

Virginia Cooperative Extension Service

VIRGINIA TECH AND VIRGINIA STATE

VIRGINIA'S LAND GRANT UNIVERSITIES

Fast Foods - How Nutritious Are They? Answers and Explanations to Pre- and Post-Tests

1. Nutrients that are most often lacking in fast-food meals include vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and fiber. Good sources of vitamin A include dark green and deep yellow fruits and vegetables such as collards, kale, leafy greens, carrots, sweet potato, tomato, cantaloupe and apricots. Foods from the milk group which contain fat such as whole milk, whole milk cheeses, and butter also supply vitamin A. Sources of vitamin C include citrus fruits (oranges, grapefruits, lemons, limes), leafy greens, tomatoes, potatoes, broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cantaloupe, strawberries, and green peppers. Calcium is found in milk, cheese, and dark green leafy vegetables. Fiber is supplied by fruits, vegetables, and whole grain cereals.
2. Balanced meal plans would include a burger item, whole milk or fruit juice. Plain hamburgers and cheeseburgers are lower in fat and calories than fried fish sandwiches or the larger burgers. Try to avoid french fries, fruit pies, shakes, and carbonated beverages as these are high in calories largely in the form of fat or refined sugar. Milk or juice are your best beverage choices if these are available. If not, order coffee or iced tea which, although they supply no nutrients, do not supply any excess calories.
3. Several choices can be made which will lower caloric intake at a fast-food restaurant. If you are watching your weight, order a plain hamburger or cheeseburger which are lower in calories than any of the larger sandwiches. Avoid empty calories in the form of fat or refined sugar. Do not order french fries, fried onion rings, fried fish filets, or fried fruit pies. Order your burger item without salad dressing or tartar sauce. Don't choose "thick" shakes or carbonated beverages to accompany your meal. Order no-calorie coffee or iced tea. If you feel you need extra calories, order fruit juice or milk so that you are at least getting some nutritional return from the extra calories.

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<u>4. Nutrient</u>	<u>Source</u>
Protein	Hamburger items Pizza with meat or cheese Fish Chicken Milk Milk Shakes (if the real thing is available)
Calcium	Milk Green leafy vegetables
Vitamin A	Collards Kale Leafy greens Carrots Sweet potato Tomato Cantaloupe Apricots Whole milk Butter
Vitamin C	Oranges Grapefruit Leafy greens Potatoes Brussel sprouts Cantaloupe Green peppers Lemons Limes Tomatoes Broccoli Cabbage Strawberries
Fiber	Fresh fruits and vegetables Whole grain cereals

5. Burgers and fries are generously pre-salted in most fast-food restaurants. The average meal can supply 80 percent of your day's salt requirement. There is never any need to add any extra salt to a fast-food meal.