



My Favorite Healthy Fast Food Choices

"I walked into McDonald's and asked for fries. The woman at the counter said, 'Would you like fries with that?'" – Jay Leno

Fast food is everywhere.

Whether we like it or not, it's become part of our culture and it's here to stay. Ideally, we would steer clear of fast food altogether and only eat healthy meals that we prepare at home. But let's be realistic. Sometimes, we just don't have time and need to grab a quick bite. Fortunately, there are some decent options out there that won't blow up your gut. Here are my top three favorite healthy fast food choices. Just to clarify, when I say "healthy" I mean low-calorie. I realize this may be a somewhat controversial definition of the word, so I'll elaborate later in the post.



#3. McDonald's McDouble with small fries

- McDouble: 390 calories
- Small Fries: 230 calories

I know McDonald's gets a bad reputation, but it does have one saving grace: portion size. As long as you can control yourself and not order multiple items or avoid some of the more high profile items like the Big Mac or Double Quarter Pounder with Cheese, you won't do a lot of damage here. McDonald's basic menu items such as the hamburger, cheeseburger, chicken nuggets, and small fries aren't all that bad.

#2. Wendy's 5 piece crispy chicken nuggets with sour cream and chives baked potato

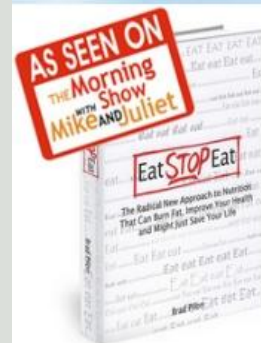
- 5 piece crispy chicken nuggets: 230 calories
- Sour cream and chives baked potato: 320 calories

Even if you add on a side of barbeque sauce at 45 calories, you're still under 600. I'll give Wendy's kudos for being the only fast food chain out there that offers baked potatoes. I'm a big fan of baked potatoes. They are a much healthier and less greasy alternative to fries (as long as you don't smother them in cheese and bacon). Wendy's even lets you substitute a baked potato for fries as the side item in your combo meal for no extra charge.

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#1. Subway foot long oven roasted chicken breast sub

At 640 calories, this is the most bang for your calorie I have ever seen in fast food. In my opinion, Subway is the holy grail of healthy fast food. I get the foot long oven roasted chicken breast sub every time I go. I always load it up with all of my favorite veggies: lettuce, pickles, onions, and green peppers. Finally, to add a little kick, I throw on some spicy mustard and jalepenos. This sandwich tastes great and fills me up every time. Also, it has plenty of good stuff (lean protein, veggies) and nothing fried or greasy. No need to add chips or a soda. You'll just pack on unnecessary calories. This one is a winner on its own.

Notice I only focused on one nutrition fact: the number of calories.

Forget about everything else. I used to get all bogged down in details about how many grams of fat were in my meal or whether I was getting enough protein. Now, I focus on one number: calories. I'm not saying the other numbers aren't worth acknowledging. I'm just saying they aren't really relevant to fat loss.

Calories in versus calories out will determine whether you will get lean or whether you will get fat.

Don't overcomplicate things. People tend to think that certain foods are bad because they are high in fat or high in carbs when in fact, the real reason why these foods are bad is because they are high in calories. The number of calories is the only figure that matters for your waistline. So as far as I'm concerned, low-calorie may not necessarily be nutritious, but it is healthy.



A fast food meal doesn't have to be a cheat meal.

One final note. If you include cheat meals in your diet, as I strongly recommend, don't use these options as your cheat meals. These meals are not meant to satisfy your biggest cravings. They are meant to prevent you from accidentally falling into an unintended cheat meal when you don't have time to prepare something healthy. Having one or two meals like this every week will not sabotage your overall [weekly calorie intake](#). When you do indulge in a cheat meal, plan it out and go all out. Don't hold back. This will help you stick to your eating plan in the long run. Feel free to post some of your favorite healthy fast food choices.