

Making Everything Easier!™

The Calorie Counter

FOR DUMMIES®

Learn to:

- Keep track of calories, fat, saturated fat, sodium, carbs, fiber, sugar, and protein
- Understand the nutritional and caloric value of everyday foods
- Balance your choices when eating out and on the go
- Put this information to work, eat healthier, and lose weight

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The Calorie Counter

FOR

DUMMIES®

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Introduction

According to recent data from the National Center for Health Statistics, about two-thirds of adults in the United States are overweight, and almost one-third are obese. Consumers must come to terms with the fact that eating *behavior and choices* are what drive their struggles with excessive weight. Changing your eating behaviors is a multifaceted process that involves commitment and support, but one thing remains true: You must consume fewer calories.

A major influence on today's high calorie intake is restaurant dining. On a typical day in the United States in 2009, more than 130 million individuals patronized a food-service establishment, and there's no sign that this trend will change. But just because more people are dining out doesn't mean they're any less concerned about making healthy food choices. What they may not realize, though, is that diet plays a role in disease risk and management.

Getting the right amount of calories from a variety of foods and with a focus on whole grains, fruits, and vegetables creates the healthiest diet. The foods you eat should provide key nutrients, such as vitamins A, C, and E; B-vitamins, vitamin D; fiber; and omega-3 fatty acids. A healthy diet should also be low in saturated fat and sodium.

Whether you're eating at home or dining out, considering calorie intake and proper nutrition is a good idea. *The Calorie Counter For Dummies* is the perfect companion to eating on the go because it includes nutritional information for everyday foods as well as many popular restaurants foods and beverages. With it, you have the information you need to balance your diet for better health.

About This Book

The Calorie Counter For Dummies is your handy nutritional reference guide for common foods and popular restaurants. You can keep it in your car, your purse, or at your desk at work.

Why count calories? Well, we don't recommend obsessing over every calorie you eat all day, but having an idea of how many calories are in different foods is useful knowledge. Think of it as "calorie awareness."

This book will help you understand how different foods compare to each other so you can make an informed choice about what you eat. You'll gain a better understanding of how you can balance your diet throughout the week and discover how to decipher nutrient profiles so you can determine what's important to your health.

The Calorie Counter For Dummies is for anyone interested in good health. Although we're casting a wide net with that statement, we think it rings true. If one or more of these descriptions hits home, you've come to the right place:

- ✔ You only use fast food in situations where you're on the road or away from home, and you want to make the best choices.
- ✔ You frequent restaurants on a daily basis, and you feel now is the time to take control of your dietary decisions.
- ✔ You're watching your total calorie and/or sodium intake.
- ✔ You're concerned about weight control, heart health, diabetes, or high blood pressure.

If you're a parent, here's a special note for you: As the guardian of your child's health, it's up to you to pass along good habits for your children to model. By showing your child that you're aware of the types of foods you choose to eat and are making healthier choices in order to manage your own health, you'll be setting a good example.

Conventions Used in This Book

This guide provides you with nutritional data for common foods and nearly 140 popular restaurants. We've chosen to highlight a few key nutrients that have the greatest impact on health and disease risk: calories (Cal), fat, saturated fat (Sfat), sodium (Sod), carbohydrates (Carb), fiber, sugar, and protein (Prot).

Following is a quick primer on how these different nutritional values are measured (we skip over calories because that one's pretty self explanatory):

<i>Nutritional Value</i>	<i>Measured in</i>
Fat	Grams
Saturated fat	Grams
Sodium	Milligrams
Carbohydrates	Grams
Fiber	Grams
Sugar	Grams
Protein	Grams

Here's a cheat sheet to some other abbreviations we use within the nutritional data:

<i>Abbreviation</i>	<i>Meaning</i>
&	and
amt	amount
approx.	approximately
avg	average
diam	diameter
ea	each
equiv	equivalent
g	grams
indv	individual
lrg	large
med	medium
mg	milligrams
NP	not provided
oz	ounce
pc	piece
reg	regular

Abbreviation	Meaning
sml	small
std	standard
tbsp	tablespoon
tsp	teaspoon
vit A/C	vitamin A or C
w/	with
w/o	without

We also want to mention that we didn't really have room to include trademark symbols for all the various nuggets, nibblers, uperchinos, and other brand-name items offered by the fine restaurants in this book. So we reiterate what's on the copyright page: All trademarks listed in this book are the property of their respective owners. Wiley Publishing, Inc., is not associated with any product or vendor mentioned in *The Calorie Counter For Dummies*.

How This Book Is Organized

The three parts in this book are designed to provide you with guidance in making better food choices whether you're dining out or eating in.

