



# Eating Out with Diabetes

## THE CHALLENGE

Food prepared away from home can be high in calories, fat, sugar and sodium. Planning ahead can help you follow a healthy meal plan when eating out. Here are some tips to make it easier:

- Know your meal plan well and try to stick to it.
- Call ahead to ask what is on the menu. Some restaurants serve “heart healthy” or “lite” items that will fit your needs. Often restaurant chains provide nutrition information in their restaurants or over the internet.
- For a party, ask your host ahead of time what is being served. Offer to bring a dish if the food seems heavy on fat, sugar or sodium.
- Decide what you will eat before you arrive. If you know what you want, you will be less tempted by unhealthy choices.
- Learn how to switch among carbohydrate foods so you have more choice and better blood sugar control.
- Only drink alcohol with your doctor’s permission. Don’t drink more than one to two drinks a day. Since alcohol can lower the blood sugar too much, drink with someone who knows how to treat low blood sugar reactions. Always wear visible diabetes identification. One drink equals 4 ounces of dry wine, 1<sup>1/2</sup> ounces of hard liquor and 12 ounces of light beer.
- If portions are large, share with a friend or take the extra amount home.
- If only a buffet is offered, look it over before you choose. Select only those foods you really enjoy. Have plenty of empty space around each serving. Always sit down to eat with a utensil away from the food.
- If you overeat, be more active afterward.

## WHAT TO CHOOSE



**Appetizers:** Clear soup or broth, raw vegetables, salad with low calorie dressing, tomato juice or fresh fruit cup.

**Entrees:** Grilled, roasted, boiled or poached skinless poultry, lean meat, fish or seafood. Have sauce or gravy served on the side or left off. If the only choice is fried, peel the breading off.

**Potatoes and substitutes:** Baked or boiled without added fat. Ask for margarine and reduced fat sour cream on the side so you can control the amount added.

**Vegetables:** Steamed, baked or grilled. Avoid cheese sauce or other high fat or high sugar toppings.

**Breads:** Whole wheat or enriched white bread and rolls, small muffins and biscuits, corn tortillas, english muffins, hamburger and hot dog buns, low fat crackers and flat breads.

**Fats:** Soft or liquid margarine, reduced fat salad dressings, liquid vegetable oils

**Desserts:** Fresh fruit, small scoop of ice cream, frozen yogurt or sorbet, small slice of unfrosted cake

**Beverages:** Coffee, unsweetened tea, sugar-free soft drinks, skim milk, water.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK

How can I get nutrition information about the food served in local restaurants?

What can I choose at my favorite restaurants that will fit my meal plan?

PREPARED BY:  
CONNIE CRAWLEY, MS, RD, LD  
EXTENSION NUTRITION  
AND HEALTH SPECIALIST

PUBLICATION NUMBER  
FDNS-E 11-15

Reviewed 2013



The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. Cooperative Extension, the University of Georgia Colleges of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and Family and Consumer Sciences, offers educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, gender or disability.

**An Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action Organization  
Committed to a Diverse Work Force**