

BALLPARK FOODS THAT ARE BEST AND WORST FOR YOU

It's Opening Day for many major league baseball teams. And fans will find much more than peanuts and crackerjacks at the concession stands. On The Early Show on Monday, April 6, 2009, Men'sHealth magazine (www.menshealth.com/cda/homepage.do) Senior Editor Matt Bean detailed some of the healthiest -- and unhealthiest fare awaiting fans at the old ballgame:

HEALTHY FOOD ITEM: Seattle Mariners Ichiro

Seattle's fans are in luck, since they have one of the healthiest offerings around.

- Ichiro, essentially a spicy tuna roll is a great choice
 - The seaweed in sushi provides vitamins A and C. A spicy tuna roll can pack as much as 24 g of protein, too.
- 295 calories
2.5 g fat
70 g carbs

UNHEALTHY FOOD ITEM: Philadelphia Phillies Schmitter Sandwich

- When fans head to Citizens Bank Park they need to be careful!
- The Schmitter Sandwich (at McNally's stand) is a caloric bomb.
- This is a Kaiser Roll, Sirloin Steak, Salami, Thousand Island Dressing/secret sauce, fried onions, American cheese and a tomato
- Even the tomato can't save this sandwich!

906 calories

51 g fat (20 g saturated)

1333 mg sodium

Philly didn't just win the World Series- their ball park also tops the list of the "Most Vegetarian-Friendly" sports venue in North America!

- For decades ball park food catered to the carnivores, but this is a new trend we are seeing with specific vegetarian offerings being included, rather than relegating the vegetarians to side dishes.
- Be careful because skipping meat doesn't always equal health!
- However, generally it's better to go with a vegetarian protein, than stick to inhaling empty calories like candy and pretzels the whole game.
- Philly mock-steak sandwich
- vegetarian chicken cheesesteak sandwiches
- crab-less crab cake

No matter where you decide to watch a game this year, you can count on certain foods being available.

The best choices are FAR from obvious, so don't be fooled.

Snack

Pretzel with Cheese Sauce vs. Cracker Jacks

- Most people opt for soft pretzels assuming they are a healthy choice, but once you add the processed sauce that calls itself cheese, you negate any health benefits
- Opt for 1 serving of cracker jacks instead
- Although they are both empty calories, Cracker Jack only has 9 ingredients, we lost track counting the number of ingredients in the cheese sauce

WORST:

- Large soft pretzel with cheese sauce
- 593 calories
12 g fat (5 g saturated)
103 g carb

BEST:

Cracker Jacks (1.5 cups/84g)

360 calories

6 g fat (0 g saturated)

69 g carbs

Source: Cracker Jack website <http://www.crackerjack.com/nutrition.php>

It's quite a climb to undo the damage done by this twisty treat. You would need to climb up 37 flights of stairs to burn off the calories in one large soft pretzel with cheese sauce! Unless you're planning on climbing to the upper deck through the entire game, you should probably pass.

Ball Park Beverages

Beer vs. Soda

While you can't overindulge having a beer at the ball park could actually be good for you!

Beer has been linked to reduce risk of diabetes, high blood pressure and other diseases brought on by excess weight.

- In a 2005 at Boston Medical Center, people who consumed 20 such drinks a month were 66 percent less likely to be diagnosed with an obesity-related condition than those who abstained. Though more than 2 will not provide the same benefits.

- Regular Beer (12 oz)

139 calories

0g fat

12 g carbs

- Regular Cola (16 oz)

155 calories

0g fat

49g carbs

No one would get a coffee and put in 12 packs of sugar, but that's just what you're doing when you're putting the 49 grams of carbohydrates in your body with a regular soda. Not so sweet!

Ball Park Meals

Nachos vs. Hot Dog

This is one of the most surprising matchups at the ball park

Frankly, hot dogs are one of the lowest calorie items on a ballpark menu, and every stadium is guaranteed to have them from the major leagues to a local little league game

Don't even think about the chili or cheese sauce with your dog!

Stick to Ketchup, Mustard and Relish

Nachos are another victim of the mystery cheese

If you must have nachos ask for the cheese sauce on the side and dip sparingly!

Nachos

692 calories

38 g fat (16 g saturated)

1632 mg sodium

Hot Dog with relish, ketchup and mustard

280 calories

15 g fat (5 g saturated)

1,250 mg sodium

In order to burn off the classic nacho and cheese combo one would have to walk 8 miles, which is equal to 80 New York City blocks.