

Nutritionists Pick 49 Healthiest Fast Food Meals You Can Order

**Rachael Schultz**

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Healthiest [fast food](#) is kind of an oxymoron. Whether it's for convenience or [cravings](#), though, sometimes the drive-thru is unavoidable. You can definitely hit Micky D's without wrecking your six-pack, but most of the mouth-watering options your eyes (and stomach) gravitate toward will set you back a few days. And even some of the healthier fast food options at most places are packed with [sodium](#), which can add to water retention and bloating, points out New York-based nutritionist [Jessica Cording, R.D.](#)

Rather than rolling up and trying to guess what you think is the least offensive option, we've tapped a handful of nutritionists to tell us exactly what to order at every fast food restaurant. Now, some of these experts are advocates of not breaking any nutrition rules—even at the drive-thru, which means you'll be ordering a la cart and tossing half the meal just to score the perfect portion of protein, carbs, and fats. Other R.D.s are a bit more lenient, adopting the attitude that you can enjoy a signature burger as long as you're not doing it every week. Even with this carpe diem, though, they

TRENDING

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There are a few blanket rules everyone should follow when getting anything to-go, says Alexandra Miller, RDN, LDN, corporate dietitian at [Medifast](#). The most important: Skip the soda, opt for lean meats, order salad dressing on the side, and keep condiments to a minimum. That way you minimize the amount of added sugar and salt you're getting.

As for exactly what combo meal you should opt for, check out the healthiest fast food options at 49 of your favorite drive-thrus and restaurants.

Healthiest Fast Food Meals You Can Order

The experts

- New York-based nutritionist [Keri Gans](#), R.D.N., author of *The Small Change Diet*
- Michelle Shepherd, R.D., founder of [Westcoast Nutrition](#)
- Nutrition and fitness expert, [Janet Brill](#), Ph.D., R.D.N.
- Nutritionist and transformational health coach Emily Littlefield, founder of [Emily's Powerfoods Living](#)
- New York-based nutritionist [Jessica Cording, R.D.](#)
- Alexandra Miller, R.D.N., L.D.N., corporate dietitian at [Medifast](#)

1. Carl's Jr.

What to order: Single All Natural Burger without the cheese and mayo or Chicken Club without the bacon; pair either with the Garden Salad, but only use half the dressing

Approved by: Gans

[\[carlsjr.com\]](#)

2. Checkers

What to order: Checker Burger or Big Chicken Deluxe

Approved by: Gans

[\[checkers.com\]](#)

Yahoo Life · 4 min read

Instagram may finally free the nipple as Meta advises overhaul on nudity rules for all genders



Glamour · 2 min read

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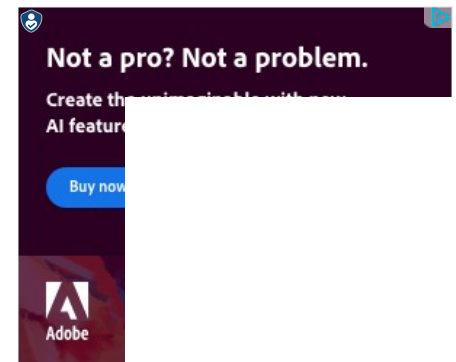


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Approved by: Gans

[chick-fil-a.com]

4. Chipotle

What to order: Salad with steak, black beans, roasted chili corn salsa, and either cheese or guacamole

Approved by: Gans

[chipotle.com]

5. Dairy Queen

What to order: Garden Green Salad with grilled chicken or Grilled Chicken Sandwich with a side salad

Approved by: Gans

[dairyqueen.com]

6. Del Taco

What to order: Fresco Bowl Pollo Asado with avocado

Approved by: Gans

[deltaco.com]

7. Captain D's Seafood Kitchen

What to order: Grilled salmon over rice with a double order of broccoli as the sides

Approved by: Gans

[captains.com]

8. Dunkin Donuts

What to order: Two Egg White Flatbreads, but take the egg out of one, add it to the second sandwich and toss the first flatbread

Approved by: Shepherd

[dunkinonuts.com]

Approved by: Shepherd

[\[elpolloloco.com\]](https://elpolloloco.com)

10. Famous Dave's

What to order: Bowl of chili

Approved by: Shepherd

[\[famousdaves.com\]](https://famousdaves.com)

11. Hardee's

What to order: Build your own burger with a quarter-pound Little Thickburger, extra lettuce, tomato, onion and light ketchup; opt for the low-carb Thickburger on non-training days.

