

HAVE IT YOUR WAY FAST FOOD





# Have It Your Way Fast Food

## Objectives

### Students will:

- Visually see how much fat is in a typical fast food meal.
- Learn at least three ways to cut fat in their fast food meals.

## Time Needed

50 minutes

## Getting Ready

### Have:

- Tub of margarine
- Two measuring teaspoons
- One plate

### Read:

- Teacher Background Information

### Make:

- *McLabel It!* transparency
- *Make a Better Fast Food Choice* transparency

### Duplicate:

- *Make a Better Fast Food Choice*

## Curriculum Links

- Health
- Consumer Education
- Math

**OVERVIEW OF LESSON**—Many fast food restaurants are offering more healthier choices, but it is not always easy to identify them. This lesson offers simple tips for cutting back on the fat and saturated fat in fast food meals while reinforcing the idea that teens can have it their way—a healthier way—when ordering fast food.

## Activity Steps

**1.** Ask students to raise one hand if they ate at a fast food restaurant this week; raise both hands if they ate at a fast food restaurant twice this week; and stand if they ate at a fast food restaurant three or more times this week. Ask students how much they usually spend on one fast food meal.

Ask students to look around the classroom and notice how much money is spent by teenagers at fast food restaurants. Note that fast food restaurants are looking too. When teens eat out, they go to fast food restaurants 85 percent of the time.

**2.** It's important for teens to know how to make healthier food choices when they eat out. Using the *McLabel It!* transparency, ask students to pick a McDonald's lunch that a typical high school student would order. As a class, total the grams of fat and saturated fat. On the chalkboard, note that five grams of fat are equal to about one teaspoon of fat such as margarine, butter, or oil. Ask for a student volunteer to figure out how many teaspoons of fat are in the McDonald's meal. (Take the total fat grams and divide by five.) Ask for another student volunteer to measure out the corresponding teaspoons of margarine and place them on the plate. Ask students to offer feedback on what they see. Fast food meals tend to be large portions (or "supersized"), so people end up eating more than they need. Note that the McDonald's meal is just one example of a fast food meal. Since most fast-food items are high in fat, saturated fat, and calories, it's important for people to know how to make better choices when eating fast food.



**3.** Distribute *Make a Better Fast Food Choice*. Remind students that every effort counts. Just asking to hold the mayonnaise or substituting water for soda, can make a meal healthier. Ask students to circle the tips they are willing to try. Ask students to share their feedback about the tips.

### Extensions

- **Homework:** Ask students to complete the *Fast Food Contract*. After a week, ask students to discuss whether they tried what they set out to do. What did they learn? Did they try any new foods? Did they try any favorite foods in a new way (a hamburger without the special sauce or mayonnaise, etc.)?
- **Optional Outreach Activity:** Have students ask for nutrition brochures when they go to a fast-food restaurant. Ask students to write letters to fast food chains or call them on their 1-800 toll-free numbers to express their opinions about their food. (See *Sample Business Letter* in Lesson 3, and *Contact 'Em* for resources.)

### Teacher Background Information

It's not uncommon for one fast food meal to exceed an entire day's worth of recommended fat grams. The average teenager needs to consume between 2100 and 3000 calories a day, depending on their age, gender, activity level, and growth needs. To meet the health recommendation of no more than 25–35% of calories from fat, adolescents' fat intake—on average—should not exceed 58–116 grams of total fat a day. Within that range, teens should also try to keep their saturated fat consumption at less than 10% of their total calories, and eat as little trans fat as possible. Weaning teens away from fast food is a tough sell, but they can incorporate some simple tips to eat healthier.



