

# Healthy Eating

## How to Eat Well at Buffets

By Kari Bachman

“All-you-can-eat” buffet restaurants can be a good choice for dining out, because each person can find something he or she wants, and buffets are often reasonably priced.

But who hasn't felt uncomfortably full after eating at one of these restaurants? When presented with such an overwhelming variety of foods, it's difficult not to overeat. To avoid consuming too much, try some of the following ideas.

When entering the restaurant, review the entire spread and decide which dishes seem most appealing to avoid serving some of everything when you fill your plate.

Before selecting a main course, visit the salad section. Use a medium-sized plate to create a mixed vegetable salad. Concentrate on the fresh vegetables, since pre-dressed salads tend to be high in fat and calories, and then choose a lowfat dressing.

When eating, sip on iced tea instead of sugary soft drinks, which carry lots of empty calories. Sweeten the tea with a sugar substitute. Take time to join in table conversation. This will help you eat more slowly and be more aware of feeling full.

After the salad, wait a bit before heading for the main course section. Once there, select small portions of two or three main dishes. Complement them with non-greasy cooked vegetables. Don't try every dish that appeals to you. Leave some to taste on the next restaurant visit.

After the main course, it's time for dessert. Use a small bowl to select a variety of fruits, and top it off with a little soft-serve ice cream and a handful of nuts. This makes a healthier, tastier dessert than the cakes and pies on the buffet line.

You don't have to try all these ideas at once. Just try two or three of them on the next restaurant visit. And remember, buffets can be satisfying without giving you a stomachache.

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