Part I: Healthy Eating 101

Here we've outlined some basic guidelines for healthier eating and included tips based on a few common health concerns: weight control, high cholesterol, diabetes, and high blood pressure. Take note of the specific guidelines that apply to your needs to make the best choices for your situation.

Part II: Restaurant Guide

In a perfect world, you'd have the time and energy to cook a fresh, healthy meal every night, but that's just not how most folks live these days. Because we don't expect you to be perfect, we're giving you the nutrition facts for 150 popular restaurants so you can make informed choices when dining out. You can even impress your friends with these handy facts too! (Beware the fallout of reporting the calories in that three-cheese, triple-patty burger with bacon that your friend just ate for lunch though.)

Part III: Common Food Guide

We by no means want to discourage you from preparing meals at home because that's the best way to control calories and provide your body with adequate nutrients. So we've included a part that provides the nutrient data for common foods. If you do a quick comparison between the two types of products, you can see why eating at home is usually a better option. (And if this part inspires you to cook more at home, consider picking up a copy of *Lowfat Cooking For Dummies* or *30-Minute Meals For Dummies*, both published by Wiley.)

Where to Go from Here

If you need to brush up on some healthy eating guidelines, take a look at the chapters in Part I. If you're curious about the nutritional content of food items at your favorite restaurants, dive in to Part II. You're likely to find some shocking information.

Part I

Healthy Eating 101

The 5th Wave

By Rich Tennant



"Phillip's doctor told him diet, exercise, and genes can effect your cholesterol levels, so he cut out fatty foods, walks everyday, and switched to chinos."

In this part . . .

No matter what your personal situation may be, eating healthfully is easy to do when you have a few basic guidelines in mind. That's why this part introduces you to the concept of balanced eating and explains the basics of how to go about it — whether you're enjoying a nice meal at home or dining at your favorite restaurant.

If you want to lose weight, or if you have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, this part is also your resource for specific healthy-eating information geared toward your needs.

Chapter 1

Keep Your Balance

.....

In This Chapter

- ▶ Developing a balanced lifestyle
 - ▶ Making healthier decisions when dining out
-

Balance is what a healthy body is all about. Every system within your body constantly strives for balance, and it's this balance that keeps your health stable and your systems functioning.

We bet you're no stranger to the phrase *balanced diet*. However, do you have any idea what that phrase really means? This chapter takes a stab at defining it for you. It also features tips for healthy eating when dining out so you can find balance even at your favorite restaurant.

Balancing Act

So what exactly is a balanced diet? There's no one perfect diet, but a balanced diet is one that includes a variety of foods from each basic food

group every day. Eating different foods from each food group guarantees you're getting adequate carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals. A balanced diet also infers that energy needs are balanced with physical activity; that is, you take in the exact amount of calories your body needs to function and maintain a healthy weight.



Of course, most people can't eat perfectly at every meal of every day. To really succeed in achieving a balanced diet, consider your diet through the week, not necessarily at only one meal.

Strive for a little variety

Nobody likes to eat the same thing all the time. One of the ways you can help yourself eat a balanced diet on a daily basis is to really make an effort to choose a variety of foods. By *variety* we mean you should pick different types of foods within each food group. So even if you love bananas, you should try to mix things up and eat an apple, a plum, some melon, or berries every week. Hey, go crazy: Try a kiwifruit or mango once in a while too!

Eat fruits and vegetables

Fruits and vegetables are nutritional powerhouses, and they play a vital role in a balanced diet. When you're on the go, bring fruit to work or school with you, or grab an apple on your way out the door. This behavior strategy helps round out your diet by providing important vitamins and minerals, thereby balancing out the higher-fat, higher-calorie

choices you may make at other times. It also adds fiber to your diet, and fiber helps control hunger, aiding in weight control.



Eat at least two servings of fruit daily, gradually increasing this amount to three or four.

And what about those pesky vegetables? Well, they're very low in calories and rich in vitamins and fiber, plus they add color and healthy *phytochemicals* (nonnutritive plant chemicals that have protective or disease-preventive properties). And despite what you may recall from childhood, vegetables can be delicious if prepared properly.



Grilling is a really quick and easy way to prepare vegetables as a side dish or pasta topping. Vegetables such as bell peppers, eggplant, zucchini, onions, potatoes, and portobello mushrooms all do well on the grill.

Adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet when you eat at home is important because choices are slim and sometimes nonexistent in many restaurants, especially the fast-food variety. If you can choose a fruit or vegetable when dining out, do so, but in some restaurants, your best bet is simply to make lower-calorie, lower-sodium choices. Doing so gives you a better shot at balancing out nutrients to meet your body's needs overall.