Approved by: Shepherd

[\[hardees.com\]](https://hardees.com)

12. Jack in the Box

What to order: Whole grain chicken fajita pita and apple bites

Approved by: Shepherd

[\[jackinthebox.com\]](https://jackinthebox.com)



What to order: Vegetarian or Totally Tuna 8-inch sandwich, but tear off half the bun and eat sandwich open faced

Approved by: Shepherd

[jimmyjohns.com]

14. Qdoba

What to order: Four tacos filled with grilled chicken, beans, veggies, salsa, guacamole, and pico de gallo

Approved by: Brill

[qdoba.com]

15. Roy Rodgers

What to order: Grilled Chicken Sandwich with a baked potato, side salad, and an apple

Approved by: Brill

[royrogersrestaurants.com]

16. Schlotzky's

What to order: Homestyle Tuna Wrap

Approved by: Brill

[schlotzskys.com]

17. Sonic Drive-In

What to order: Grilled Chicken Sandwich with apple slices

Approved by: Brill

[sonicdrivein.com]

18. Taco Bell

What to order: Black Bean Burrito with guacamole, salsa, veggies, and rice

Approved by: Brill

[tacobell.com]

is probably turkey breast with extra veggies and no mayo

Approved by: Brill

[subway.com]

20. Steak 'n Shake

What to order: Chili, vegetable soup, and applesauce

Approved by: Brill

[steaknshake.com]

21. Tim Horton's

What to order: Oatmeal with 1% chocolate milk

Approved by: Brill

[timhortons.com]

22. A&W

What to order: Bacon Double Cheeseburger with signature sauces, but take off the bun.

Approved by: Littlefield

[awrestaurants.com]

23. Arby's

What to order: Roast Turkey Farmhouse Salad and a Chicken Sandwich. Add the protein from the sandwich to the salad and toss the bread.

Approved by: Littlefield

[arbys.com]

24. Atlanta Bread Co.

What to order: Choose either the Bacon Morning Classic, Spanish Omelet, or Tomato Bacon Omelet and add a side of whole grain oatmeal and fresh fruit salad.

Approved by: Littlefield

What to order: Jumbo Pretzel dog or mini dogs, bread removed, with mustard.

Approved by: Littlefield

[\[auntieannes.com\]](#)

26. Au Bon Pain

What to order: Mayan Chicken Harvest Hot Bowl

Approved by: Littlefield

[\[aubonpain.com\]](#)

27. Baja Fresh

What to order: Order the Baja BBQ Chicken Salad and Tasty Burritos, then take out the burrito meat, veggies, and toppings and add them to the salad. Toss the tortilla.

Approved by: Littlefield

[\[bajafresh.com\]](#)

28. Bojangles

What to order: Order two grilled Chicken wheat wraps, a side of green beans, and a grilled chicken salad. Take the protein from the wrap and put it on your salad.

Approved by: Littlefield

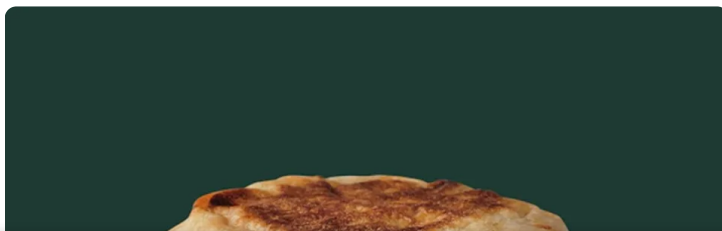
[\[bojangles.com\]](#)

29. Boston Market

What to order: The half chicken

Approved by: Littlefield

[\[bostonmarket.com\]](#)





31. KFC

What to order: Order the Kentucky Grilled Chicken breast or thigh, corn on the cob, green beans, and house side salad. Put the chicken and veggies on the salad instead of using dressing, or use Light Italian dressing.

