Our campus is moving in an exciting direction, but there are still some healthy options we hope will be added to the many menus on campus. Help it along by requesting and buying these items from the vendors you visit on a regular basis. Show them that healthy choices sell!

Soups & Salads
Ask for dressings made with no sugar and healthy plant oils (or at least plain olive oil and vinegar). Ask for some of the lower fat soups that we mention.

Sandwich Builders
Try whole grain bread, rolls, buns, tortilla and pita. You should also ask that vendors carry a low fat cheese option.

Comfort Food is Not a Dirty Word
Ask for more whole grain options (pasta, rice, grains), vegetables that are prepared plain/steamed/grilled and more lean cuts of meat that are grilled, baked, broiled or roasted.

Influence the Asian Choices
Ask for low sodium soy sauce, brown rice, whole grain noodles or soba noodles, and sushi made with brown rice.

Italian/Pizza Requests
Ask for whole wheat pasta, whole wheat pizza crust, more dishes made with low-fat dairy (ravioli, manicotti, lasagna) and low-fat cheese.

Grill It Up Right
Ask for whole grain buns or bread, low-fat cheese, baked or air cooked french fries and veggie burgers.

Breakfast is the Most Important Meal of the Day
Ask for whole grain breads, English muffins and bagels; whole grain cereals and prepared oatmeal; non fat or low fat yogurt and cottage cheese; egg whites or egg beaters; low fat cheese.

Put in a request!

Ever wonder how you can eat well here at MIT? With your busy schedule it is no surprise that taking care of this part of your life is a challenge. This brochure can make eating healthfully a little bit easier. Take a look at the guiding principles and balanced plate suggestions; with some information and practice you can learn to navigate any menu or meal.

You can learn to eat for health, energy and enjoyment. Read on and find the way!

Use this guide to build the skills necessary to make choices all over campus. We encourage you to ask questions, eat it your way and ask for things you do not see. We include a list of things to request from the vendors you buy from. If enough people ask, they will stock it!
Building a Powerful Sandwich

Bread – Whole grain is the best choice. You should be looking for breads with the following descriptions: whole wheat, whole grain, whole oat, rye, pumpernickel, etc.

Meat – The leaner the better; go for sliced turkey, chicken, ham. Try to avoid some of the overly processed or high fat options (roast beef, salami, pastrami or bologna).

Cheese – Always ask if there is a lower fat version. Limit yourself to one or two slices.

Pile on the Veggies – This is good chance to get your servings and make your sandwich more satisfying. Add cucumbers, lettuce, avocados, tomatoes, peppers, onions, pickles, sprouts, etc.

Condiments – Go slow on the mayonnaise if possible. Instead, go for mustard, ketchup, relish, etc.

Soup & Salad

SOUP – Look for soups with a broth or vegetable base. You can also get a lot of protein and nutrients from black bean soup or veggie chili. Go slow on cream based soups (cream of broccoli, chowders, etc) or soups that have a lot of ground meat and/or cheese in them.

SALAD – Start with a foundation of fresh greens. Go slow on salads made with mayonnaise, pasta or potatoes. Veggies are usually low in fat and high in nutrients. Go slow on the cheese and high fat condiments like mayonnaise.

Burgers and cheese steaks are not the only way to go at the grill.

When possible ask for grilled chicken, fish or a veggie burger. Go slow on the red meat.

Watch your buns – Is there a whole grain option? If not, ask if there is whole wheat bread you can have instead.

Add Veggies – Lettuce, tomato, avocado, pickles, peppers, cucumbers, sprouts, mushrooms, onions, etc. Go slow on the cheese and high fat condiments like mayonnaise.

Fries or Salad? – If you choose to have a burger, choose the salad in order to have a balanced meal.

PIZZA – Cheese and veggie are the best choices. Watch your servings – a slice of pizza in the dining hall can be 2-3 servings. Get just one slice and a side salad.

PASTA – Is there a whole wheat option? This is not always available, but when given the option, whole wheat pasta is delicious and provides you with a lot more energy and fiber.

Lasagna, ravioli, manicotti, and tortellini – Most of these options are made with whole fat cheese. Watch your portions.

Sauce – When possible stick with sauces that are made with tomatoes. Go slow on the cream, pesto and meat sauces; they tend to be a lot higher in calories and saturated fat.

Portions – This is the area where most people go overboard. A serving of pasta is about 1/2 cup. Most restaurants give 6 or 8 servings. Ask for an appetizer or half size portion, or share an entre with a friend.

Bread – Whole grain cereals – Try plain oatmeal, Kashi cereals, Shredded Wheat, Cheerios, Grape Nuts, etc. Be prepared and keep options at work.

Whole grain breads – Go for whole grain bread, English muffins, bagels, etc.

Watch portion sizes – The average bagel is 3-5 servings (eat half). Go slow on muffins, scones, croissants and pastries. Most are packed with calories and saturated fat.

Dairy – Select skin, 1%, or 2% milk, yogurt or cottage cheese. Go slow on butter and whole fat cream cheese. Instead add low sugar jam, natural peanut butter, or low fat cream cheese.

Egg Sandwiches – Ask if they can make it with just the egg white. If not, go slow on the meat and cheese and ask for it on whole grain toast or English muffin.

Comfort Food: Just Like Mom Makes

Best choices – Choose white meat, turkey, pork, or chicken. Fish or tofu/tempeh are also great options.

Go slow on red meat. Look for items that are roasted, steamed, baked or grilled. Ask for the gravy or sauce to be on the side.

Proportion vs. Portion – A serving of protein is about 4 ounces (a deck of cards). Watch your portions and avoid having more than 2 servings per meal.

More than half your plate should be filled with a vegetable and a grain. Go slow on vegetables covered in butter and potatoes that are fried or mashed with a lot of butter and cream. Eat a variety of vegetables and try some of the less known grains—quinoa, couscous, bulgur, brown rice, whole wheat pasta are all great options!

Asian influence

When getting a stir-fry, ask if it can be sautéed in broth or water.

Most people do not know this is an option!

Go for fresh or steamed (as opposed to fried) spring rolls, dumplings and egg rolls and opt for the vegetarian or seafood versions.

Pick the whole grain – Ask if there is a whole grain noodle or brown rice available. Try to avoid fried rice or fried noodle dishes.

Choose your meat – Go for the seafood, chicken, tofu or tempeh. Go slow on the red meat.

Go slow on entrees described as crispy or fried.

Veggie Variety – Get as much variety as possible. Add flavor with garlic and onions.

Do not be afraid to have it your way – Ask for the sauce on the side or for them to go light on the sauce. This is where most of the calories and fat come from — you should control how much.

Italian / Pizza

Breakfast

Trucks

Watch your portions – Go for quality, not just quantity. Share a meal with a friend, eat half and save the rest for dinner; select appetizers, soups and salads. Ask about preparation – Do not be bashful; ask how the meat, fish, chicken or tofu is cooked. Try to stick with items that are steamed, baked, broiled or grilled.

Can I have it on the side? – Often sauces and dressings pack a lot of calories and fat. Whenever possible, ask for the sauce and dressing on the side so you can control the amount you put on your food (1-2 tablespoons is usually considered a serving).

Mix it up – Love the dish you get at Gooseberry’s and do not want to give it up? Don’t! Try the new STEAM Café, Sepal, or Anna’s Tacqueria – they are all inexpensive and have many options that will fuel your mind and body. Save that indulgent dish for Friday.