

## Surviving a McDonald's Party

Your 6-year-old's best friend is celebrating a birthday at McDonald's. Of course, your child is excited but you are not thrilled because you make a conscious effort to encourage your child to eat healthy by avoiding fast foods. What is a parent to do to encourage healthy eating in such a situation?



**Here are a few tips to help minimize your child's intake of foods that offer little to no nutritive value...**

1. Try to have your child eat a healthy snack before going to the party.  
(For example: yogurt with a fruit, bowl of cereal with milk, crackers and cheese, fruit with cheese, ½ peanut butter and jelly sandwich). Doing this will help curb your child's appetite so that he/she will not eat as much when arriving at McDonald's.
2. Before you get to McDonald's, discuss with your child what he or she will order. Encourage options that will be lower in fat and calories while offering some nutritional value.

Here are a few examples of healthier choices from the McDonald's menu  
(Nutrition facts are available from the McDonald's website):

Menu Item	Calories	Fat (g)
<b>Meal:</b>		
Hamburger	260	9
Cheeseburger	310	12
Premium Grilled Chicken Classic Sandwich	420	9
4 pieces Chicken McNuggets (without sauce)	170	10
<b>Salads (not including dressings):</b>		
Asian Salad with Grilled Chicken	290	10
Bacon Ranch Salad with Grilled Chicken	220	9
Caesar Salad with Grilled Chicken	220	6
<b>Desserts:</b>		
Fruit and Yogurt Parfait	160	2
Apple Dippers	35	0
Apple Dippers with low fat Caramel Dip	100	0.5
Vanilla Reduced fat Ice Cream Cone	150	3.5
Kiddie Cone	45	1
<b>Drinks:</b>		
1 % Milk carton	100	2.5
Small Apple or Orange Juice	90-140	0
Child Size Sodas	70-120	0

3. If your child chooses a salad and would like to add some salad dressing, encourage them to have one of the lower fat versions – they are much lower in calories and fat.
4. If your child chooses to have a soda and fries, have him/her order the smallest size, and encourage splitting it with you or a friend.

### **The Bottom Line**

Making healthier choices at McDonald's is possible by considering menu options before getting there.

Discussing meal options with your kids before getting to a restaurant will help narrow down choices, and make you more likely to choose something healthier.