

Avoid Picnic Pitfalls. Healthy Choices for the Perfect Picnic.

Life Time Fitness provides healthy swap outs for some of summer's tastiest picnic foods

CHANHASSEN, Minn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Summer and picnics go hand in hand but traditional picnic foods do nothing to help your waistline. By making a few easy swaps, you can pack the perfect picnic and eliminate unhealthy amounts of sugar, unhealthy fats, preservatives, additives and more. [Life Time – The Healthy Way of Life Company](#) (NYSE: [LTM](#)) offers tips for avoiding summer eating pitfalls and making a great summer meal a healthy one, too.

- **If you didn't put your own effort into it; avoid it:** Many of the picnic or BBQ-friendly convenience foods we pick up on short notice are highly processed, preserved, nutrient-poor, and designed for mindless, easy overconsumption. Instead, chose a pre-cut veggie tray, fruit tray, or even roasted or grilled veggies from the grocery store deli counter or stop by Life Time LifeCafe.
- **Skip the chips:** Salty, crispy, grab-able snacks such as chips, pretzels and snack mixes are everywhere at summer social gatherings. To counter the temptations, fill up the buffet tables with healthier foods-with-a-crunch like salty kale chips or strips of bell peppers to dip in spicy hummus, guacamole, or sour cream. Produce such as broccoli florets, carrots, jicama, cherry tomatoes and baby cucumbers also make great snacks.
- **Watch your drink:** Juice, sodas and sweetened teas are often made with high-fructose corn syrup and may contain brominated vegetable oil, which can wreak havoc on our bodies. Instead, pack your coolers with sparkling mineral water, unsweetened tea, or offer a water cooler filled with chilled cucumber – mint or berry/citrus-infused water.
- **Banish the bun:** Despite the fact that bread products raise our blood sugar as quickly and as much as eating two tablespoons of pure sugar, we still seem to fill these picnic staples with anything we can throw on the grill. Try going bun-less by eating with a fork and knife to slow down your eating. Use a lettuce-wrap approach to put some color into your meal or toss your grilled goods on top of a plate of hearty salad greens.
- **Be bold with burgers:** It's tough to go to a picnic or barbecue without seeing copious amounts of meat sizzling away on the grill. Many of our nostalgic char-grilled favorites, however, are heavily processed or preserved with nitrates, nitrites, BHT, BHA, or the notorious pink slime. Whenever you can, opt for 100% grass-fed beef or try something new like wild Alaskan salmon burgers or mix ground, nitrate-free turkey with organic salsa and olives for a spicy turkey burger.
- **Eat your hotdog naked:** Most condiments are packed with unsavory additives to enhance flavor, shelf life, texture, or appearance. Season with fresh or dried herbs and seasonings and try dry rubs for chicken and ribs, pack some fresh herbs and spices

into your grass-fed burger patties, or marinate your poultry or seafood with olive oil, citrus, and herbs before searing them on the grill. Fresh salsa, guacamole, sour cream, or hearty mustard are great toppings for your bun-less burger, chicken, or brats.

- **Steer clear of faux salads:** Potato salads, macaroni salad and pasta salad do not offer our bodies any true nourishment. Replacing these sides with some roasted vegetable salads or crisp, lightly-dressed coleslaw or use Greek yogurt in place of mayonnaise or sour cream when making your own side dishes.
- **Don't chase the ice cream man:** Popular summer desserts such as gelatin and colorful ice pops include artificial coloring agents that could just as easily dye our hair, clothing, or crafts. Instead, choose to naturally sweeten up your party with fruit kabobs, frozen berries with heavy cream, or homemade real-fruit popsicles.

If all else fails or you're crunched for time, stop by the [LifeCafe](#) to pick-up some tasty to-go items made with only real and wholesome ingredients. To learn more about packing a health picnic, visit a Life Time destination near you or [LifeTimeWeightLoss.com](#). For more information about Life Time Fitness, visit [LifeTimeFitness.com](#) or [Facebook.com/lifetimefitness](#).

About Life Time Fitness, Inc.

As The Healthy Way of Life Company, Life Time Fitness (NYSE:LTM) helps organizations, communities and individuals achieve their total health objectives, athletic aspirations and fitness goals by engaging in their areas of interest — or discovering new passions — both inside and outside of Life Time's distinctive and large sports, professional fitness, family recreation and spa destinations, most of which operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Company's Healthy Way of Life approach enables customers to achieve this by providing the best programs, people and places of uncompromising quality and value. As of July 2, 2013, the Company operated 106 centers under the LIFE TIME FITNESS® and LIFE TIME ATHLETIC® brands in the United States and Canada. Additional information about Life Time centers, programs and services is available at [lifetimefitness.com](#).

Life Time Fitness, Inc.

Lauren Flinn, 952-229-7776

lflinn@lifetimefitness.com

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