

dining out with lupus

Dining out is one of life's simple pleasures, however enjoying a meal out while trying to follow a specific eating pattern can be challenging. **The good news is, by following the simple tips below, you can dine out with ease and confidence once again.**

BEFORE DINING

Check The Menu Online

- Research the restaurant's online menu 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.
- To avoid overeating, plan to have a healthy snack before leaving the house.

AT THE RESTAURANT

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 added fat.
- Avoid menu item descriptors such as 'fried', 'extra crispy', 'smothered' or 'creamy'. These words indicate the item was prepared with high amounts of added fat.
- If eating meat, pick skinless poultry, fish or shellfish most often. Limit your intake of red meat.
- Avoid heavy or creamy sauces and dressings.
- Ask for "light" cheese or for cheese to be left off a food item.

Balance the Plate

- Choose fruit or vegetable side dishes to pair with your entrée. Ask for the butter or sauce to be left off or served on the side.
- Explore the salad bar for opportunities to incorporate more fruits or vegetables into your meal. Choose a lower calorie dressing like a vinaigrette and avoid foods like cheese, croutons and bacon bits.
- Substitute a side item. For example, substitute a baked potato instead of French fries.
- Choose whole-grain options when they are available.

Dine for 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 is the item prepared?
 - Can the sauce or dressing be served on the side?
 - Does the dish contain garlic, or can it be prepared without garlic?
 - Can substitutions be made?
 - Can lower-sodium options be prepared?

Hydrate Your Body

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