McDonald's Menu Item	Calories	Total Fat (grams)	Saturated Fat (grams)	Trans Fat (grams)
Hamburger	260	9	3.5	.5
Double Cheeseburger	460	23	11	1.5
Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese	730	40	19	3
Big Mac	560	30	10	1.5
Big N' Tasty	470	23	8	1.5
Premium Grilled Chicken Classic Sandwich	420	9	2	0
Premium Crispy Chicken Classic Sandwich	500	16	3	1.5
Small French Fries	250	13	2.5	3.5
Large French Fries	570	30	6	8
6 piece Chicken McNuggets	250	15	3	1.5
Caesar Salad with Grilled Chicken	220	6	3	0
Caesar Salad with Crispy Chicken	300	13	4	1.5
Side Salad	20	0	0	0
Newman's Own Creamy Caesar Dressing	190	18	3.5	0
Newman's Own Low Fat Family Recipe Italian Dressing	60	2.5	0	0
Fruit and Yogurt Parfait	160	2	1	0
McFlurry with M&M Candies (12 oz.)	620	20	12	1
Chocolate Triple Thick Shake (21 oz cup)	770	18	11	1
1% Low Fat Milk	100	2.5	1.5	0
Coca Cola Classic (32 oz.)	310	0	0	0

Based on McDonald's USA nutrition Facts For Popular Menu Items [www.mcdonalds.com/countries/usa/food/nutrition/categories/nutritionfacts.pdf](http://www.mcdonalds.com/countries/usa/food/nutrition/categories/nutritionfacts.pdf) accessed 4/26/06



# Make a Better Fast Food Choice




## Hold the mayo!

If you order a Double Whopper with Cheese without mayonnaise, the fat grams in your sandwich go from a whopping 63 fat grams to 43 fat grams. Instead of the mayo, ask for barbecue sauce, ketchup, or mustard.

## Grilled chicken is finger-lickin' good!

Chicken sandwiches can be a great choice—just beware of the extra fat, saturated fat, and calories that make up the crispy breading. Look for the words “grilled” not “crispy”. At Wendy’s, an Ultimate Chicken Grill has 370 calories, and 8 grams of fat, compared to the Spicy Chicken Sandwich at 510 calories and 19 grams of fat.

## Is your salad dressed to kill?

If you overdress your salad, it can become as fatty as a Big Mac. Use less dressing and choose reduced-fat or fat-free dressing. Also, stay away from higher-fat toppings like cheese, bacon bits, deep fried croutons, and cheese.

## Skip the soda!

Order water instead of soda. You save money, and avoid cavities at the same time.

## Order small fries instead of large!

Small fries at Burger King have 230 calories and 13 grams of fat compared to 600 calories and 33 grams of fat for the King Size fries.

## Choose a regular burger instead of a specialty burger.

A Carl’s Junior plain hamburger has 9 grams of fat compared with a Carl’s Double Western Bacon Cheeseburger with 50 grams of fat.

## Choose a roast beef or turkey deli sandwich.

Turkey or roast beef sandwiches without mayo are your best bet. But if you must smear even one tablespoon of mayonnaise on a turkey sandwich, the total fat more than triples from 6 grams to 19 grams.

## Look for fruits and veggies.

Many fast food restaurants are adding fruits and vegetables to their menus. Look for items such as, baked potatoes, salads, fresh veggies, or fruit and yogurt parfaits, instead of fries.



# Fast Food Contract

The next time I eat fast food, I will try the following in an effort to eat healthier meals:

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I may have the following challenges:

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To overcome these challenges, I plan to:

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**SIGNED:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**WITNESS:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_





Call or email your favorite fast food company and tell them that you want the lower fat/healthier option! Or ask for the address of the corporate headquarters and send a letter with your suggestions. If the fast food company that you want is not listed, call 800/555-1212 and ask for the desired number.

<b>Fast Food Corporation</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Arby's	800/487-2729	www.arbys.com
Burger King	305/378-3535	www.burgerking.com
Domino's Pizza	800/366-4667	www.dominospizza.com
McDonald's	800/244-6227	www.mcdonalds.com
Subway	800/888-4848	www.subway.com
Togo's	800/859-5339	www.togos.com
Taco Bell	800/tacobell	www.tacobell.com
In-N-Out	800/786-1000	www.in-n-out.com
Carl's Jr.	877/799-7827	www.carlsjr.com
Jack in the Box	800/955-5225	www.jackinthebox.com