



The Skinny on Fast Food

It's hot, it's muggy and the last thing that you can be bothered doing is cranking up the oven to cook. Instead it's so much easier to grab some fast food on the way home or order in. As a general rule we know that fast food isn't a healthy option for us (and we know that when we're ordering it), however do you really understand the impact those 'quick fix meals' are having on your goals?

At this point I want to stress, this article isn't about telling you to stop eating fast food. You know by now that I don't believe in cutting things out, instead learn to have things in moderation and become educated about what you're putting into your mouth. After reading this article, it's my hope that you will be more aware about the choices you're making & the impact that they can have on your body & your goals. Just because it's hot and you can't be bothered OR even if you've smashed yourself at training this week, it doesn't give you license to eat junk food all week and still expect to lose weight!

It's important to keep in mind as you're reading this, that we're only looking at ONE meal out of your daily calorie intake & how much of a chunk that meal takes out of your daily allowance. On average for a woman to lose weight you'd eat between 1400-1600 cals & for men its 1800-2000 cals per day and the approximate Recommend Daily Fat Intake is 40g. So let's breakdown some of our favourite takeout meals and see how they stack up.

Pizza

Mmmm pizza! We all know that pizza is not a healthy or nutritious meal to be eating on a regular basis. When you look at what's on a pizza you can understand why it's so calorific. It's loaded with cheeses, sugary sauces and processed meats which are all very fatty and oily (if you doubt me, check the bottom of the pizza box next time!) So even though it may taste great, it's a killer calorie wise & also adds a lot of unnecessary saturated fats to your diet. Here are a couple of popular choices and remember this is based on per slice (*how many slices would you HONESTLY eat in one sitting!*)



- 1 slice of pizza hut supreme (94g) has 227cals & 9.7g of fat (4 slices = 910cals & 38.7g of fat)
- 1 slice of pizza hut bbq meat lovers is 248cals & 10.9g of fat (4 slices = 990cals & 43.6g of fat!)
- 1 slice of pizza hut pepperoni lovers is 228cals & 10.3g of fat (4 slices = 911cals & 41.2g of fat)
- 2 slices of pizza hut garlic bread (40g) is 122cals & 5.6g of fat. That's on TOP of your pizza!

So already on all of those options you're daily fat intake has been blown and you've taken in 1/2 to 1/3 of your daily calorie intake. As you would know from previous articles, any extra calories that your body doesn't need/ doesn't burn gets turned into fat!

When you're ordering out be smart about what is on the pizza. Obviously the less fat the less calorific it will be. You could chose slightly less calorific slices such as Hawaiian, Veggie or Capricciosa and always watch your portion size. Instead of having a pizza to yourself, could you have 1-2 slices of something that you really love & have a salad on the side to fill you up?

The even healthier option is making your own pizza's but again please be mindful of what you're loading them up with. If you put 1/2 a packet of pizza cheese on your pizza's its 342cals & 25.5g of fat just by itself!





Fish & Chips

Ok with this option it's not really a surprise that it's very calorific! We all know that anything that is deep fried isn't going to help our waistline at all. Even if you try to be healthy and make smarter options (such as grilled fish etc) it's the other accompaniments that go with it that can kill you. Here is a scary breakdown:



- 1 piece of battered fish (150g) 480cals & 34.5g of fat!
- 1 serve of chips (100g or approx 20 medium chips) 263cals & 15g fat
- 1 fried dim sim (70g) 177cals & 8.4g of fat
- 1 potato cake 150cals & 11g of fat

That is a total of 1070 calories and 68.9g of FAT! (That is about ½ to ¾ of your DAILY intake and almost 30grams of fat **OVER** your daily allowance!)

To even become close to working that off you'd need to do 2 spin classes back to back!!

The best option is to choose grilled fish or even peel the batter off the fish if they can't do grilled. If you are going to have chips don't get sucked into mindless eating. Put a small handful on your plate so you can actually control how many you're eating. As you can see the calories add up quickly. At your next weigh in you won't remember 'how much you really ate out of the box...' "It wasn't that bad was it?"

Another suggestion is to have a steamed dimmy instead of fried. They come in at 103cals & 4g of fat (so even if you splurge and have 2 you're almost on par with 1 fried dimmy!) You can also bulk up your dinner by making yourself a quick nice garden salad (only a little effort and no oven needed!) or even throw some frozen vegies in the microwave to help fill you up on nutritious foods other than chips!

Subway

Subway can be a great option for having a light healthy snack for dinner. It's quick and easy; it's light and doesn't cost a fortune. However please be warned, just because subway falls into the 'sandwich' category does not mean that everything on the menu is healthy! (If you only eat a 6" halve the calories)

12" meatball sub with cheddar cheese & sauce 1236cals and 69g of fat

12" steak & cheese sub with cheddar cheese & sauce 992cals & 47.6g fat.

12" Italian BMT with cheddar cheese & sauce 998cals & 46g of fat

1 subway choc chip cookie (45g) 215cals & 10.5g of fat

Again the calorie content & fat content is quite high. Don't be deterred, Subway has a great range of subs that are under 6g of fat (6" serve). You can also reduce the calories by removing cheese and not having the dressing. So next time your set on having your cookie, maybe you can pass on some of the extras so your meal fits in with your calories & that means you can still reach those goals your working so hard for!

Salads

Salad's are a fantastic choice and great to eat in the warmer months. However just because it's got lettuce in it does NOT mean that it's always healthy! Here's a breakdown on a couple of salad favourites and you may be in for a shock!





