

## eating out with rheumatoid arthritis

Enjoying a meal out while following a specific eating pattern can sometimes be a challenge. Use the following suggestions as a guide to help you confidently navigate any menu and dine out with ease.

**Set yourself up for success by following these simple tips and techniques:**

### BEFORE DINING

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#### Check The Menu Online

- Research the restaurant's menu online before arriving. This can help relieve possible stress associated with dining out.
- Look to see if any menu items can easily be altered to fit within your eating plan.

### AT THE RESTAURANT

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#### Limit Saturated Fat and Trans Fat

- Look for menu item descriptors such as 'baked', 'broiled', or 'steamed'. These words indicate the item was prepared with little or no saturated fat.
- Avoid menu item descriptors such as 'fried', 'extra crispy', 'smothered', or 'creamy'. These words indicate the item was prepared with a high amount of saturated fat.
- Aim to incorporate a lean source of protein such as chicken, fish, or beans.

#### Balance the Plate

- Choose fruit or vegetable side dishes to pair with the entrée.
- Explore the salad bar for opportunities to incorporate more fruits or vegetables into your meal.

#### Hydrate Your Body

- Consider water for your drink of choice. Soft drinks, alcoholic beverages, and sweetened tea all contain high amounts of sugar.

#### Dine For (A Healthier) You

**Don't be afraid to be assertive. Most restaurants are willing to prepare a meal to meet a customer's needs. Ask the server questions about your order.**

- How was the item prepared?
- Can the sauce or dressing be served on the side?
- Can a high FODMAP food item be swapped for a low FODMAP option?
- Is the item gluten-free, or can it be prepared gluten-free?

**Don't be afraid to bring your own RA-friendly utensils—forks, spoons, knives, plates, or cups that best fit our needs. Eating out should be an enjoyable experience.**