

For the older traveler, what to eat on the go can be an ongoing problem. We're away from home, not guided by the sensible three-a-day meals routine. We must meet schedules, disruptions and, worst of all, food temptations.

For instance, there's the buffet at the hotel or aboard ship. At home, we watch our calories, keeping them down to 400 or 500 a meal. At the buffet, stacks of food are displayed in front of us, and we succumb to the all-you-can eat invitation. What's wrong with two or three helpings of meat and that extra dessert or two? Everything.

The need for restraint should govern everything we eat while traveling. Unless you want to gain a pound or two a day, here are some ideas for sensible eating while traveling.



While sitting in the airport, you'll be bored. With all those shops around, you feel maybe a snack or two will help pass the time. That's OK, as long as you make them healthy bites. An apple, banana or orange can take away the between-meals hunger.

Fruit drinks and non-fat milk are satisfying. A small cup of yogurt can give a filled feeling. If your hunger won't go away, eat some sherbet or non-dairy sorbet. If the snacks have flavoring, try to get those with real fruit, rather than sugar-loaded artificial coloring.

If airport travel schedules, delays and long waits prevent a sit-down breakfast, lunch or dinner, munch some whole wheat crackers, small crackers with peanut butter or salt-free pretzels. They have some fats, but the healthy kind. Stay away from potato chips and other heavily-salted snacks.

If you're stuck in a waiting room at dawn's early light, and your home schedule is usually a bowl of cereal, try to have something similar. If there's no restaurant nearby, get a small one-serving box of non-sugared Cheerios or Wheaties. Add a sliced banana or raisins and eat dry. Or, get a mini box of skim milk and use the cereal carton as your plate. Stay away from doughnuts and other calorie-loaded cakes. Candy is a definite no-no, unless you bite into a fiber-loaded granola health bar.

For a quick lunch or dinner in the airport waiting room or on the road, and there's a shop nearby, try a veggie salad with tuna, salmon, lean turkey or chicken. Eat it with salt-free crackers, or if available, raw celery or carrot sticks. A bowl of fat-free, non-dairy soup can also

be satisfying. Consider the calories you'll be taking in, and compare the number with the usual amount you eat at home.

If your home eating routine doesn't involve lots of salt and other spices, stay away from the deep-fried ethnic foods, including Chinese, Japanese, Italian and Mexican. However, if you find yourself dragged in by traveling companions, eat very small portions of the least spicy items. Or just ask for simple salads with steamed white rice or unsalted peanuts.

Final word about buffets. You're certain to see many overweight people with overloaded trays marching past your table. Take that as a lesson. It's OK to sample many of the tempting items, but keep the portions very small. A broiled chicken leg or modest slice of rare roast beef can be very satisfying, and maybe a teeny dish of orange sorbet for dessert can top it off.

When in the air, on the sea or along the road, always try to keep your eating sensible, and as close to your regular routine as possible. Your belly, butt and waistline will thank you for it.