

# Healthy for Life Project's Eat Well Initiative: Nutrition Criteria for Healthy Menu Items

*Adopted from the National Restaurant Association's Healthy Dining program*

## Adult Nutrition Criteria

Entrées/full meals must include at least two of the following:

- Fruits and/or vegetables
- Lean protein (skinless white meat poultry, seafood, beef, pork, tofu, beans, eggs)
- Whole grains
- Unsaturated fats

Entrées/full meals:

- 750 calories or less
- 25 grams of fat or less
- 8 grams of saturated fat or less

Appetizers, side dishes, and desserts:

- 250 calories or less
- 8 grams of fat or less
- 3 grams of saturated fat or less

## Children Nutrition Criteria

Full Kids' Meals (entrée, side and beverage):

- 600 calories or less
- ≤ 35% of calories from total fat
- ≤ 10% of calories from saturated fat
- < 0.5 grams trans fat (artificial trans fat only)
- ≤ 35% of calories from total sugars (added and naturally occurring)
- ≤ 770mg of sodium
- 2 or more food groups

Side Items:

- 200 calories or less
- ≤ 35% of calories from total fat
- ≤ 10% of calories from saturated fat
- < 0.5 grams trans fat (artificial trans fat only)
- ≤ 35% of calories from total sugars (added and naturally occurring)
- ≤ 250mg of sodium
- 1 food group

Full meals must include two sources, and a la carte sides must include one source of the following:

- Fruit - > ½ cup (includes 100% juice)
- Vegetable - > ½ cup
- Whole Grains - Contains whole grains
- Lean protein (skinless white meat poultry, fish/seafood, beef, pork, tofu, beans, eggs)
- > 2 ounces of meat
- 1 egg or egg equivalent
- 1 ounce nuts/seeds/dry beans/peas
- Lower fat dairy (1% or skim milk and dairy)
- >1/2 cup (while not considered low fat, 2% milk is allowed if included in the meal and if the meal still fits the full meal criteria)

**Deep fried items not permitted.**

## A note about our nutrition criteria:

The menu items highlighted at each participating restaurant meet the criteria above, which were adopted from the National Restaurant Association's Healthy Dining program and based on a 2,000-calorie diet. However, keep in mind that everyone's nutritional needs and goals vary. If you have specific dietary or health considerations, you should consult your physician and/or registered dietitian to better understand if these menu options meet your needs. For example, many dishes prepared in restaurants and food stores are high in sodium, and the Healthy for Life program does not evaluate the sodium content of adult entrees. If you need or want to limit your sodium intake, please contact the individual restaurants for sodium content.

Also, please note: the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has very strict criteria for any food or meal designated as "healthy," but these criteria are different from the Eat Well program criteria. For example, in its criteria, the FDA includes limits for sodium and cholesterol, but Eat Well does not. Therefore, Eat Well does not claim that the menu items listed here meet the FDA's criteria for healthy.