Approved by: Cording

[kfc.com]

32. Krystal

What to order: Order three of the bacon or sausage toast sandwiches, but eat just the egg and cheese and toss the bread and meat.

Approved by: Cording

[krystal.com]

33. Long John Silver's

What to order: Baked Cod or Baked Shrimp with seasoned green beans and a baked potato

Approved by: Cording

[ljsilvers.com]

34. McDonald's

What to order: Order either a salad with grilled chicken and no dressing, an Artisan Grilled Chicken Sandwich, or the Egg White Delight McMuffin.

Approved by: Cording

[mcdonalds.com]

35. Moe's Southwest Grill

fish, or scrambled eggs, beans, lots of veggies, and cilantro.

Skip the rice and stay light on dips, sauces, and cheese.

Approved by: Cording

[moes.com]

36. Mrs. Winner's Chicken & Biscuits

What to order: Order fried chicken and a side of green beans, but scrape breading off the chicken and eat just the white meat.

Approved by: Cording

[lovmrswinners.com]

37. Panera Bread

What to order: Order either the Lentil Quinoa Broth Bowl with chicken or egg; Avocado, egg white, and spinach Breakfast Power Sandwich; or Classic Salad with Chicken, all with an apple on the side.

Approved by: Cording

[panerabread.com]

38. Pizza Hut

What to order: One slice of small, thin & crispy or skinny slice with veggies on top and a side garden salad. Order naked, non-breaded wings to put on top of the salad.

Approved by: Cording

[pizzahut.com]

39. Popeyes Chicken & Biscuits

What to order: Order off the “live well” menu: Red Beans & Rice or Chicken & Sausage Jambalaya, plus a side of green beans.

Approved by: Cording

[popeyes.com]

leaner protein and 1/3 less meat and cheese than their regular sandwiches.

Approved by: Cording

[[potbelly.com](#)]

41. Waffle House

What to order: Two eggs, one serving of City Ham, dry whole wheat toast, and tomatoes

Approved by: Miller

[[wafflehouse.com](#)]

42. Wendy's

What to order: Power Mediterranean Chicken Salad or Asian Cashew Chicken Salad with dressing on the side

Approved by: Miller

[[wendys.com](#)]

43. Whataburger

What to eat: Whataburger Jr. or Grilled Chicken Sandwich with apple slices

Approved by: Miller

[[whataburger.com](#)]

44. White Castle

What to order: My Size Slider (either grilled chicken, original, or cheese slider) with applesauce and low-fat milk or water

Approved by: Miller

[[whitecastle.com](#)]

45. Zaxby's

What to order: The Caesar-Grilled Salad with no croutons and dressing on the side or five chicken wings with celery (no ranch dressing or fries)

46. Burger King

What to order: Whopper Jr. or Tendergrill Grilled Chicken Sandwich, no mayo on either and add a garden side salad

Approved by: Miller

[\[bk.com\]](#)

47. Culver's

What to order: Value Basket: Butterburger single and a side salad with raspberry vinaigrette

Approved by: Miller

[\[culvers.com\]](#)

48. In-N-Out Burger

What to order: Protein Style hamburger, cheeseburger, or double double, which comes with a lettuce leaf instead of burger bun, and no sides

Approved by: Miller

[\[in-n-out.com\]](#)

49. Taco John's

What to order: Breakfast Egg Burrito with salsa or pico de gallo, no sour cream or cheese or the Beef Taco Salad with house dressing on the side

Approved by: Miller

[\[tacojohns.com\]](#)