

# Eating out

## Information for patients and families

### Counting your carbohydrate at a restaurant

Here are some tips to make carbohydrate counting easier when eating out.

- Check to see if the restaurant has a menu with nutritional information (you can also check their website)
- Avoid mixed or one dish type meals. Choose meals that have the foods separated out on the plate instead (such as fish, rice and vegetables)
- Choose foods with a seasoning instead of a sauce. For example, try a rotisserie chicken instead of chicken with a sweet barbeque sauce

### Eating less carbohydrate at a restaurant

If you are trying to eat less carbohydrate, here are some tips.

- Only eat half of your hamburger bun or make your sandwich “open-faced” by having it on one slice of bread
- Choose only one carbohydrate option and ask for extra vegetables
- Skip the fries and have a side salad
- Ask the server not to bring bread to the table
- Either split your pasta dish with someone or pack up half to-go

## **Losing weight**

Eating out from time to time is okay, even if you are trying to lose weight. Here are a few strategies to help you make lower calorie choices when eating out.

### **Plan ahead**

If you know that you are eating out, try to make healthier choices during the week knowing that you will be having a higher calorie meal at the restaurant.

### **Control portions**

Eating smaller portions when eating out is a great way to reduce calories.

- Order an appetizer as your entrée
- Share an entrée with someone else
- Ask for a to-go container and pack up half of your meal right away
- Ask if you can order the smaller, lunch-size portion
- If you order dessert, share

### **Select lower calorie menu options**

- Avoid items that are fried, breaded, wrapped in pastry, have lots of cheese, or are made with cream
- Choose items that are broiled, grilled, steamed, roasted, poached, or baked
- Ask the server if the chef can modify a menu item to make it healthier (for example, steaming the vegetables instead of sautéing them in butter or oil)
- Ask for sauces or dressing on the side, so that you can control the amount
- Choose soups with a clear broth, rather than a cream-based soup
- Avoid filling up on bread (skip the bread or just have one slice)

## Drinks

Drinks are often high in calories and will not fill you up.

- Choose water instead
- Have soda water or sparkling water with a slice of lemon or lime
- Limit alcoholic beverages to 1 or 2
- Add soda water to your wine to make it last longer
- Choose calorie-free drinks such as diet pop
- Avoid sugary drinks such as pop, juice, sweet iced tea or milkshakes

## Activity

Consider doing some physical activity (for example, going for a walk) within 90 minutes before or after your big meal. Although this activity will only burn a few of the calories from your meal, it will have a positive effect on your blood sugar.

St. Michael's cares about your health. For reliable health information, visit our Patient and Family Learning Centre, Room 6-004, 6th floor, Cardinal Carter Wing, or find us online at [www.stmichaelshospital.com/learn](http://www.stmichaelshospital.com/learn)

This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Ask your healthcare provider about this information if you have questions.

72949 Dev. Jan5 2016 V1