



# WELLNEWS

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## Healthy Valentine's Day Dining

The greatest part about Valentine's Day is spending time with your sweetie. And what better way to do that than with a nice dinner out? Of course, when you're faced with a sprawling menu of decadent options, or worse, a set prix fixe, panic can sometimes set in, ruining the mood. But it doesn't have to! With a little planning and these six easy strategies, you can take control and treat yourself to a special night.



Fancier restaurants prepare dishes to order, so requests are usually no problem. But even less fancy dining establishments are often willing to make changes too. There's no harm in asking! And on that note, tell the chef not to "finish" the sauce. Chefs sometimes swirl butter into a sauce before it's served. Ask if the sauce can be plain, fresh and bright, not "finished." If the chef cannot accommodate you, ask your waiter to suggest an alternative, lighter preparation.

### 1. **Relax**

Don't approach the dinner with trepidation. You're not denying yourself anything; you're making choices about your life. And you're sharing a meal with those you love, whether that's your partner, your family, or a group of friends. How could it get any better than that?

### 2. **Ask for what you want**

Scan the menu to create your own dinner. If you want the fish, but don't want the cream sauce, ask for it to be served with the salsa that comes with the chicken or the fresh herbs from the pasta. If you want veal but don't want it drenched in butter, ask for it with lemon juice and herbs. And the same goes for the sides: That shrimp dish you want might come with potato gratin, but the roast chicken comes with grilled asparagus. Just ask for the shrimp with asparagus.

### 3. **Order simpler food**

When scanning the menu, keep certain prep terms in mind. In terms of calories, grilled is usually better than fried; baked is better than braised.

### 4. **Ask for your meal to be divided**

Meals these days are often served in enormous portions. Ask the waiter to divide yours before it's served and put one half in a take-home bag that's reserved for you in the kitchen. That way you won't be tempted to overeat tonight, and you'll have lunch or dinner for tomorrow, too.

### 5. **Prioritize what you put in your mouth**

If you think your entree might end up being a splurge, even with special requests, make it healthier. Forgo a cocktail, which can be loaded with sugar, and have a glass of red wine instead. Ask for lemon juice or vinegar on your salad. Order cocktail sauce or chutney for your baked potato, rather than butter and sour cream.

### 6. **Share**

Consider splitting an appetizer, a salad or a dessert. It's very romantic to share a dish with someone you love!

Source: [www.weightwatchers.com](http://www.weightwatchers.com)



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# How to Select a Dentist

When choosing a dentist, there are many things to consider. Here are some commonly asked questions to help you pick the right dentist for you and your family:



**Question:** How do I find a dentist?

**Answer:** The American Dental Association offers these suggestions:

- Visit [www.mouthhealthy.org](http://www.mouthhealthy.org) to search dentists in your area.
- Ask family, friends, neighbors or co-workers for recommendations.
- Ask your family physician or local pharmacist.
- If you're moving, your current dentist may be able to make a recommendation.
- Call or write your state dental society.

**Q: What should I look for when choosing a dentist?**

**A:** You may want to call or visit more than one dentist before making your decision. Dental care is a very personalized service that requires a good relationship between the dentist and the patient. During your first visit, you should be able to determine if this is the right dentist for you.

**Consider the following:**

- Is the appointment schedule convenient for you?
- Is the office easy to get to from your home or job?
- Does the office appear to be clean, neat and orderly?
- Was your medical and dental history recorded and placed in a permanent file?
- Does the dentist explain techniques that will help you prevent dental health problems? Is dental health instruction provided?
- Are special arrangements made for handling emergencies outside of office hours? (Most dentists make arrangements with a colleague or emergency referral service if they are unable to tend to emergencies.)
- Is information provided about fees and payment plans before treatment is scheduled?
- Is your dentist a member of the ADA? All ADA member dentists voluntarily agree to abide by the high ethical standards reflected in the member code of conduct. You and your dentist are partners in maintaining your oral health. Take time to ask questions and take notes if that will help you remember your dentist's advice.

**Q: What is the difference between a DDS and a DMD?**

**A:** If you're looking to find a dentist you may notice that while most are listed with a "DDS", some may be listed as "DMD". They both mean the same thing—your dentist graduated from an accredited dental school. The level of education and clinical training required to earn a dental degree, and the high academic standards of dental schools are on par with those of medical schools. Upon completion of their training, dentists must pass both a rigorous national written exam and a state or regional clinical licensing exam in order to practice. In order to keep their licenses, they must meet continuing education requirements for the remainder of their careers so that they may stay up to date on the latest scientific and clinical developments.

Source: [www.mouthhealthy.org](http://www.mouthhealthy.org)

## Asian Chicken and Vegetable Stew



- 1 teaspoon toasted sesame oil
- 1 pound boneless, skinless chicken breasts, all visible fat discarded, cut into 3/4-inch cubes
- 14-ounce can fat-free, low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 8-ounce can bamboo shoots, rinsed and drained
- 4 ounces (about 1 cup) fresh snow peas, trimmed
- 1/3 cup water and 1 tablespoon water, divided use
- 4 medium green onions, sliced
- 3 tablespoons plain rice vinegar
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce (lowest sodium available)
- 1 tablespoon coarsely chopped peeled gingerroot
- 1 teaspoon light brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch

Heat a large nonstick saucepan over medium-high heat. Pour in the oil, swirling to coat the bottom. Cook the chicken for 6 to 8 minutes, or until no longer pink in the center, stirring frequently.

Stir in the broth, bamboo shoots, snow peas, 1/3 cup water, green onions, vinegar, soy sauce, gingerroot, brown sugar, red pepper flakes, and pepper. Bring to a boil over high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce the heat and simmer for 6 to 8 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Put the cornstarch in a cup. Add the remaining 1 tablespoon water, stirring to dissolve. Stir into the soup. Increase the heat to medium high and bring to a boil. Boil for 1 to 2 minutes, or until thickened, stirring occasionally.

Healthy Family Activities in your community:

<http://search.active.com/?tab=events>

[www.affinityhealth.org](http://www.affinityhealth.org)

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