

# Wrestling USA

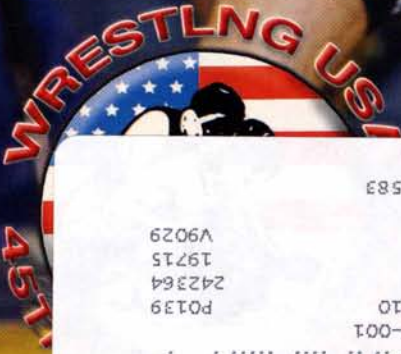
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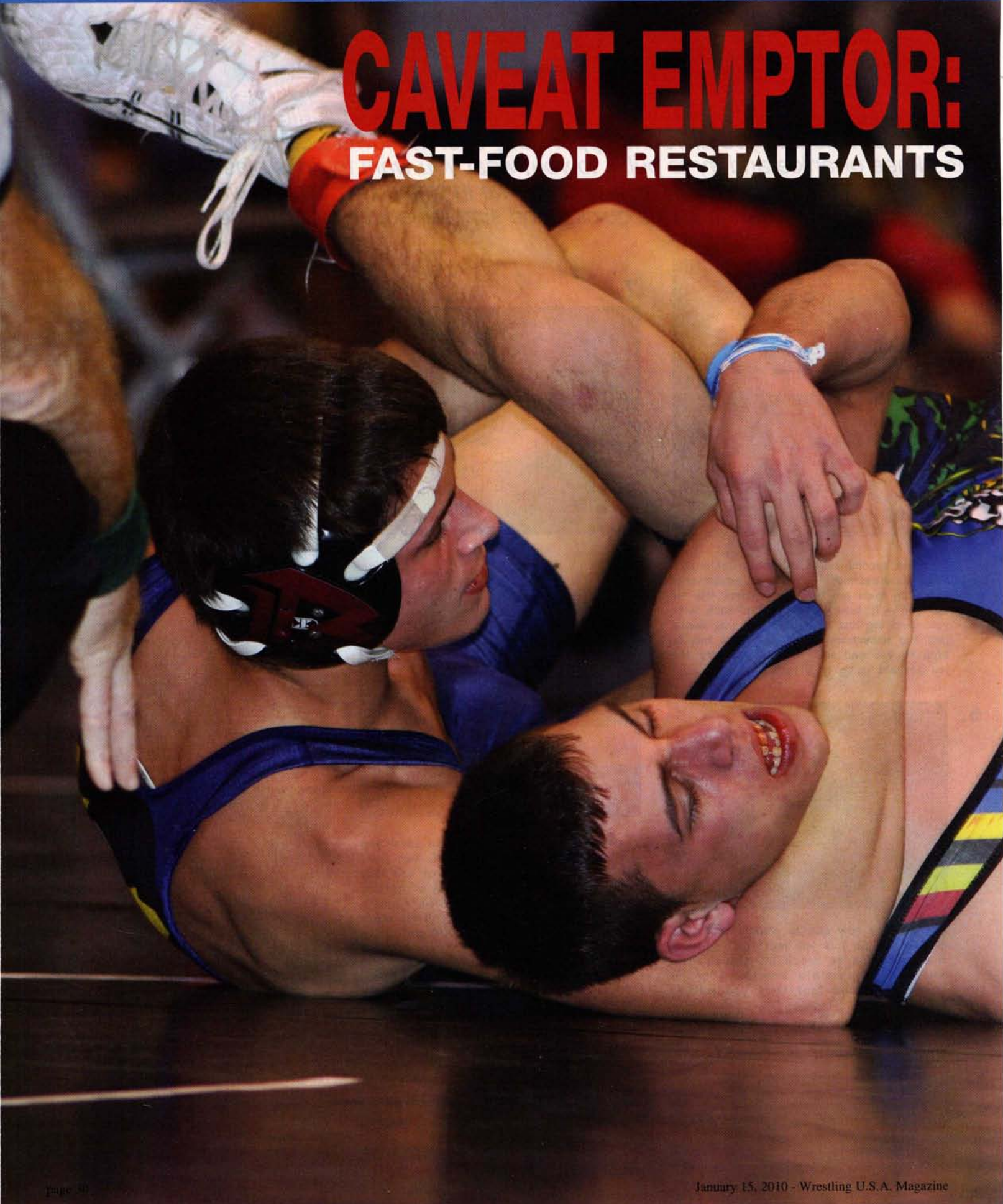
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# CAVEAT EMPTOR: FAST-FOOD RESTAURANTS





By Matt Brzycki



2009 NHSCA Sophomore Nationals - Josh Fisher (West Virginia) with a nearside cradle on Vinny Punzone (New York). Fisher won by tech fall 17-2. Photo by Valerie Smith.

