

## Guide for People with Diabetes Who Enjoy Eating in Restaurants

Eating out in restaurants can be enjoyable — especially if you know your meal pattern and plan ahead. Here are some tips to help you:

- Know your meal plan and food lists so you can select foods at a glance.
- Measure foods at home so that you can judge more accurately the size of portions when eating out.
- If you expect the meal to be delayed beyond your scheduled eating time, have a snack before leaving home (your fruit or milk exchange would be a good choice).
- Watch your serving sizes. When a serving is too large, eat only the amount you are allowed and leave the rest.
- When you see foods with special names on the menu, ask about what is in the dish and how it is prepared.
- Ask the server to serve condiments on the side. If possible, eat in the same restaurant regularly so that you may learn to order from their menu items.
- Most carbohydrate group foods have about the same amount of carbohydrates per serving, except for vegetables. You can exchange:

1 starch = 1 fruit = 1 milk = 15 grams of carbohydrate

Because nonstarchy vegetables have only 5 grams of carbohydrate, it takes three vegetables to equal one carbohydrate choice.

- If you take insulin, adjust your meal time.

How many times have you encountered a lengthy delay at a restaurant? Keep a small can of juice in your purse or in the car just in case the restaurant has a rule not to serve customers until all are seated.

If you had planned for a before-dinner drink expecting your meal to be served promptly, and now it will be delayed considerably, ask for some crackers and cheese, or one of the soups, salads or appetizers on the menu. This may mean taking some of your main course home or leaving it on your plate, but better than an insulin reaction.

If you know beforehand that the meal will be delayed and how long it will be delayed, you can plan ahead. If the meal will be delayed, by an hour, have a fruit or starch exchange from the meal you are will be eating away from home at the time you normally eat the meal.

- Use sugarless or low-calorie products and diet sweeteners.
- Be careful at the salad bar.

For a truly delightful meal, select fresh fruits and vegetables. Add a bowl of soup, an assortment of cheeses and crackers, or possibly a meat or seafood appetizer. But be careful. Avoid selections such as banana pudding and heavenly hash, which have considerable amounts of sugar, fat and calories.

Also, ask if the fruit was canned in syrup or in its own juice. Most canned fruit on salad bars has been packaged in heavy to medium syrup instead of water or fruit juice.

Avoid gelatin salads unless they were sweetened without sugar or with diet sweeteners. Also avoid mixed potatoes or pasta salads because they usually have mayonnaise, oils, sour cream or cream cheese.

- ▶ Order an appetizer instead of an entree and finish the meal with a salad of fresh vegetables and fruits, bread and possibly soup.
- ▶ Don't be a nibbler. Eat only what you order. Don't be tempted by the tortilla chips and salsa, crackers and cheese, or bread and butter if you have not planned to eat them. If you know you cannot refuse, ask the waiter or waitress to take them back to the kitchen.

- ▶ Topping it all off: Unless fresh fruit is available, most desserts are inappropriate for diabetic people under most circumstances. The best thing to do is to order a nice hot cup of decaffeinated coffee or tea and sip it slowly.

- ▶ Menu choices: Even though you can eat most of the items served in restaurants, some foods are better choices than others:

Cream sauce: Do not eat all the sauce. Omit one or two fat exchanges.

Salads that already have dressing mixed in them: Omit one or two fat exchanges.

Meat or fish appetizers and cottage cheese: Omit the appropriate number of meat and fat exchanges from the main course.

## **If you blow it**

If you know you have blown your meal plan, there is one thing you can do: exercise! Go dancing, take an after-dinner walk or ride your exercise bike when you get home.

<b>FOODS</b>	<b>DO ORDER</b>	<b>ORDER LESS OFTEN</b>
<b>Appetizers</b>	Vegetable juices, unsweetened fruit juices, clear broth or consomme, fresh vegetables such as celery, radishes, etc., dill pickles; fresh fruit, fruit cocktail (unsweetened)	Cream soups, soups with noodles, rice or barley; sweetened juices, canned fruit cocktail, fish cocktails or meat appetizers unless you plan to eat a smaller portion of meat for your main dish.
<b>Salads</b>	Vegetable salads without dressing or any low-calorie dressing. Ask for dressing to be brought separately; use your allowed fat exchanges for the dressing or ask for a lemon wedge or vinegar; or order a fresh fruit salad for a fruit exchange.	Mixtures with dressing, such as coleslaw, canned fruit or gelatin salads.
<b>Meat, fish and chicken</b>	Roasted, baked, blackened, mesquite-grilled, broiled or boiled. Trim off excess fat. (Remember: bacon is a fat exchange.) Ask that gravy be served on the side or omitted. Peel off any breading.	Fried, grilled, sauteed, stewed, braised, breaded, with gravy or sauces. Eat stews and casseroles at home so you will know the ingredients used.
<b>Eggs</b>	Soft or hard cooked eggs or poached or baked (shirred).	Fried or scrambled or omelets. No more than 3 to 4 weekly.
<b>Sandwiches</b>	Meat, fish, poultry and cheese sandwiches. They may be served with lettuce, onion, dill or sour pickles, and other fresh vegetables, mustard.	Hot gravy sandwiches, club sandwiches, cream cheese fillings, salad (such as ham or tuna) sandwiches or sandwiches grilled in fat or sauces.
<b>Potatoes and substitutes</b>	Mashed — without fat or milk; baked, boiled, steamed with no butter, gravy, or sour cream added. Pasta, rice or noodles without cream sauce or added butter.	Home-fried, browned, creamed, scalloped, au gratin or hash-browned.
<b>Vegetables</b>	Stewed, steamed or boiled. When served with butter, reduce the amount of fat used with the rest of the meal. Cooked without added fat or salt pork.	Creamed, scalloped, au gratin, fried or sauteed.
<b>Breads</b>	Any kind of plain, whole-wheat or enriched bread sliced in the average thickness; hard or soft dinner rolls; plain muffins, English muffins, tortillas, hamburger bun, biscuits, and crackers.	Sweet rolls, fried doughnuts, nut breads, coffee cake or bread that is sweetened or frosted.
<b>Fats</b>	Corn oil margarine, salad dressing, bacon, cream, sour cream, but only in amounts equal to the fat choices on your meal plan.	Butter, gravy, fried foods, foods with cream sauces, such as creamed chicken. Salads with oils or dressing already mixed in them.
<b>Desserts</b>	½ cup plain ice cream (1 starch, 2 fats), ½ cup sherbet (1 starch), fresh fruit or unsweetened canned fruits and unfrosted angel food cake (2 starches).	Meringues, pies, cakes, cookies, custards, puddings, parfaits, sweetened fruits or glazed fruits or whipped toppings.
<b>Fruit</b>	Fresh fruit, fresh fruit salad and unsweetened juice.	Canned fruit or frozen fruit salad with mayonnaise and whipped cream.

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<b>Beverages</b>	Plain coffee, tea, decaffeinated beverages and milk as allowed on your meal plan. Unsweetened fruit juices for a fruit exchange and diet soft drinks.	Chocolate milk, cocoa and milk drinks, such as shakes and malts. Regular soft drinks.

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