

### Smart Ways to Eat at a Buffet

Many companies like to organise a buffet as the anniversary celebration event, allowing everyone to choose their favourite foods. So, what should we office workers do at a buffet to enjoy a healthy and happy meal?

#### **Maintain a Balanced Diet as Usual**

Intentionally “saving room” to indulge ourselves during a buffet may backfire and lead us to overeat unconsciously due to hunger, resulting in excess calorie intake and weight gain. Besides, binge eating after dieting may cause gastrointestinal discomfort. Therefore, we should maintain a balanced diet as usual on the day of the buffet, and reduce the consumption of foods high in oil, salt or sugar.

#### **Walk Around Before Getting Food**

A buffet offers a great variety of food. Before making our choices, it is recommended to walk around, identify the foods we like, and plan before getting them to avoid overconsumption.

#### **Fruit and Vegetables Help Control Food Intake**

A healthy diet should primarily consist of grains, followed by fruit and vegetables, and supplemented with an appropriate amount of meat or its alternatives. However, the foods available at a buffet are often heavy on meat and light on vegetables. Fruit and vegetables are rich in dietary fibre, which can boost our satiety. It is recommended to start with a vegetable salad or a mixed vegetable soup, and opt for fresh fruit instead of desserts high in fat and sugar. When eating a vegetable salad, add a moderate amount of vinegar dressing and avoid consuming a large amount of high-fat salad dressings.

#### **Be Smart, Opt for Foods Low in Oil, Salt and Sugar**

When choosing grains, opt for foods low in oil, salt and sugar such as quinoa, corn, cold noodles and noodle soups, and avoid those high in oil, salt or sugar such as croissants, garlic bread and fried noodles. For meat, opt for foods cooked with less oil (using methods such as steaming, baking/roasting and grilling), and avoid those that are deep fried, which are high in fat. Compared with red meat, white meat (such as chicken, and seafood like lobsters, scallops and blanched shrimps) is relatively lower in fat. As for desserts, since they are usually high in fat and sugar, they should only be consumed in moderation.

#### **Quality over Quantity**

Since our brains can only receive a satiety signal about 20 minutes after eating, enjoying food slowly can help control the amount we eat. Never adopt a “fear of missing out” attitude and overeat – the key to enjoying a buffet is to value quality over quantity!

Eating raw or frozen foods such as sashimi, raw oysters, sushi and salads imposes a higher risk. Elderly persons, children, pregnant women and those with impaired immunity should refrain from eating such foods as far as possible.