



Fear of the Lord brings health to the body!

Proverbs 3:7&8

Guide To Eating Healthy While Dining or Traveling

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Eating healthy while traveling is one of the most challenging aspects of living a healthy lifestyle – primarily because restaurant food and fast/junk food are the most tempting, convenient and inexpensive choices; and because they're also the poorest choices nutritionally! And what about those “low-fat” and “natural” food products, are they healthy? How can you eat healthy while traveling or on vacation? What do you do? What do you choose?



The trick is to know the truth and in being prepared! Here are **three** skills that will help you to eating healthy while traveling.

1 **Spotting the traps:** This is really quite simple to do – **if the food is widely advertised and/or has a food label, then it is suspect of being unhealthy.** Why? Because these foods are lacking in nutrients and/or fiber, are loaded with sugar, salt and/or fat, and more often than not, have chemicals and preservatives that toxify your body.

Sadly, the most tempting, tasty foods are that way because they have been altered on purpose – these fast foods and junk foods are designed to keep you coming back, not because the altered food is healthier for you, but because it makes profits for the company. So what makes it a trap is that they attach a message of some obscure health benefit, so you'll think it's good for you. **DON'T BELIEVE IT!**



Deceptive advertising is rampant, so beware! Some examples include: packages that say “Heart Healthy”, pastries that say, “No sugar added”; cookies and crackers that say, “All natural”; cola drinks and other sodas that say, “Zero calories”. Think about it - water has zero calories but they don't advertise that!

So what do you do? Make the effort to buy whole, plant foods: fruits, vegetables, grains, seeds, nuts and legumes that are minimally processed. Avoid food that is highly refined (such as white sugar, white flour), natural food covered in chocolate or sugar, processed foods that need a label for the long list of chemical additives, or any food that is advertised in magazines or on TV; this includes animal products like milk, cheese & meat, and ALL fast food meals.



Get to know your body: This is a skill that takes time – in most cases it requires months or years to develop. And because most people want immediate results, most never take the time or make the commitment. However, there are lifestyle change programs out there that help you learn this in a few weeks or months. For example, we've developed a structured weight loss program we call the 20/40 Project, where you can learn this skill quickly.

Here, the principles of weight loss are applied in a practical way for a specified time. Specifically, the Project focuses on lifestyle change as the means to weight loss rather than a “diet” that you do for a few months, then get off of the diet without any thought to what is happening to your body in the process. We believe the best weight-loss program is one that focuses on healthy FAT loss and is sustainable over the long haul; a sustainable program doesn't focus on body change (i.e. pounds lost) but on lifestyle change – because **once you change your lifestyle, your body will follow**.



For example, can you tell the difference between being hungry and being thirsty? Most people mistakenly eat because they think their body is telling them they're hungry – when in fact, they “crave” a food or they're really just thirsty and their bodies need water. As a result, they end up eating too much, too frequently, or choose the fastest, most convenient and nutrient-deficient food available.

This is a cultural problem, so as a general rule, allow 4-6 hours between meals and drink water to curb those false hunger signals. If you're driving for several hours, take along some healthy snacks (see #3 below).

Another way to get to know your body is during times of excretion, i.e. urine and bowel movements. If your urine is pale yellow, you need water; if it is bright yellow, your body is dehydrated and **desperately** needs water. Likewise, if you can't stand the smell of your bowel movements, you're eating too much meat. If your bowel movements are loose (or really, really hard), you're probably under stress and/or are not getting enough fiber.

There are other changes your body may also experience as you change your lifestyle, such as with your skin, hair and nails. However, before this skill becomes useful, you must first make the change to eating nutrient-rich, fiber-rich plant foods and drinking plenty of water so as to see how this triggers your body to function at its best. Then, when you slip up (and we all do) while traveling, you'll be more likely to notice the changes in your body, this in turn will encourage you to do better next time!

The bottom line is that these clues are a simple, safe, cheap and effective self-monitoring systems that will help you to know if you're eating right anywhere, anytime – but especially while traveling.



Plan ahead: The best skill to learn in your quest to eating healthy while traveling is simply being prepared by planning ahead. It's like preparing for a college test – the more time you study, the less cramming you have to do the night before. This get's easier, and you get better at it with every trip you take. Here are our **four** tips to help you on your next trip:

1. **Prepare your gear.** Whether you're driving or flying, you'll need some simple, basic tools:



- a. Cooler or small ice chest & ice packs. We recommend the soft, fabric type vs. the rigid plastic ones.
 - b. Water bottle. Use aluminum, except when flying.
 - c. Trash bag. Plastic grocery bags work just fine; use it for apple cores, orange peels, etc.
 - d. Travel utensils. Plasticware, Swiss army knife or “Leatherman” tool (good for cutting fruit or veggies). Always carry plenty of napkins and/or wet-wipes.
2. Prepare Snacks. Although fresh fruit is the best all-around snack (fruits have water), they don’t always fare too well in a back pack or suitcase. Trader Joe’s has a great selection of pre-packaged snacks that are perfect for the road or plane. Some options for healthy snacks are:



