RIGHT STUFF

IHOP TO IT

IHOP isn’t exactly synonymous with healthy food. A stack of 5 Original Buttermilk Pancakes without syrup, for example, supplies roughly 750 calories’ worth of white flour and two-thirds of a day’s saturated fat (13 grams). Most pancake combos (2 pancakes, 2 eggs, hash browns, and 2 bacon strips or sausage links) and omelette-plus-pancake meals hit 1,000 to 2,000 calories and deliver one to three days’ worth of sodium and sat fat.

But you can bypass all that...by flipping to the IHOP For Me menu, which features about a dozen “smarter everyday selections under 600 calories.” Thanks to egg substitute and a side of fresh fruit, the “Just Right” Omelettes—Veggie, Turkey Bacon, or Spinach, Mushroom & Tomato—slash the calories (to 350 to 470), the sat fat (to 2½ to 11 grams), and the cholesterol. Sodium (510 to 890 milligrams) isn’t low, but it’s far lower than IHOP’s regular omelettes.

The Whole Wheat French Toast Combo For Me is topped with sliced bananas and sides of scrambled egg substitute and turkey bacon. The sodium is 970 mg, but the calories (470) and sat fat (3½ grams) are reasonable. The Two-Egg Breakfast For Me (eggs, substitute, turkey bacon, whole wheat toast, and fresh fruit) lowers all three numbers, and the Oatmeal For Me drops the sodium to just 170 mg.

If IHOP isn’t IHOP without pancakes, head for the Blueberry Harvest Grain ‘N Nut Combo For Me. It’s only part whole-grain, but it’s full of blueberries and topped with sliced bananas, so you can skip the syrup.

“Come hungry. Leave happy,” says the menu. Now at least you don’t have to leave heavy.

IHOP: (818) 240-6055

FRANKENSTEIN

“For MEAT LOVERS. 2X the size of regular hot dogs,” announces the Hebrew National Quarter Pound Beef Franks label. Nathan’s sells similar-size Dinner Beef Franks, just what we need: bigger hot dogs.

When it comes to franks, Hebrew National has a wholesome reputation. The company says that its dogs are “made with premium cuts of kosher beef” with “no fillers, no by-products, no artificial flavors, and no artificial colors.” Unfortunately, they’re also made with fatty, salty meat.

Each quarter-pound Hebrew National frank delivers 360 calories and 13 grams of saturated fat plus 1½ grams of trans fat. That’s three-quarters of a day’s artery goop in one convenient package. (The trans occurs naturally in the beef, but natural trans appears to raise bad cholesterol as much as man-made trans does.)

And each frank’s sodium (from salt, sodium lactate, sodium diacetate, sodium erythorbate, and sodium nitrite) reaches 1,070 milligrams—about two-thirds of a day’s worth...before you add a bun, relish, or mustard. Oh yeah. People who eat more processed meats (hot dogs, bacon, sausage, ham) have a higher risk of diabetes and colon and prostate cancer, possibly because of sodium nitrite, a preservative that’s added to processed meat.

Franks are fun. People eat them at ballpark amusement parks, and backyard barbecues. But once you consider your risk of heart attack, stroke, cancer, and diabetes, ordinary hot dogs are already too big. Bigger isn’t always better.

Hebrew National: (866) 432-6281
Nathan’s: (800) 238-0020

Hebrew National Quarter Pound Beef Franks

Toss 1 can of white beans and 1 can of no-salt-added tuna with ½ cup of vinaigrette. (To make your own, shake 5 Tbs. extra-virgin olive oil with 2 Tbs. red wine vinegar, 1 tsp. Dijon mustard, ½ tsp. honey, and ¼ tsp. salt.) Serve over 8 cups of salad greens.

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