



# 101 Ways to Eat Better in Your Military Dining Facility

The principles for eating in your military dining facility and eating away from home are basically the same. Here are some tactics you can use to make healthy food choices, anywhere and anytime you eat.

## GENERAL GUIDELINES

- LOOK AT THE MENU AND PLAN WHAT YOU ARE GOING TO EAT** before getting in the serving line.
- PLAN TO EAT MEALS THAT ARE HIGH IN CARBOHYDRATE, MODERATE IN PROTEIN, AND LOW IN FAT.**
- CHOOSE FOODS FROM A VARIETY OF FOOD GROUPS IN THE MYPYRAMID** to include: Grains, Vegetables, Fruits, Milk and Meat and Beans.
- Make half your **GRAINS** Whole.
- Vary Your **VEGETABLES**
- Focus on **FRUITS**
- Get Your **CALCIUM-RICH FOODS**
- Go Lean with **PROTEIN**
- Know the **LIMITS**
- MAKE HALF YOUR PLATE FROM THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROUP.**
- THE REMAINDER OF YOUR PLATE SHOULD CONTAIN WHOLE GRAINS, SKIM/LOW-FAT MILK PRODUCTS, AND LOW-FAT PROTEIN FOODS.**
- CHOOSE FOODS THAT YOU HAVE NEVER TRIED BEFORE** or that you usually don't eat at home.
- IF YOU CHOOSE A HIGHER-FAT ENTRÉE, HAVE LOWER-FAT CHOICES FROM THE OTHER FOOD GROUPS.**
- AVOID SKIPPING MEALS, EVEN IF YOU ARE TRYING TO LOSE WEIGHT.** You need a regular supply of fuel to recharge your energy. Also, skipping meals could sabotage your weight loss efforts by causing you to overeat later in the day.
- AVOID SECOND HELPINGS IF YOU ARE TRYING TO LOSE WEIGHT.** It not only matters what you eat, but how much you eat.
- EAT SLOWLY, AND STOP EATING BEFORE YOU FEEL TOO FULL.**
- INCLUDE A LARGE GLASS OF WATER WITH YOUR MEAL** Water is always the "best choice" for hydration.

## TACTICS FOR BREAKFAST

Breakfast is the healthy way to start your day. Breakfast eaters tend to have more strength and endurance and are able to concentrate and solve problems better.

- EAT COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES** – Carbohydrate is your premium energy fuel. Look for: whole grain hot or cold cereal, whole wheat toast, English muffin, bagel, fresh fruit or fruit juice, grits without butter, skim or low-fat milk and yogurt.
- A STACK OF PANCAKES GOES A LONG WAY** – Pancakes are a high-carbohydrate, low-fat food. To keep fat low, go light on the butter and margarine.
- LOOK FOR FIBER** – Whole wheat, grains, and fresh fruit.
- WATCH THE SUGAR** – Sugar can give you a quick burst of energy but it doesn't last long. Also, lots of breakfast sweets are high in fat.
- CHOOSE 100% FRUIT JUICE** over fruit drinks, which are high in added sugar.
- CHOOSE UNSWEETENED WHOLE GRAIN CEREALS** such as oatmeal and bran flakes.
- LIMIT ADDED SUGAR** by using syrup, jelly, or fruit butters in moderation.
- GO LIGHT ON FAT** – Fat slows you down and can fill you up before you get the carbohydrates you need for energy.
- LIMIT HIGH-FAT MEATS**, such as bacon and sausage.
- GO EASY on:** biscuits, Danish pastry, sweet rolls, doughnuts, cheese, hash browns and gravy.
- DRINK SKIM (FAT-FREE) OR 1% LOW-FAT MILK.**

- TRY YOGURT FOR A CHANGE OF PACE.** It provides Protein and Calcium and is low in Fat.
- USE ONLY SMALL AMOUNTS OF BUTTER OR MARGARINE.**
- LIMIT EGGS TO THREE OR FOUR A WEEK** – The yolks are high in cholesterol and fat.
- WHEN YOU DO EAT EGGS, CHOOSE BOILED AND POACHED EGGS MOST OFTEN** – They have no extra cooking fat.
- CHOOSE SCRAMBLED EGGS AND OMELETS LESS OFTEN** – They are prepared with some fat.
- EAT FRIED EGGS ONLY OCCASIONALLY** – They are cooked with a lot of extra fat.
- CHOOSE WHOLE OR CUT-UP FRUIT RATHER THAN FRUIT JUICE MORE OFTEN**, for the benefits that dietary fiber provides.
- TOP YOUR BREAKFAST CEREAL WITH FRESH FRUIT** instead of adding sugar.
- VARY YOUR FRUIT CHOICES.** Get a variety of nutrients by eating the colors of the rainbow: Blue/Purple, Green, White, Yellow/Orange, and Red.
- TAKE A PIECE OF FRESH FRUIT TO HAVE LATER AS A MID-MORNING SNACK.**
- TRY VEGETABLE JUICES LIKE TOMATO JUICE OR V-8.** These juices are high in Vitamins A and C and important phytochemicals.