Embrace exercise and sleep

The diets of people who are overweight are usually unbalanced. Being overweight is a risk factor for

Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. If you need to lose weight, check with your physician and do the following:

- ✓ **Exercise regularly.** Including physical activity (also known as exercise) with a balanced diet is a great way to stimulate weight loss.
- ✓ **Get more sleep.** Research has shown that getting adequate sleep helps with weight control. When you're well rested, you're able to make reasonable decisions, thereby passing up that 460-calorie sweet potato casserole in favor of the 60-calorie steamed vegetables.



Losing weight is all about finding balance. (There's that word again.) Make exercise a habit, but also make sure you get enough rest.



Perhaps you're on a high-protein diet in an effort to lose weight. Although this type of diet can lead to successful weight loss, fast-food restaurants aren't the place to stick to it because most of the high-protein foods offered there are also high in fat. So, please, no "double bacon cheeseburger without the bun" orders.

Basic Tips When Dining Out

Dining out can be an enjoyable experience, but it can also be a high-calorie one. However, with a bit of planning ahead, you can manage to enjoy your dining experience without the worry of eating too many calories or sacrificing health. Consider these tips to save calories the next time you dine out:

- ✔ Ask for dressings or sauces on the side, or skip the mayo.
- ✔ Consider an appetizer or side dish as an entrée, or choose the regular, small, or kid-sized portion. (Skip anything that's extra-large or supersized.)
- ✔ Choose nonfat or lowfat milk and coffee drinks (pick the small or "tall" size for the latter).
- ✔ Select grilled or oven-roasted items and skip the deep-fried foods.
- ✔ Drink more water with your meals.
- ✔ Review beverage sizes and calories. You can rack up several hundred calories a day in liquid if you don't monitor your intake.
- ✔ Watch out for salads; they aren't always the low-calorie choice.
- ✔ Include as many vegetable toppings as possible on your sandwich, in your omelet, or on your pizza.
- ✔ Skip the butter on breakfast items such as waffles or pancakes and use smaller amounts of syrup.
- ✔ Enjoy your eggs with toast, but skip the extra meat item.
- ✔ Skip the extra cheese on anything whatsoever.
- ✔ Choose pastas with marinara or olive oil-based sauces rather than cream or Alfredo-type ones.
- ✔ Consider splitting an item with a friend and ordering a side salad to round out your meal (unless of course you're splitting dessert).
- ✔ Bring this guide with you and choose wisely!



If you currently eat out daily, consider cutting back to eating no more than three meals per week away from home (not counting packed lunches). Ideally, you should limit dining out to two or fewer times a week.

Chapter 2

Dietary Guidelines for Optimal Health

.....

In This Chapter

- ▶ Watching calories to lose weight
 - ▶ Limiting fats to prevent high cholesterol
 - ▶ Cutting back on sodium to regulate blood pressure
 - ▶ Spreading out your carbs to control diabetes
-

If you're like most people, you're concerned about your overall health. Maybe you just want to lose weight. Perhaps you're trying to prevent conditions such as heart disease, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure. You may even be trying to eat better in order to treat an existing condition, such as diabetes.

This chapter provides some dietary guidelines based on these five common health concerns and offers recommendations on healthy restaurant menu options for each one.

Weight Loss

Excess body weight is associated with risk factors for several diseases, namely heart disease and diabetes. Being overweight or obese may also aggravate your joint health and either hasten or worsen arthritis. It can also affect high blood pressure.

The current standard for determining healthy body weights is the Body Mass Index (BMI). BMI measures your overall “fatness” and is a better indicator of health than simply body weight for one’s height. You should strive for a normal BMI, valued between 19 and 24. A BMI of 25 to 29 indicates you’re overweight, and a BMI of 30 or higher indicates you’re obese. Check with your doctor or registered dietitian to determine what a healthy weight is for you.

General dietary considerations for weight loss:




- ✓ To lose weight, you must reduce your total calorie intake. Eating 500 calories less a day will promote the loss of 1 pound per week.
- ✓ Check out the calories in common foods that you eat each week to determine where you can make a change or reduce portion sizes.
- ✓ Include fiber in your diet. Fiber (found in fruits, vegetables, beans, lentils, and foods made with whole grains) provides denseness without the calories, meaning you can actually eat a bit more without upping your calorie intake. Shoot for 3 grams of fiber or more per serving.
- ✓ Add one to two vegetable servings to your diet daily. Have carrots available to snack on, slice an apple, or eat a banana. You’ll be surprised how easy this is to do if you plan on it.



- ✔ Drink at least six to eight 8-ounce glasses of water every day.
- ✔ Analyze your eating behaviors to see whether any of them are possibly sabotaging your weight-loss efforts. Skipping meals, avoiding food groups, and eating when you're stressed or bored can all hinder weight loss.
- ✔ Get support. If you need to lose weight, find a professional to help you do it. Talk to your doctor about consulting a registered dietitian (RD) or certified personal trainer (CPT).

