

Heart Attack on a Plate!

Hidden fat & Salt in your food just got easier to see!

Trans fats are making news everywhere since New York City Health Department banned their use in restaurant meals. Now King County will follow suit. The King County Public Health Department also voted to require restaurants with over 10 outlets to label the nutrient content of their menu items.

Restaurants will have to label foods with their calorie, fat, trans fat, carbohydrate and sodium content.

What restaurant foods have trans fats in them? Probably some of your favorite comfort foods!

And beware; some of the foods you'll find trans fats in are deceiving. A simple deep fried apple pie has three times the trans fat of a Quarter Pounder! And for a dollar, you can get two of them, enough trans fat for two people for a week!

One Krispy Kreme donut has 4-6 grams of trans fat, the equivalent of 5 Quarter Pounders!

A Sausage Biscuit comes in at 7 grams of trans fat, and the winner for fat and sodium is the Deluxe Breakfast, weighing in at 11-13 grams of trans fat and 2,200 mg of sodium! That's about a week's supply of trans fats for two people, and a four-day supply of salt!

As for sodium, most of these foods have 10 times the salt you would add to the food, if you salted it yourself.

Take a look at the heart stopping, (literally) trans fat and sodium content of some fast foods below:

| Fast Food | Trans Fat (g) | Sodium (mg) |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Recommended*</i> | <i>>0.5g/serving</i> | <i>>2,000mg/day</i> |
| Quarter Pounder w cheese | 1.5 | 1,190 |
| SW Salad w chicken & dressing (McDonalds) | 1.5 | 1,450 |
| Sausage McMuffin | 7 | 920 |
| Sausage Biscuit | 7 | 1,240 |
| Deluxe Breakfast | 13 | 2,280 |
| McDonald Land Cookies | 2.5 | 270 |
| Crispy Cream Donut | 4-6 | 100-320 |
| NachoesBellgrande (Taco Bell) | 3 | 1,280 |
| Large Fries (McDonalds) | 8 | 330 |

*There is no recommended level of trans fats, but less is better. Items with less than 0.5 gm trans fat per serving don't need to be labeled.

Why is everyone in such a snit about Trans fats and salt in restaurant foods? Well, when you consider the epidemic of obesity and diabetes that is flooding the US, and when you realize most Americans eat 1-2 meals a day away from home, and spend half their food budget on restaurant meals, you can see the impact.

Estimates are that 30,000 Americans die from Coronary Heart Disease caused by Trans fats in the diet, and another 900,000 die from high blood pressure induced heart attack or stroke, and another 80,000 develop kidney failure and need dialysis.

The good news is that decreasing your intake of trans fats to 2% of your calorie intake can cut your risk, or your children's risk of heart disease by 50%. That's a pretty big payoff for a relatively small change. And cutting your salt intake down to about 2,000 mg will decrease your risk of heart disease, stroke and kidney failure just as dramatically.

Making good food choices in restaurants will be easier for consumers with this new regulation, and chances are, it will also drive restaurateurs to make relatively easy changes in their offerings that will translate into big savings of life and health. No company wants to have the visibility of having the worst heart disease menu in the county.

For more healthy ideas and recipes, check out the rest of the Nutrition information at the Northwest Kidney Centers web site, www.NWKidney.org

If you have questions, feel free to email our dietitians, they'd love to help you eat better, or attend our annual Kidney Expo, October 27 at Quest field, and meet the NKC nutrition department in person! Knowledge is Power!