## TACTICS FOR LUNCH AND DINNER

### BEVERAGES

What you drink, is just as important as what you eat. Don't let extra calories slip up on you!

- GO LOW-FAT OR FAT FREE** when you choose milk and other milk products.
- TRY LEMON IN ICED TEA OR DRINK HERBAL TEAS.**
- USE SKIM OR LOW-FAT MILK** in coffee and hot tea.
- LIMIT CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES** Caffeine increases your chance of becoming dehydrated.
- TRY TO DRINK PLAIN BEVERAGES.** The calories from sugar and cream add up fast.
- DON'T FILL UP ON BEVERAGES CONTAINING A LOT OF SUGAR.** Doing so may crowd out other nutrient-rich foods needed for good health.

### SALAD BAR

Salad bar fruits and vegetables are a good source of fiber, minerals, vitamins and phytochemicals (fight-chemicals) that provide a variety of health benefits. These foods also fill you up without adding a lot of calories from fat.

But there are some fat traps at the salad bar. Use these guidelines for making salad bar food choices.

- START WITH THE SALAD ITEMS FIRST.** Load up on the raw vegetables. These are usually placed at the beginning of the salad bar line.
- INCLUDE A GREEN SALAD WITH YOUR MEAL EVERYDAY.**
- GO EASY ON CREAMY PASTA, POTATO SALAD, AND COLESLAW.** They are usually high in fat.
- LOOK FOR ITEMS THAT ARE DULL.** Salad items with a shine probably contain more fat.
- DON'T DROWN SALADS IN HIGH-FAT DRESSINGS.** Use only a small amount if a low-fat alternative isn't available.
- USE A "REDUCED-FAT" OR "FAT-FREE DRESSING."**
- TRY ADDING SALSA AS A TANGY LOW-CALORIE DRESSING ON SALADS.** An added bonus: It is high in Vitamins A and C.

- CHOOSE AN ITALIAN-TYPE DRESSING OR OIL AND VINEGAR** if there is not a reduced-fat or low-fat option.
- SKIP THE CREAMY TYPE SALAD DRESSINGS:** Ranch, Blue Cheese, and Thousand Island.
- PUT DRESSING IN A SMALL CONTAINER ON THE SIDE, AND DIP YOUR FORK IN THE DRESSING WITH EACH BITE.** This usually adds just the right amount.
- GO LIGHT ON HIGHER-FAT ADDITIONS,** such as bacon bits, croutons, sunflower seeds, olives, hard-cooked eggs, and cheese.
- ADD A SMALL AMOUNT OF NUTS OR SEEDS TO YOUR SALAD FOR ADDED CRUNCH.** They provide protein and healthful fat.
- CHOOSE A GREEN SALAD INSTEAD OF FRENCH FRIES MORE OFTEN.**

### SHORT ORDER

Short on time? You can still be long on performance with these choices:

- CHOOSE LOWER-FAT SANDWICHES MOST OFTEN**
- BEST** – Roast Chicken or Turkey Breast
- GOOD** – lean Roast Beef, lean Ham, and low-fat processed meats
- EAT ONLY OCCASIONALLY** – Pastrami; Salami; Bologna; Hot Dogs; and salads such as Tuna, Egg, and Ham that contain mayonnaise.
- CHOOSE A PLAIN BURGER INSTEAD OF THE DELUXE VERSION.** Keep in mind that cheese and other toppings can add calories and fat.
- BOOST THE NUTRIENTS IN YOUR SANDWICH** by adding low-fat sandwich fillers, such as leaf lettuce, Spinach, tomato, cucumbers, peppers and onion.
- USE LOW-CALORIE CONDIMENTS ON SANDWICHES** such as Salsa, Mustard, Relish, Ketchup, and Pickles
- GO EASY ON CONDIMENTS THAT ARE HIGH IN CALORIES AND FAT** such as mayonnaise, cheese (unless you are coming up short on calcium for the day), and tartar sauce.
- HAVE A SMALL ORDER OF FRIES INSTEAD OF A LARGER SERVING.**
- HAVE FRESH FRUIT INSTEAD OF FRENCH FRIES OR CHIPS.**

### HOT ENTREES

Use these tactics to make healthy choices in the hot entrée line.