**D**espite the current economic malaise, many meals are still eaten outside the home. In fact, statistics show that youths aged 11 to 18 visit fast-food restaurants twice per week. And with more than 300,000 fast-food restaurants in the United States, there are certainly plenty of options. (Here, a fast-food restaurant is one in which orders are placed at a counter; there are no waiters or waitresses.)

Although convenient and affordable, the meals at fast-food restaurants tend to be high in calories, fat (especially saturated fat and trans fat) and sodium. This presents a number of problems. For example:

Eating foods that are high in calories makes it a challenge for wrestlers who are looking to manage their weight. Remember, you will gain weight if you consume more calories than you expend.

Eating foods that are high in saturated ("sat") fat and trans fat increases low-density lipoproteins (the "bad" cholesterol) and decreases high-density lipoproteins (the "good" cholesterol). This clogs arteries and heightens the risk of heart disease in later life.

Eating foods that are high in sodium can contribute to hypertension (high blood pressure) and increase the risk of heart disease and kidney disease in later life. (Note: The Recommended Daily Allowance of sodium is 2,400 milligrams per day. This is the equivalent of about one teaspoon of table salt per day.)

## RANDOM SAMPLINGS

Let's take a look at some random samplings of meals at eight major fast-food restaurants. For the most part, the meals will consist of a "signature" food and beverage along with an appetizer, side order or dessert.

### Arby's: Large Beef 'n Cheddar

Arby's menu includes Market Fresh (deli-style) sandwiches. But the restaurant is known mostly for its roast beef sandwiches and curly fries.

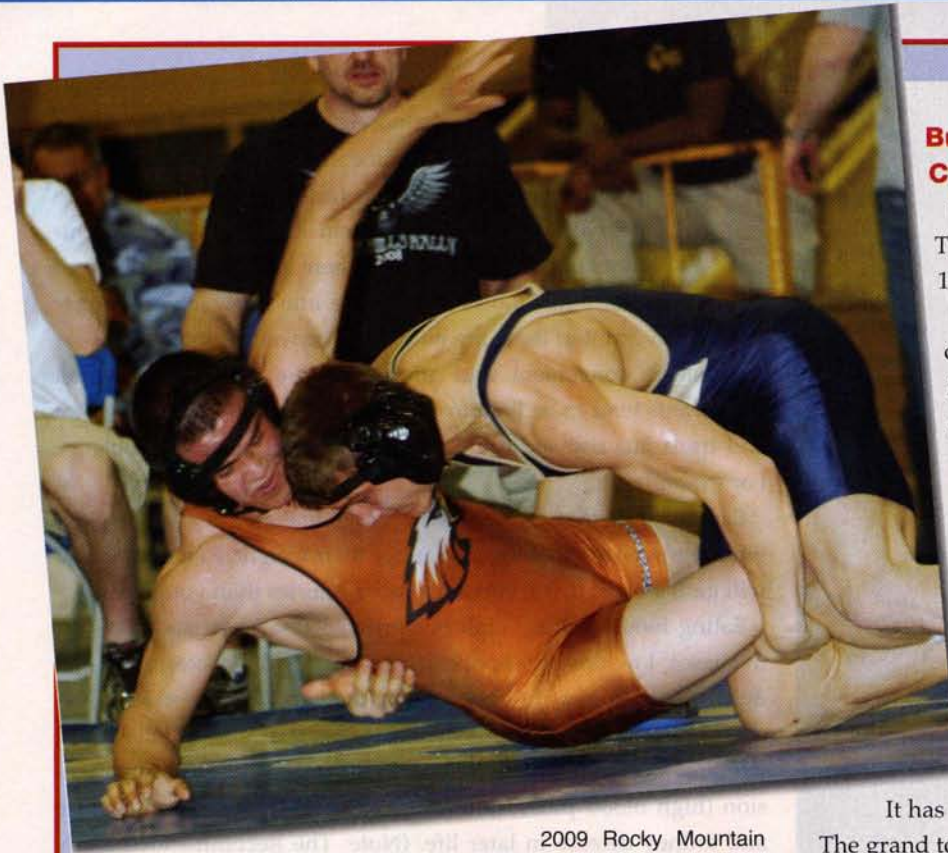
A large Beef 'n Cheddar sandwich has 660 calories with 324 (49.1%) from fat, including 13 grams of sat fat and 2 grams of trans fat. It has 2,310 milligrams of sodium.