Chicken Caesar is a classic restaurant choice but did you know that depending where you order & how they make it there can be up to a whopping 800 calories in a standard Caesar salad! It's so calorific because of all the bacon, the croutons (normally fried in oil which is soaked up), the creamy mayonnaise, and even the eggs. This is a classic case of just because it has lettuce & chicken in it doesn't mean it's the best choice for you. A serve from Sumo Salad has 490 calories and a whopping 32.6g of fat (again that's almost your daily fat intake in one meal)!



If you love your Caesar salad don't be afraid to change it up a little. Ask how the croutons are made (and if they're oily ask them to exclude them); you can take out the bacon or have the dressing on the side. These are simple suggestions to help you reduce your calories so you can keep on track.

Potato Salad

A bbq favourite! You've got your snags and chops & it's time to head over to the salad table. Potato salad – its salad so it must be healthy for you right!? Sorry to be the one to burst your bubble but potato salad isn't a great option if you're trying to lose weight. When you think about what's predominantly in it, there are potatoes (which are quite starchy), mayonnaise (which is fat) and bacon (which again is fat).

To give you a better understanding, a big serve of potato salad (300g) has 486 cal and 24.6g of fat. That's a heck of a lot of calories for a 'side serve of salad' and I'm sure many people go back for seconds or even thirds! (AND that doesn't include all the other calories you've got on your plate!)

The main things to look for when you're choosing a salad is make sure you're using common sense. If you can see that it's creamy (pesto salads, potato salads, coleslaws etc), if there is lots of cheeses, dressing or 'extra's then it's going to add up. Garden salads and Greek salads are great. They fill you up, they are low in calories and if you order dressing on the side it means you can control how much dressing you put on (and it will be more to your preferred taste!) Please don't feel like you should only eat lettuce leaves, experiment with what you like, take control & become educated about your food choices.

McDonalds & KFC

Whether you're for or against the mega fast food chains people will eat it and as long as it's in moderation it's ok. The problem is so many people don't realise just how calorific these choices are even though they realise they aren't good for them. So let's have a quick look at some popular choices:

- A large Big Mac meal is 1160cal & 49.8g of fat! Or a small Big Mac meal has 836cal & 39.2g of fat!
- A KFC Zinger burger with bacon & cheese is 527cal & 23.2g of fat.
- Add on the KFC chips (large serve 243g) is 576cal & 25g of fat (total meal 1103cal & 48.2g fat)
- or a regular serve of chips (115g) is 273cal & 11.8g of fat (total meal of 800cal & 35.1g of fat)

Instead I would recommend looking at the healthier options on the menu (please remember that it is fast food so just because the marketing says it's healthy doesn't mean it's better for you than a home cooked meal!)

- A McDonald Lean beef burger, small coke & small fries comes in at 609cal & 21.8g of fat (*that's a difference of 551cal & 28g of fat compared to a large Big Mac meal!*)





Chinese

Even though Chinese falls into the "Asian" category it doesn't necessarily mean that it's healthy. Although it's pretty obvious that options like "Sweet & Sour Pork" or "Lemon Chicken" aren't healthy, sometimes things that we think are ok are actually just as calorific or fatty.

- A medium dish of fried rice (350g) has 770cal & 29.8g of fat
- 1 spring roll (170g) is a massive 400cal & 17g of fat
- Sweet & Sour Pork (224g) is 820cal & 60g of fat!
- A combination box (mixture of foods) has approx 750cal & 25g of fat (this of course will depend what's actually in meal)

Instead of going for some of the meals listed above you can make healthier options which don't have as much fat or calories in them.

- Instead of fried rice have steamed rice (350g) has 410cal & 0.7g of fat
- Instead of a spring roll have a rice paper roll (71g not fried) its 80cal & 2g of fat!
- Fill up on Chicken & Corn soup before your main meal. A medium bowl is only 160cal & 4g of fat!
- Beef braised with Chinese vegetables (210g) comes in at 250cal and 12g of fat



So, were you as blown away as I was when I first learnt how calorific and FATTY some of my favourite foods where? Does it now being to make sense, that even though you're training hard you're not losing the weight at the rate that you want because every now and then you're having a take away meal? As I mentioned earlier, any extra calories that the body doesn't use or burn will turn to fat. When we're only looking at ONE meal and it's more than ½ your daily intake, that's a LOT of extra exercise just to get you BACK on track for the day.

Again at this point I want to reiterate it's not about cutting out junk food forever. Instead it's about giving you the tools to make smarter choices so you can have the yummy things in life but still achieve your goals. You'll have noticed that in a couple of the examples outlined, portion control DOES count! A small serve still allows you to eat the foods you want, but doesn't kill you calorie wise. It also means that week you've got a better chance of losing weight because you didn't blow it all on one meal.

Finally I want to remind you that what you're doing needs to be a long term process. If you are going to make excuses that it's too hot to make a salad, or you can't be bothered that's fine – but don't turn around and whinge when you don't lose weight. It's also important that you realise that if you've got the calories you don't need to feel guilty about what you're eating. Enjoy it! If you don't have the calories either make up for it with exercise or understand the consequences.

At the end of the day guys, it's really simple. You're the one who makes the choices with what you put in your mouth and it's up to you to understand the impact that those choices have on YOUR goals.

Don't wait for it to happen – MAKE IT HAPPEN!

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