Don't knock fast-food

If you have ever considered the role of fast food in a conscientious weight-loss program, you may have concluded that there is an inverse relationship between the speed with which a food is prepared and the appropriateness of it on your plate. In other words, "fast food bad, slow food good," may sum up your attitude toward food preparation while dieting.

Nothing could be further from the truth!

"With today's fast-paced, hectic lifestyle, takeout and other so-called fast foods are a fact of life. However, like all food types, there are fast foods you can embrace and fast foods that should be avoided," says Roberta Blackie, Weight Watchers director of operations for Southern Ontario, Quebec and Atlantic Canada. "The difference lies not in the food itself but in the method of preparation.

'Take hamburger restaurants for example," says Blackie. "Many people mistakenly think that a fillet of fish or fried chicken sandwich would be a healthier choice than a broiled hamburger. However, the manner in which fish or fried chicken sandwiches are prepared typically gives them a higher fat content than broiled ham-Weight At burgers. Watchers, we help our members distinguish between the basic ingredients of a meal and the manner in which it is prepared. Additionally, we show them how to take this information and apply it to the real world of fast food."

If you are interested in losing weight, but like to eat out or order in, here are some simple tips to help you make a healthy selection:

Deli & Hamburger **Takeout**

· Be selective. Many fast food restaurants have salad bars as well as broiled and grilled choices. The greater the selection, the better the chances of making a wise

choice.

- · Be savvy. Know what went into the food you order. The salads you make at home may have far less mayonnaise and fat than what you purchase outside. Choose the no-oil salads or pasta salads made with tiny amounts of olive oil. A good rule of thumb is: if the pasta looks like it is swimming in oil, you should swim the other way.
- · Eat with dignity. Do not eat out of containers or while standing at the kitchen counter. Regardless of how quickly the food is prepared or delivered, take your time to appreciate each morsel.
- · Choose lean cuts of deli meats. A roasted chicken is almost always a good choice so long as you remove the

Chinese Takeout

- · Choose stir fried rather than deep fried dishes. Ask the kitchen staff to "go light on the oil." You might be surprised how accommodating they can be.
- · Choose appetizers and entrees wisely. A clear soup will fill you up with fewer calories and steamed rice is lower in fat that fried rice.

Italian/Pizza Takeout

· Order pizza by the slice and avoid such high-fat selections as pepperoni, sausage and extra cheese. If a whole pizza comes to your door, think about eating only a slice or two and freezing the rest.

· A spicy, full-flavored marinara (meatless tomato) sauce can be very satisfying on any type of pasta. Italian bread, a garden salad and a modest amount of grated cheese will round out a truly great meal.

Many fast food restaurants offer a much healthier menu today than they used to. Salad bars, low-fat and lowsalt selections as well as a greater variety of foods have made it easier for weight management with today's hectic lifestyle.









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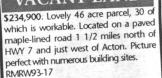
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