A small order of curly fries has 330 calories with 189 (57.3%) from fat, including 4 grams of sat fat. It has 840 milligrams of sodium.

Four mozzarella sticks have 430 calories with 252 (58.6%) from fat, including 13 grams of sat fat and 1 gram of trans fat. They have 1,370 milligrams of sodium.

A 20-ounce vanilla shake has 560 calories with 153 (27.3%) from fat, including 11 grams of sat fat and 1 gram of trans fat. It has 440 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,980 calories with 918 (46.4%) from fat, including 41 grams of sat fat and 4 grams of trans fat, and an astounding 4,960 milligrams of sodium.



2009 Rocky Mountain Nationals - 189 lbs. Daniel Mitchell (Colorado) with the takedown on Adam Gonzales (Arizona) in a 5-2 battle of State Champions. Photo by Dean Vande Berg.

### Burger King: Triple Whopper with Cheese

Burger King is "Home of the Whopper." The Whopper was introduced way back in 1957 and is Burger King's signature food.

A Triple Whopper with cheese has 1,250 calories with a whopping 756 (60.5%) from fat, including 32 grams of sat fat and 3.5 grams of trans fat. It has 1,600 milligrams of sodium.

A small order of onion rings has 310 calories with 153 (49.4%) from fat, including 3 grams of sat fat. It has 490 milligrams of sodium.

A Hershey's Sundae Pie has 310 calories with 171 (55.2%) from fat, including 12 grams of sat fat. It has 220 milligrams of sodium.

A 22-ounce Coca Cola has 270 calories.

It has 15 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 2,140 calories with 1,080 (50.5%) from fat, including 47 grams of sat fat and 3.5 grams of trans fat, and 2,325 milligrams of sodium.

### Kentucky Fried Chicken: Variety Big Box Meal

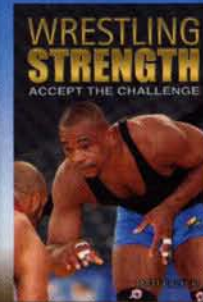
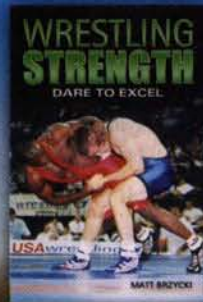
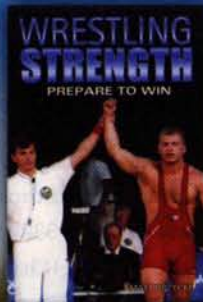
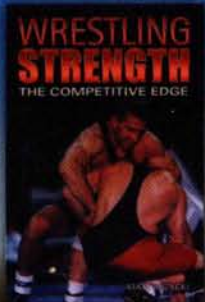
In describing its Variety Big Box Meal, Kentucky Fried Chicken cautions that "your rumbling stomach doesn't stand a chance." No doubt, as a Variety Big Box Meal consists of a drumstick, a Crispy Stick, a box of popcorn chicken, two side orders of your choice, a biscuit and a 32-ounce "refreshing" beverage.

A drumstick (extra crispy) has 150 calories with 81 (54.0%) from fat, including 2 grams of sat fat. It has 360 milligrams of sodium.

A Crispy Stick has 125 calories with 67.5 (54.0%) from fat, including 2 grams of sat fat. It has 240 milligrams of sodium.

A box of popcorn chicken has 400 calories with 234

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(58.5%) from fat, including 4.5 grams of sat fat. It has 1,160 milligrams of sodium.

A side order of mashed potatoes with gravy has 130 calories with 40.5 (31.2%) from fat, including 1 gram of sat fat. It has 550 milligrams of sodium.

A side order of cole slaw has 180 calories with 90 (50.0%) from fat, including 1.5 grams of sat fat. It has 270 milligrams of sodium.

A biscuit has 180 calories with 72 (40.0%) from fat, including 6 grams of sat fat. It has 530 milligrams of sodium.

A 32-ounce Lipton Brisk Raspberry Tea has 320 calories. It has 100 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,485 calories with 585 (39.4%) from fat, including 17 grams of sat fat, and 3,210 milligrams of sodium.

### Long John Silver's: Variety Platter

Long John Silver's offers several different variety platters. One option comes with two pieces of battered fish and three Chicken Planks.

