs and up to 400 calories. It's a tortilla shell with a lot of starch and fat. Plus the huge surface area means more room to put dressing. You can also add more cheese and meat than your typical sandwich. This is not a health food.

A grilled chicken sandwich on a bun gives you a great balance of fat, carbs, and protein. It is better to have a bun instead of a huge tortilla. You will add less meat, cheese and dressing. Bonus: Instead of mayo use barbecue sauce or salsa.

5. Turkey burger

- 850 calories
- 50 g fat

Eat this instead: 7 oz sirloin steak

- 350 calories
- 20 g fat

When people hear turkey, they think it must be lean and healthy.

But that depends in the type of ground turkey and toppings used. A turkey pattie can have as much fat and calories as a beef burger.

Sirloin is one of the leanest cuts of meat you can buy. It has lots of protein and will keep you feeling fuller, longer.

6. Fruit smoothies

- 600 calories
- 120 g sugars

Drink this instead: 100 percent fruit smoothie

- 350 calories
- 75 g sugars

Many fruit smoothies have added sugars and corn syrup. This means they're more like a milkshake than a smoothie.

A 100 percent fruit smoothie is made with plain yogurt instead of ice cream or sherbet. It has nearly half the calories and a lot less sugar. It also has lots of vitamins.

7. Granola bar

- 200 calories
- 15 g sugars

Eat this instead: 1 oz cheddar cheese with crackers

- 150 calories
- 5 g sugars

Did you ever wonder what keeps a granola bar together? They are made with corn syrup. This quickly raises blood sugar.

Eat cheese and crackers instead. You get rid of the sugar and calories. You get protein and fiber instead. Talk about a great deal!

8. Pasta salad

- 300 calories
- 20 g fat

Eat this instead: Egg salad

- 200 calories
- 14 g fat

When the main part of a snack or a side is pasta, you're asking for trouble. That's because pasta is made from highly-refined flour. This means you get carbs which burn quickly. It also raises your blood sugar a lot.

Egg salad is better. You get less carbs. Instead you get healthy protein. This means you feel full faster. It also keeps up your energy level.

9. Yogurt with fruit on the bottom

- 190 calories
- 30 g sugars

Eat this instead: Plain yogurt with fresh fruit mixed in

- 110 calories
- 15 g sugars

You wouldn't start your morning with a can of cola, would you? Yogurt cups have as much sugar as a soft drink. They have corn syrup which has a lot of sugar.

Yogurt and fruit can be a great way to start your day. But make it yourself. Mix a cup of nonfat plain yogurt with a half cup of mixed berries.

10. Bagel with cream cheese

- 700 calories
- 40 g fat
- 13g saturated

Eat this instead: Cheese omelet

- 425 calories
- 18 g fat
- 6 g saturated

Bagels are not good for you. The bread is bad enough. It has 300 calories and 60 grams of carbohydrates. But when you add a lot of cream cheese it can be worse than a Whopper.

Have an omelet instead. You will save nearly 300 calories. You also get protein. This helps keep your energy up.

11. Pasta primavera

- 800 calories
- 40 grams of fat (12 g saturated)

Eat this instead: 2 slices veggie pizza

- 400 calories
- 20 g fat (6 g saturated)

There are a few vegetables in this popular pasta dish. But there is also a ton of butter, cream, and carbs from all the noodles. If you want to eat pasta, look for ones with a red sauce.

But even a few slices of cheese or vegetable pizza are a fairly smart choice. If you crave Italian food, this is better. Restaurants often serve very large portions of pasta. With pizza you can limit yourself to two slices. Just be sure you have regular or thin crust. Both pan and deep dish pizza have nearly twice the calories.

12. Dried fruit

- 175 calories
- 45 g sugars

Eat this instead: Fresh fruit, like an apple or a peach

- 70 calories
- 15 g sugars

Dried fruit is far from being a harmless snack. First, the drying process takes most of the volume out of the fruit. So you can eat cups of

the stuff, and still not feel full. Also many companies add a lot of sugar to it. So it is more like candy than fruit.

In this case, the choice is clear: Stick to the real stuff. You'll get more fiber and less sugar. This is a much healthier snack.

13. Fish sandwich

- 600 calories
- 30 g fat
- 11 g saturated fat

Eat this instead: Chicken sandwich

- 300 calories
- 13 g fat
- 4 g saturated fat

Fish is healthy. But fish that is dipped in batter then fried is not. Adding cheese and tartar sauce makes it even worse. The lesson? It's not all about the main part. It's also about the things that you add to it.

So make sure your next chicken sandwich is grilled. Avoid any menu item with the word "crispy." This just means it is fried food. Have it with fresh produce, and with a low-cal sauce like barbecue, or even ketchup and mustard.

14. Stick margarine (1 Tbsp)

- 100 calories
- 11 g fat
- 2.5 g saturated
- 2.5 g trans fat

Eat this instead: Whipped butter (1 Tbsp)

- 50 calories
- 6 g fat
- 1.5 g saturated

Stick margarine is loaded with trans fats. This may cause more problems for heart disease than saturated fat.

Stick with real butter, but use whipped butter. By whipping air into the butter, there is less calories in a tablespoon of butter. And it's easier to spread.

Story and questions © Marilyn Smitshoek 2009

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Questions

1. How many calories are in a bran muffin? _____

2. How much fat is in a bran muffin? _____

3. What should you eat instead? _____

4. Why is the breakfast sandwich better? _____

5. What should you have instead of a Chicken Caesar Salad?

6. How much fat does a tuna melt have? _____

7. What does a tuna melt have that is not healthy? _____

8. What do ham and roast beef have? _____

9. Which is better for you: a chicken wrap or a grilled chicken sandwich? _____

10. Why is the wrap a problem? _____

11. What does a grilled chicken sandwich on a bun give you?

12. Why is sirloin good for you? _____

13. What do many fruit smoothies have?

14. What is a 100 per cent fruit smoothie made of? _____

This material was prepared by Marilyn Smitshoek for the Douglas College I-CARE adult literacy tutoring program. You are free to use it with acknowledgement.

