

Diabetes: Strategies for Dining out with Confidence

Dining out with diabetes can be confusing and stressful at times. The question can often be, “What can I eat that will not spike my blood sugars?” Let these strategies help you dine out with confidence!

1. Prior to Arriving at the Restaurant

- Look at the menu online to determine a few options in advance
- Eat a small snack before dining out to prevent overeating at the meal

2. When the server seats you:

- Ask the server to not bring chips or bread baskets
- Order water or unsweetened beverages; keep alcohol to a minimum
- Consider sharing a meal if able

3. When it is time to order:

- Ask for no added salt and no extra butter when cooking
- Ask for dressings, sauces, and gravies on the side
- Do not hesitate to ask for a substitution or double portions of vegetables

4. When your Food Arrives:

- Estimate your normal, at-home portion size. Put the rest in a to-go box for later
- Do not rush! Eat slowly and enjoy the meal and environment

Decoding the Menu: Description Words:

Many menu items use description words that can help you decide which choices are best for you. Below are some commonly used menus descriptor words to be on the lookout for.

Words that could mean “fried”

**Crunch, tempura, battered, crispy, breaded, crusted, golden, sizzled

Words that could mean “high sugar”

**Teriyaki, BBQ, glazed, sticky, honey-dipped, sweet and sour

Words that could mean “high fat”

**Loaded, stuffed, creamy, cheese, gooey, smothered, melted, rich, velvety

Words that could mean “lower fat or lower sugar”

**Roasted, baked, braised, broiled, poached, rubbed, seared, grilled, steamed, sauteed, spiced, seasoned, sous-vide

Take Away Message

Remember, eating outside the home should be a fun and enjoyable occasion.

- Be a conscious consumer. Always ask your waiter for clarification on menu items.
- Portion is key!
- Leftovers can be used as another meal, meaning less cooking
- Do not be afraid to ask if they allow substitutions, especially when it comes to sides and sauces.
- Savor each bite, enjoy the meal, the company, and the change in environment