Quick tips for eating fast food if you're trying to lose weight:



- ✔ Try to limit a meal's calories to between 400 and 600 for women and between 500 and 700 for men.
 - ✔ Choose an appetizer for a main entrée and order a side salad to go with it.
 - ✔ Select lowfat salad dressings when available, or just use less of the full-fat ones.
 - ✔ Share a side dish or dessert with someone.
 - ✔ Drink your whole glass of water (or more!) but limit other beverages to just one glass.
- 
- ✔ Take home half the meal for a delicious lunch the next day. You may even want to physically split the meal in half when it arrives at your table and ask for the to-go box right away so as to avoid the uncomfortable stomach pain that follows from eating the whole thing.
 - ✔ Fit exercise into your day whenever possible. If you dine out for lunch for business, arrange to walk to your destinations. Every little bit helps.

Menu options for weight loss:

- ✓ Add fiber to your salad bar selection with beans and other fresh vegetables. For example, you can top leafy greens with garbanzo beans and three-bean salad. Whatever you do, avoid the creamy premade salads or sweet salad toppings.
- ✓ When it comes to prepared entrée salads, look for ones that have less than 300 calories.
- ✓ Choose the small or “junior” burger or roast beef sandwich with lettuce, tomato, ketchup, mustard, pickle, and onion. Hold the cheese and mayo.
- ✓ Be mindful of sodium. Sodium, found in salt, can cause your body to retain fluid (which leads to excess water weight). Ideally, you should aim for less than 240 milligrams of sodium per serving.
- ✓ Choose whole-wheat bread over white bread whenever possible to up your fiber intake. (**Remember:** Fiber makes you feel fuller longer.)
- ✓ Order a side salad rather than French fries, or share a small order of fries with someone.
- ✓ Choose low-calorie grilled items.
- ✓ Order baked or grilled fish if it’s available.



Heart Disease or High Cholesterol

Diet is an important part of treatment for high cholesterol (which can increase your risk for heart disease

if left unchecked). If you have this condition, perhaps your doctor told you to follow a lowfat diet. Just what does that mean? In general, it means you should pay close attention to the amount of fats in foods, particularly saturated fat (less than 7 percent of your daily calories should be from saturated fat). The amount of fat you need daily depends on your height, weight, and activity; most men only need about 65 to 75 grams of fat per day, and most women only need about 50 to 60 grams per day.

You should work to limit dietary cholesterol (which by the way is found only in animal products; so eat more plants!), but your focus should be on reducing fat. Trans fats have been linked to heart disease, so we encourage you to limit them as much as possible. Talk with your doctor about consulting a registered dietitian for help changing your diet to lower your blood cholesterol.



A lowfat diet should also contain adequate amounts of fiber (about 20 to 30 grams per day). So try to eat a lowfat, high-fiber diet.

General dietary considerations for heart disease or high cholesterol:

- ✔ Limit your intake of saturated fat found in high-fat meats (such as prime rib, beef or pork ribs, salami, pepperoni, sausage, and chicken skin) and whole-milk products (such as sour cream, half and half, butter, and cheese).
- ✔ Include more fish in your heart-healthy diet — just make sure it's not fried. Choose grilled fish or seafood when it's available.



- ✓ Keep your portion sizes under control. Portion size is of utmost importance when you're trying to maintain a lowfat diet or cut calories to promote weight loss. Even the healthiest roasted chicken, for example, can provide too much fat if you eat the whole chicken in one sitting.



- ✓ Consider choosing smaller portions of foods you love. If you have a craving for French fries, choose the smallest order and “count” that fat as part of your overall fat intake for the day.
- ✓ Use food labels to help you make lowfat choices. U.S. food label guidelines require a food to have less than 3 grams of fat per serving to qualify as lowfat and less than 1 gram of saturated fat to be considered low in saturated fat. When it comes to fast food, you may loosen that guideline for one meal, but then make lower-fat choices at other meals that day.
- ✓ Be aware that there may be some “hidden fat” in your diet because not all foods come with complete nutritional information.

Quick tips for eating fast food if you have heart disease or high cholesterol:



- ✓ Check both the fat and the saturated fat. Total fat per 500-calorie meal should be about 15 grams or less. Saturated fat per meal should be less than 4 grams per 500-calorie meal (or less than 1 gram per 100 calories).



- ✓ To keep fat in check when eating out, the best choices include grilled, oven-roasted, and baked items rather than deep-fried ones. Check the nutrition information before making this assumption, however, because sometimes