

# HEALTHY FAST FOOD

By Sally Kuzemchak, R.D.

When life dishes up insane work deadlines, long road trips or back-to-back piano lessons and soccer practices, fast food becomes a fact of life. You can do a lot of nutritional damage in the drive-thru though, so we've scoured the menus at McDonald's, Chick-fil-A, Subway and more for our top picks.

**Some entrée items are sufficiently low-calorie that you can add a side. See our suggestions below.**



**MCDONALD'S**  
**Healthiest Meal**  
 Honey Mustard Grilled Snack Wrap and Snack-Size Fruit and Walnut Salad  
 (470 calories, 17 g fat)

••• Together these "snacks" make a well-rounded meal: plenty of protein, heart-healthy unsaturated fat (thanks to the walnuts), plus a good source of iron and calcium.

**BURGER KING**  
**Healthiest Meal**  
 Hamburger and Value-Size Unsalted French Fries

(480 calories, 21 g fat)  
 ••• Follow BK's motto and "Have It Your Way." Order the basic burger without mayo and with extra lettuce and tomato to boost veggie servings. Ask for the french fries unsalted and save 100 mg of sodium.



**WENDY'S**  
**Healthiest Meal**  
 Large Chili with side of Mandarin Oranges

(420 calories, 10 g fat)  
 ••• Made with ground beef and kidney beans, this classic tastes rich but has only 4 g of saturated fat. A full cup and a half packs 9 g of fiber and a quarter of your daily requirement of fatigue-fighting iron.

**KFC**  
**Healthiest Meal**  
 Honey BBQ sandwich and Large Corn on the Cob

(460 calories, 4.5 g fat)  
 ••• Surprise! This sandwich has even less fat than the grilled chicken breast. So go ahead and also order one of the healthier sides. The large ear of corn offers 4 g of feel-full fiber, but if you get the green beans (20 calories, 0 g fat) or even the mashed potatoes with gravy (120 calories, 3 g fat) instead, your meal will still be less than 500 calories.



**CHICK-FIL-A**  
**Healthiest Meal**  
 Char-Grilled Chicken Garden Salad with Honey-Roasted Sunflower Kernels & Light Italian Dressing and Large Fruit Cup

(395 calories, 14 g fat)  
 ••• Loaded up with cheese and creamy dressings, a salad can do more damage than a cheeseburger. But this one starts at only 180 calories. Feel free to sprinkle on the sunflower kernels for some healthy fats (but skip the butter croutons). Bonus: The fruit cup delivers all your fruit servings for the day.

## MORE TIME?

Check out these options at some not-as-fast restaurants.

**PANERA**  
 Cup of Vegetable Soup with Pesto and Half of a Smoked Turkey Sandwich  
 (380 calories, 5 g fat)

**PIZZA HUT**  
 2 slices of medium Thin 'N Crispy Veggie Lovers Pizza  
 (360 calories, 12 g fat)

**CHIPOTLE**  
 Burrito Bowl with cilantro-lime rice, black beans, corn salsa and guacamole  
 (480 calories, 19 g fat)

**NOODLES & COMPANY**  
 Small Bangkok Curry with Sautéed Shrimp  
 (285 calories, 6 g fat)

**FAZOLI'S**  
 Grilled Chicken Artichoke Salad with Lemon Basil Vinaigrette  
 (350 calories, 16 g fat)

# MAKE IT BETTER

Keep these tips in mind when ordering fast food meals:

When unsure what to order, go to the children's menu—you'll get the smallest size possible, plus healthier sides like apple slices.



Hold the mayo to eliminate more than 100 calories. Unless you say otherwise, it's usually slathered on your sandwich.



Toss the packages of crispy noodles and croutons that come with salads. These extras don't add anything except calories and fat.



Use half the packet of salad dressing. Thanks to the sugar, even low-fat and fat-free versions of most dressings can easily be more than 100 calories.



Make sure you order chicken grilled—not "crispy," which means fried—on sandwiches and salads.



Opt for leaner breakfast meats like ham or Canadian bacon instead of high-fat, high-cal sausage and regular bacon.



Request they cook your burger without added salt. At McDonald's you can order one minus the "grill seasoning," a mix of salt and pepper.



## TACO BELL

**Healthiest Meal**  
Fresco Bean Burrito  
(350 calories, 8 g fat)

••• There's a whopping 12 g of fiber in this burrito—that's nearly half the amount you need all day! Plus, the vitamin C in the tomato salsa will help you absorb more iron from the beans.



## SUBWAY

**Healthiest Meal**  
6-inch Veggie Delite Sub on Italian Bread, Subway Apple Slices, Small Bag of Baked Lay's  
(385 calories, 4.5 g fat)

••• This is the lowest-fat sub on the menu if you hold the cheese. But even with cheese, it has only about 7 g—that's 75% less fat than their 6-inch Tuna or Spicy Italian subs.



## STARBUCKS

**Healthiest Meal**  
Roasted Vegetable Panini

(350 calories, 12 g fat)  
••• You'll get two whole servings of veggies with this sandwich, which is stuffed with zucchini, eggplant, peppers, sun-dried tomatoes and baby spinach. It also packs 40% of your daily vitamin C.

## DUNKIN' DONUTS

**Healthiest Meal**  
Egg White Turkey Sausage Flatbread  
(280 calories, 8 g fat)

••• This sandwich is served all day and is a much healthier pick than deli standbys like tuna salad. It's a good source of iron and fiber, and the reduced-fat cheese provides a third of your daily calcium.



**TIP** → When grabbing a beverage, choose a no- or low-calorie one, like water, diet soda, unsweetened tea or low-fat milk.

## BEST BREAKFASTS

The ideal a.m. meal includes some protein and healthy fats to keep you full.

**DUNKIN' DONUTS** → Egg & Cheese Wake-Up Wrap (180 calories, 11 g fat) There are 8 g of filling protein but just 180 calories, so go ahead and get a nonfat latte for a calcium boost.

**MCDONALD'S** → Fruit & Maple Oatmeal (290 calories, 4.5 g fat) This new all-day menu item has two of the recommended three daily servings of whole grains and is a good source of calcium and iron (save 30 calories by skipping the brown sugar).

**SUBWAY** → Egg & Cheese Muffin Melt and Dannon Light & Fit Yogurt (250 calories, 6 g fat) You can order one made with only egg whites, but this melt has just 30 more calories—and you'll get added nutrients and feel fuller by keeping the yolk.

**BURGER KING** → BK Breakfast Muffin Sandwich (210 calories, 8 g fat) Swap out the sausage for ham and have them hold the Honey

Butter sauce in order to slash calories in half—and cut the fat by 60%!

**STARBUCKS** → Perfect Oatmeal with Nut Medley Topping (240 calories, 11.5 g fat) This cup of plain, cooked oats—fortified with iron, B vitamins and calcium—can be ordered with one of three toppings (brown sugar, dried fruit or nuts). We like the nuts, which add satisfying healthy fat.

**CHICK-FIL-A** → Sunflower Multigrain Bagel with One Folded Egg and Small Fruit Cup (380 calories, 11 g fat) Paired with an egg, this bagel is a filling meal. And unlike other fast food joints, Chick-fil-A assembles the fruit on-site.