Two pieces of battered fish have 520 calories with 288 (55.4%) from fat, including 8 grams of sat fat and 9 grams of trans fat. They have 1,580 milligrams of sodium.

Three chicken planks have 420 calories with 216 (51.4%) from fat, including 6 grams of sat fat and 7.5 grams of trans fat. They have 1,440 milligrams of sodium.

Two hushpuppies have 120 calories with 45 (37.5%) from fat, including 1 gram of sat fat and 2 grams of trans fat. They have 400 milligrams of sodium.

A serving of cole slaw has 200 calories with 135 (67.5%) from fat, including 2.5 grams of sat fat. It has 340 milligrams of sodium.

A platter-portion of fries has 230 calories with 90 (39.1%) from fat, including 2.5 grams of sat fat and 3 grams of trans fat. It has 350 milligrams of sodium.

An 11-ounce Pepsi has 140 calories. It has 35 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,630 calories with 774 (47.5%) from fat, including 20 grams of sat fat and 21.5 grams of trans fat, and 4,145 milligrams of sodium. Arrrrrgh!

### McDonald's: Big Mac

You cannot drive too far without seeing the golden arches of McDonald's. Its signature food is the Big Mac.

A Big Mac has 540 calories with 261 (48.3%) from fat, including 10 grams of sat fat and 1.5 grams of trans fat. It has 1,040 milligrams of sodium.

A small order of fries has 230 calories with 99 (43.0%) from fat, including 1.5 grams of sat fat. It has 160 milligrams of sodium.

A McFlurry with M&Ms has 620 calories with 180 (29.0%) from fat, including 12 grams of sat fat and 1 gram of trans fat. It has 190 milligrams of sodium.

A 1% Low Fat Chocolate Milk Jug has 170 calories with 27 (15.9%) from fat, including 1.5 grams of sat fat. It has

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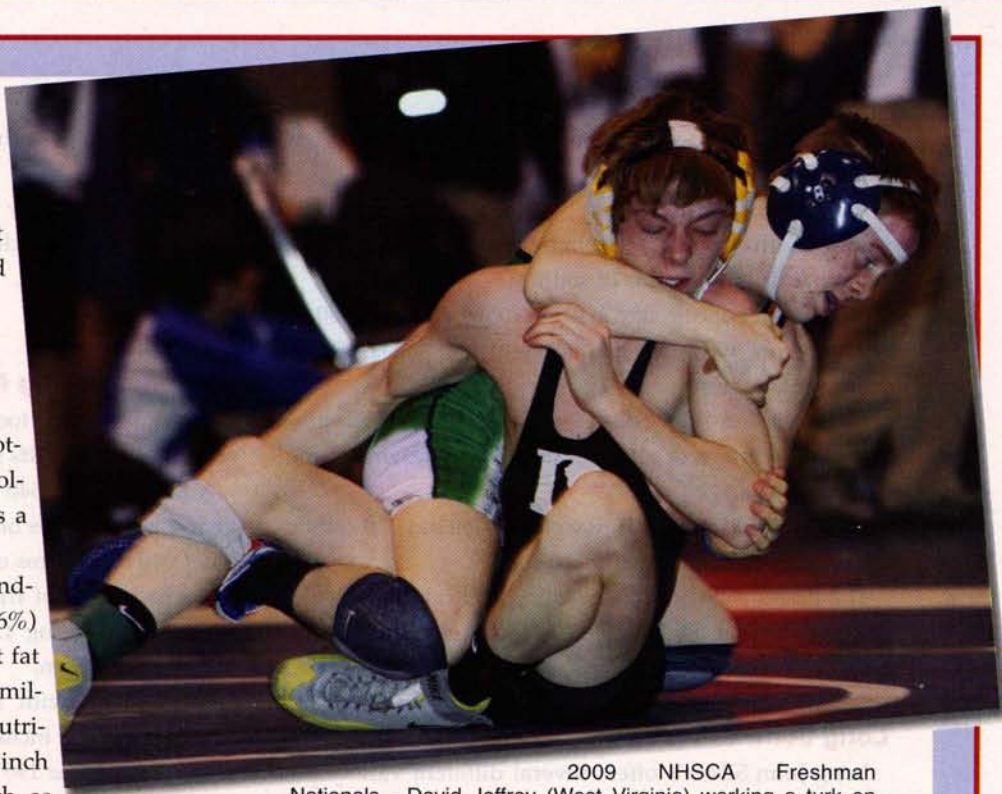
150 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,560 calories with 567 (36.3%) from fat, including 25 grams of sat fat and 2.5 grams of trans fat, and 1,540 milligrams of sodium.

