

eating out with multiple sclerosis

Depending on the stage of your disease, dining out with MS may seem overwhelming and scary. The good news is, it doesn't have to be!

Dine out with confidence once again by following the simple tips below:

BEFORE DINING

Be Aware of Ambiance

- Many restaurants dim the lights in the evenings. This is nice for creating an intimate atmosphere but can make it challenging to find an easy route through a darkened restaurant.
- Noisy restaurants can be troublesome and cause fatigue. Before going to a new restaurant, get the opinion of others who have been there, read online reviews or call to see if there is a live band playing. Some restaurants are notoriously loud. If you are concerned, stick to restaurants where you know the noise is kept at a comfortable level.

Call Ahead

- Before venturing to a new restaurant, look up the menu online. Call ahead and ask if food items can be made certain ways to avoid swallowing issues and potential choking hazards.
- It may also be important to ask about accommodations for your accessibility needs. Perhaps request a table near the front of the restaurant or near the restrooms.

Come Prepared

- If you know you can eat more easily with specialized utensils, bring them along. Having the right tools can provide comfort and confidence!
- Bringing along snacks may be helpful if you find the menu lacks foods that can be eaten with ease.

AT THE RESTAURANT

Make Special Requests

- Ask the waiter if they can accommodate special orders based on any dietary restrictions you may follow.
- If you order something that requires cutting, ask the waiter to have your meal cut before it's brought to your table.

Upgrade Your Glass

- If you find your water glass is too heavy to hold, or if you're likely to spill, ask your waiter for a straw or to only partially fill your glass. Another option is to ask for your water to be served in a wine glass. They are often much lighter and easier to hold than a traditional water glass.

Order Wisely

- Do you know you feel better if you eat a certain way? Don't let dining out get in the way of you feeling your best. Choose lean meats, plenty of fruits and vegetables and whole grains whenever possible.
- Choose food items that are grilled, baked, broiled, steamed, or stir-fried. Avoid deep fried items or heavy dressings or sauces.
- Make special requests for how items are prepared. Ask for dressings and sauces on the side or for food items to be cooked with olive oil instead of butter.