- a. Dried fruit: raisins, apricots, mango, dates, pineapple. Look for the ones without added sugar, like those banana chips.
- b. Raw nuts: walnuts, almonds, pistachios, peanuts, cashews. Choose the ones with low sodium or no salt, and avoid the chocolate covered ones.
- c. Fresh fruit or veggies: fruit in season is most cost effective. Look for and support local farmers!
- d. Trail mix: choose the ones without the chocolate chips or added sugar!

3. Prepare Meals. Planning your meals is by far the most challenging part of eating healthy while traveling, but with a little creativity, you’ll do just fine. Here are some ideas:

- a. **Call ahead**: whether you’re staying in a hotel or with family, find out if there is a refrigerator and microwave for your use. This will allow you to have more control over what you eat. The biggest challenge may be when family or friends want to take you out to dinner or cook dinner while visiting them. You don’t want to offend them, so unless they already know of your vegan eating habits, have a Plan B in mind. Plan B could include: eating a healthy snack before going to the restaurant so you’re not starving as you look at the menu; offering to pick the restaurant, which you have checked out ahead of time; offering to cook for your family/friends.
- b. **Take your carbs** (carbohydrates): This may sound odd, but if you go out of your way to buy some of your food ahead of time, you won’t be tempted to eat out as much, and you’ll save money. Specifically, we’re talking about steel-cut oats and/or brown rice as your carbs. We use short-grain brown rice because it’s a complex carb and it is so versatile – that is, you can eat it for breakfast with cinnamon, or for lunch or dinner by adding spices (see footnote); plus, we like the texture. You can take your carbs cooked or uncooked. Pre-cooking is more convenient of course, and saves time. But if you have a place to cook and store it, then take them raw. **Here’s a tip**: Trader Joe’s has pre-cooked brown rice that microwaves in 90 seconds.
- c. **Scout the area**. If taking food with you is just too weird right now, then at least search the area online and learn where there are grocery stores, farmer’s markets and healthy restaurant



alternatives. Some Chinese or Thai restaurants serve brown rice and steamed veggies as a side, so you can eat in or take out your complex carbs with confidence knowing it's the next best thing to making it yourself. If you're on a detox plan, and you don't have a juicer to take on your trip, then the next best thing is a juice bar. Juice it Up can make a healthy green drink that is just as good as any you can make at home. If you're in Redlands, then we recommend the juice cleanse at [The Living Root Cellar](#) (of course).

4. Prepare your mind - DEFY the system. **Believe it or not, your worst enemy is you.** It is the voice inside your head that says "just one bite won't kill you", or "once I get home I'll go back on my diet". Whatever the logic is, the voice always has a very good reason(s) for why you deserve that triple-chocolate mousse cake NOW – it's the voice that says tomorrow you can change. The problem is, there is no tomorrow, because tomorrow ends up being just like today, and since nothing bad happened today, then it must be OK to do it again.

The failure is not in the one meal, the failure is in repeating it! Success, on the other hand, is in practicing discipline today, and repeating it every day! Remember, the law of sowing & reaping will prevail. So to help you keep this in perspective while you travel, here's a powerful acronym:



- D.** Discern: know the hazards, know your body and know what's healthy.
- E.** Endure: you're going against the grain, so hang tough, stick it out!
- F.** Focus: keep your eye on the target; know why you're doing this – you're doing this for health and a better quality of life.
- Y.** Yearn: you gotta want it! Do it like you mean business – deliberately & intentionally!

A final note: eating healthy while traveling can be fun, memorable and even humorous – it most certainly will require effort and purposeful planning, and is most definitely worth doing.

Easy travel tip footnote: Mrs Dash brand of no-salt spices (or making your own mix) are the best tool to have while traveling to make an otherwise bland-tasting dish more enjoyable. Why? Because taking your own spices allows you to gracefully accept an invitation for dinner out yet still maintain control by avoiding the oily, salty, or fatty dressings or sauces. How do you do it? When ordering, ask for lemon slices and add your spices to make steamed veggies into a healthy gourmet meal that will not only make an impression on your family, but might even impress the server. Here are some ideas for making or taking your own spices while traveling:



- a. Lemon pepper
- b. Cayenne pepper
- c. Herbs: rosemary, thyme, basil, oregano, parsley, sage, etc.
- d. Garlic or onion powder
- e. Tajin brand seasoning (low salt, tangy spice mix).