- ASK SERVERS WHAT INGREDIENTS ARE IN A DISH IF YOU ARE UNSURE.**
- LOOK FOR POSTED NUTRITION INFORMATION** to help you make wise food choices.
- CHOOSE MORE FISH, BEANS, PEAS, NUTS AND SEEDS.**
- EAT SMALLER PORTIONS OF MEAT, FISH AND POULTRY.**
- EAT MORE VEGETABLES, FRUITS, AND HIGH-CARBOHYDRATE SIDE DISHES.**
- CHOOSE PLAIN PASTA AND RICE** or with VEGETABLE-TYPE SAUCES.
- LOOK FOR MENU ITEMS THAT ARE: BROILED, ROASTED, STEAMED, POACHED, BAKED, GRILLED, BRAISED, OR BOILED.**
- WATCH OUT FOR FOODS DESCRIBED AS BUTTERY, FRIED, DEEP-FRIED, PAN FRIED, BASTED, CREAMED, SCALLOPED, OR AU GRATIN;** These terms mean the food item is high in fat.
- TRIM FAT OFF MEAT AND REMOVE SKIN FROM CHICKEN AND TURKEY TO REDUCE FAT.**
- CHOOSE FOODS WITH TOMATO OR COCKTAIL SAUCE OR BROTH.**

- LIMIT GRAVIES, CREAM, BUTTER, HOLLANDAISE, AND CHEESE SAUCES.**
- CHOOSE BROTH SOUPS,** such as vegetable and noodle.
- HAVE CREAMED SOUPS LESS OFTEN.** They contain more fat.
- ADD SALTINES, BREADSTICKS OR OYSTER CRACKERS** as a source of low-fat carbohydrate.

### HOT VEGETABLES

Cooked vegetables are a good source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

- Add flavor to vegetables with herbs, spices, reduced-fat dressings, vinegar, cocktail sauce or salsa** instead of salt.
- GO EASY on BUTTER, MARGARINE, MAYONNAISE, AND DRESSINGS.**
- LIMIT FRIED VEGETABLES AND THOSE IN CREAM, BUTTER, HOLLANDAISE, AND CHEESE SAUCES.**
- CHOOSE SMALL PORTIONS OF VEGETABLES THAT HAVE BEEN CANDIED.**
- TRY PLAIN BAKED POTATOES OR TOP THEM WITH LOW-FAT COTTAGE CHEESE, SALSA, BAKED BEANS, OR A SMALL AMOUNT OF GRATED CHEESE.** Baked potatoes are high in fiber and carbohydrates.
- LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF BUTTER, SOUR CREAM, AND CHEESE ADDED TO BAKED POTATOES.** These condiments are high in fat.
- CHOOSE A DARK GREEN OR ORANGE VEGETABLE INSTEAD OF POTATOES, CORN, OR GREEN PEAS MORE OFTEN.**
- VARY YOUR VEGETABLE CHOICES TO KEEP MEALS INTERESTING.** Select from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes - dry beans and peas, starchy vegetables, and other vegetables) several times a week.
- GET A VARIETY OF NUTRIENTS NEEDED FOR GOOD HEALTH BY EATING THE COLORS OF THE RAINBOW:** Blue/Purple, Green, White, Yellow/Orange and Red.

### BREADS AND GRAINS

These foods are high in carbohydrate, vitamins, minerals and fiber but are low in fat.

- EAT WHOLE GRAIN BREADS FOR MORE NUTRITION.**
- FOR HIGH-CARBOHYDRATE, LOW-FAT BREAD OPTIONS, CHOOSE: BAGELS, CRACKERS, TORTILLAS, PLAIN BUNS, MUFFINS, AND ENGLISH MUFFINS.**
- CHOOSE BROWN, WILD, AND WHITE RICE; AND PASTA** as sources of carbohydrate.

### EXTRAS

- GO EASY ON FATS, SUGARS, AND SALT (SODIUM).**
- ADD TASTE WITHOUT ADDING A LOT OF CALORIES BY CHOOSING:** Ketchup, Mustard, Vinegar, Salsa, Spices (Except Salt), and fat-free or reduced-fat mayonnaise and salad dressings.

### SWEET TREATS

Yes, you can have your cake and eat it too-in moderation.

- EAT THE DESSERTS YOU LIKE.** Just eat them less often and in reasonable portions
- TRY LOWER-FAT DESSERTS,** such as Angel Food cake, sherbet, ice milk, Italian ices, and frozen yogurt.
- TRY OTHER LOW-FAT DESSERT CHOICES** like fruit, gingersnaps, fig bars, oatmeal cookies and vanilla wafers
- SUBSTITUTE FRESH FRUIT FOR DESSERT** several times a week.
- WHEN YOU HAVE DESSERT, HAVE IT AT THE END OF THE MEAL** so that a small serving will be satisfying.