



EATING OUT

By Dr. Cindy Tanzar

Avoid ordering before-the-meal "extras" like cocktails, appetizers, bread and butter because these are often sources of extra fat, carbohydrates and sugar. Order seltzer or spritzer with a bit of juice as a pre-dinner drink, you can ask for vegetables and dip prior, or a salad prior to your meal if helpful as well.

Ask for butter, cream cheese, salad dressings, sauces and gravies to be served on the side, so you can control the quantity you consume. **MAKE SURE YOU ASK FOR REAL BUTTER** as most restaurants will serve whipped margarine because it is less expensive. Then you can add as you know appropriate for your body.

Clues to Healthy Code Words Grilled chicken vs. fried chicken; broiled fish vs. fried fish. When dining out, look for code words to healthier foods with less saturated fat. Look for things that say "baked, broiled, grilled, poached, roasted, steamed, in its own juice, or garden fresh."

Choose desserts carefully. Fresh fruit, fruit ice, sherbet, are good alternatives to more traditional desserts. If you need a chocolate fix, go for a flourless chocolate cake to decrease the sugar and carbohydrate content.

Don't HESITATE to ask your server how particular foods are prepared or what ingredients they contain.

Ask whether the restaurant can prepare your food to order – for example, by leaving off or going very light on dressings, butter, cheese or other high-fat items. Ask the chef to prepare the food with very little butter or oil or none at all and ask if it's possible to add the seasonings at the table.

Ask if smaller portions are available, such as a lunch or half portion or whether you can share entrees with a companion. If smaller portions aren't available, ask for a to-go box when you order and place half the entree in the box to eat later.

Ask whether healthy substitutions are possible. For example, if a dish comes with French fries or onion rings, ask whether you can get grilled vegetables, salad or fruit salad on the side instead.