### Subway: Italian BMT Sandwich

Subway ran a promotion for a foot-long sandwich at a cost of five dollars. One of the eight options was a Meatball Marinara sandwich.

A six-inch Meatball Marinara sandwich has 560 calories with 216 (38.6%) from fat, including 11 grams of sat fat and 1 gram of trans fat. It has 1,590 milligrams of sodium. (Note: This nutritional information is for a six-inch sandwich, not a 12-inch sandwich as



2009 NHSCA Freshman Nationals - David Jeffrey (West Virginia) working a Turk on Travis Leiskau (Texas). Jeffrey decisoned Leiskau 11-7. Photo by Valerie Smith.

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per the promotion. It is reasonable to think that the aforementioned numbers would double.)

A bowl of wild rice with chicken soup has 230 calories with 99 (43.0%) from fat, including 3.5 grams of sat fat. It has 900 milligrams of sodium.

A chocolate chip cookie has 210 calories with 90 (42.9%) from fat, including 6 grams of sat fat. It has 150 milligrams of sodium.

A Berry Lishus Fruizle Express has 110 calories. It has 30 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,110 calories with 405 (36.5%) from fat, including 20.5 grams of sat fat and 1 gram of trans fat, and 2,670 milligrams of sodium. Using the estimated numbers for a 12-inch sandwich, the grand total for this meal is 1,670 calories with 621 (37.2%) from fat, including 31.5 grams of sat fat and 2 grams of trans fat, and a staggering 4,260 milligrams of sodium.

### Taco Bell: Fresh Taco Salad

Taco Bell implores you to "think outside the bun." Well, okay. Its fresh taco salad sure sounds healthy and inviting.

A fresh taco salad has 840 calories with 405 (48.2%) from fat, including 11 grams of sat fat and 1.5 grams of trans fat. It has 1,780 milligrams of sodium.

A side order of nachos has 330 calories with 189 (57.3%) from fat, including 3.5 grams of sat fat and 2 grams of trans fat. It has 530 milligrams of sodium.

A caramel apple empanada has 290 calories with 135 (46.6%) from fat, including 2.5 grams of sat fat. It has 270 milligrams of sodium.

A Strawberry Frutista Freeze has 230 calories. It has 55 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,690 calories with 729 (43.1%) from fat, including 17 grams of sat fat and 3.5 grams of trans fat, and 2,365 milligrams of sodium.

### Wendy's: The Baconator

According to the company's website, Wendy's is "unrivaled in [its] passion for giving people what they want – and uncompromising in giving people what they deserve." In 2007, Wendy's unleashed the Baconator, something that people clearly do not deserve. It has six strips of bacon, two quarter-pound beef patties, two slices of American cheese and mayo.

A Baconator has 830 calories with 459 (55.3%) from fat, including 23 grams of sat fat and 2.5 are trans fat. It has 1,880 milligrams of sodium.

A small order of fries has 340 calories with 144 (42.4%) from fat, including 2.5 grams of sat fat. It has 290 milligrams of sodium.

A small strawberry Frosty shake has 390 calories with 99 (25.4%) from fat, including 7 grams of sat fat and 0.5 grams of trans fat. It has 170 milligrams of sodium.

A 12-ounce Sprite has 130 calories. It has 30 milligrams of sodium.

The grand total for this meal is 1,690 calories with 702 (41.5%) from fat, including 32.5 grams of sat fat and 3 grams of trans fat, and 2,370 milligrams of sodium.

### THE LAST REP

To their credit, all of the aforementioned fast-food restaurants have nutritional information listed on their websites. In fact, the nutritional analyses in this article came from those sources.

So that there is no misunderstanding, I am not saying that you should avoid these and other fast-food restaurants. What I am saying is that you should eat at these restaurants infrequently and, if and when you do, you should seek healthier options. Generally speaking, the restaurants have at least some healthy choices on their menus. And many offer tips for healthy eating on their websites. Nevertheless, when it comes to eating at fast-food restaurants, caveat emptor: Let the buyer beware!


*Editor's Note:* Matt Brzycki has authored, co-authored or edited 17 books on strength and fitness including four that are devoted to wrestling. His latest book is *Youth Fitness: An Action Plan for Shaping America's Kids*.

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