

## WHAT'S THE BEST TIME TO EAT LUNCH?

Don't wait more than five hours (and have a snack) between breakfast and lunch. Once your stomach rumbles, eat within 30 minutes to stop a feeding frenzy. "Somewhere after slight hunger pangs but before you hit starving," says Megan McCrory, Ph.D., assistant professor of nutrition science at Purdue University. As for *what* to eat, that depends. Are you:

### eating out?

Outsmart sneaky fat traps at five types of restaurants with these simple ordering secrets.

**Burger joint** It's the fixin's that push burgers into the badlands: Add cheese (100 calories a slice), mayo (94 cals per tablespoon), two bacon strips (80 cals) and butter (70 cals) to a quarter-pound beef patty and bun (500 cals), and you're nearing double-lunch territory. Use one condiment packet: mustard (5 cals), ketchup (20) or barbecue sauce (about 40).

**Sandwich chain** Watch those bookends: Two slices of whole-grain bread are only 140 calories, but wraps, hero rolls and oily loaves like focaccia have double that amount or more, says Marisa Moore, R.D., a spokeswoman for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. Ready to stack? Stick to two or three slices of lower-fat deli meat—turkey (with no added nitrates), chicken, roast beef—and one slice of cheese, then go for unlimited veggies.

**Hot buffet** All that variety makes us want to sample more, raising calorie consumption 22 percent, a Purdue study finds. Lap the table to narrow your faves, then select one protein and one carb before loading up on produce. And sit facing away from the buffet, preferably at a booth, so it's harder to hop up for seconds.

**Burrito place** The worst item on the menu? The tortilla that holds the burrito together. A typical 12-inch soft tortilla can weigh in at about 300 calories and 9 g fat, says Patricia Bannan, R.D., author of *Eat Right When Time Is Tight*. Order your burrito "naked," with the fillings piled into a bowl.

**Build-a-salad bar** Love the sea of whole-food options. But too much of a good thing can happen fast when you start rattling off toppings. A smart salad formula: one protein, one healthy fat, one cheese (feta or blue cheese has less fat and more flavor than harder ones), ample raw veggies (just 25 cals per cup!) and one crunchy element, such as chow mein noodles, croutons or tortilla strips.

### chained to your desk?

#### IN YOUR DRAWER

- Barney Butter Almond Butter Squeeze Packs
- Wasa Whole Grain Crispbread Crackers
- The Laughing Cow cheese wedges

#### IN THE BREAK ROOM FREEZER

- Kashi Frozen Entrees
- Lemongrass Coconut Chicken
- WeightWatchers Smart Ones
- Santa Fe Style Rice & Beans
- Artisan Bistro Savory Turkey

### brown-bagging?

This sammie-side combo fulfills all your midday-meal needs.

#### Crunchy Chicken Salad Stuffed Pita

Toss 2 oz precooked chicken breast with 1 tbsp nonfat plain Greek yogurt, 2 tsp light mayo, 1 tsp Dijon mustard and ¼ cup each diced cucumber, red onion and celery. Season with salt, black pepper and dried dill. Stuff chicken salad and ¼ cup romaine inside a 6½-inch whole-wheat pita. Serve with 1 sliced apple mixed with 2 tbsp chopped walnuts and a sprinkle of cinnamon.

**THE SKINNY** 542 calories, 18 g fat (2 g saturated), 73 g carbs, 12 g fiber, 29 g protein

#### DON'T LIKE IT? SWAP IT

Play with these ingredient swaps for boredom protection. Instead of...

**A pita** = 10-inch whole-wheat tortilla; ¾ cup quinoa; 1 cup brown rice

**Chicken** = 3 oz turkey bacon; ½ cup tofu cubes; ¾ cup nonfat Greek yogurt; ½ cup shelled edamame

**Our veg combo** = ¾ cup diced zucchini, carrots or any vegetable

**An apple** = 1 pear; 1 banana; 1¼ cup mixed berries; 1 orange

**Walnuts** = 2 tbsp any seed or nut; 1 tbsp almond or peanut butter

#### WORKING OUT OVER LUNCH?

Have a small 150-calorie snack, such as a large banana rolled in 1 tbsp sliced almonds, one to two hours before you hit the gym to energize but avoid stomach cramps, says SELF contributing expert Willow Jarosh, R.D. Then eat your regular meal post-sweat.