

Eating Out on a Low Potassium, Low Phosphorus Diet



Getting started

If you are limiting the amount of potassium and phosphorus you eat, you can still learn to have a relaxing, enjoyable meal. Some ways to do this include:

- Pick restaurants that serve a variety of foods, so you have more choices.
- Ask questions about how your food or drinks are made.
- Ask for your foods to be made with lower or no salt seasonings, and sauce or gravy on the side.
- Choose broiled or grilled foods instead of foods that are breaded or fried.
- Skip the appetizers unless that will be your main meal.



Choosing your drink

Think carefully about the drinks you choose for meals. Drinks can have extra calories, and add to your fluid levels for the day. Follow your doctor's instructions for the amount of fluid you may have. Try to drink more water as your foods have more potassium and phosphorus.

Drinks to choose:

- Water
- Non-cola soft drinks such as Sprite, root beer, ginger ale, or low-sodium club soda
- Lemonade or iced tea
- Coffee
- Apple juice

Check with your doctor if you can drink alcohol.

Drinks NOT to choose:

- Cola soft drinks
- High potassium fruit juice, such as prune, orange, grapefruit, or tomato juices
- Drinks made with cola or fruit juice
- Milk or drinks made with milk
- Creamy drinks

Breakfast

Start off your day right with breakfast foods that fit your diet.

Breakfast foods to choose:

- Toast, biscuits, bagels, English muffins, Danish, pastries, or croissants
- Eggs
- Omelets with low potassium vegetables
- Pancakes, waffles, or French toast
- Hot or cold cereals
- Low potassium fruit or juice
- Use margarine, honey, or jelly spreads
- Use non-dairy creamer with coffee or tea

Salad

Salads and salad bars can be a great way to get enough fruits and vegetables in your diet. Choose foods that fit your specific diet.

Salad foods to choose:

- Vegetables: lettuce, radishes, cauliflower, celery, onions, cucumbers, green peas, beets, or alfalfa sprouts
- Salad toppings: Chinese noodles
- Pre-mixed salads: coleslaw, macaroni salad, or cottage cheese
- Fruits: canned fruit, such as peaches, pears, or fruit cocktail, or fresh fruits, such as grapes, pineapples, or peaches
- Low sodium salad dressings: oil and vinegar mixes, or lemon juice

**Breakfast foods NOT to choose:**

- High sodium and cured meats, such as ham, sausage, bacon, Canadian bacon, lox, or smoked fish
- Cheese, hash browns, gravy, high potassium fruits, and juices, such as oranges, tomatoes, or prunes, and whole grain products

Salad food NOT to choose:

- Tomato
- Raw or cooked spinach
- Mushrooms
- Olives
- Pickles/relish
- Bacon bits
- Mushrooms
- Kidney, pinto, black beans, or chickpeas
- Potato salad
- Seeds or nuts
- Croutons
- Dried fruit
- Fruit: Kiwi, melon, oranges, or bananas

Main meals

Your main meal also has many possible food choices. Make sure that lower salt or no salt seasonings are used and sauces are kept on the side. Some can add too much salt or potassium.

Appetizers as a main meal to choose:

- Canned fruit cup with low potassium fruits
- Clams, shrimp, or crab meat
- Lower potassium vegetables, such as green beans, cooked carrots, corn, eggplant, kale, peppers, or radish

Main meal foods to choose:

- Beef: steak, prime rib (with fat removed), or burgers
- Fish
- Chicken
- Pork chops (grilled or broiled)
- Sandwiches with grilled meat
- Vegetable omelets (see Breakfast Foods)

Side dishes

Side dishes that come with your meal are often high potassium vegetables or fried items. Talk to your server about replacing choices.

Side dish foods to choose:

- Rice or noodles, which are lower in potassium
- Vegetables:
 - Green beans
 - Corn
 - Asparagus
 - Eggplant
 - Peas
 - Cooked carrots
 - Cauliflower

Appetizers as a main meal NOT to choose:

- Soups
- Potato skins
- Chips
- Crackers
- Squash
- Baked beans
- Beets
- Brussels sprouts
- Tomato products
- Raw carrots

Main meal foods NOT to choose:

- Casserole-like items
- Battered and fried foods
- Breaded items
- Cured or salted meats
- Foods made with cheese
- Foods covered in sauces or gravies

Side dish foods NOT to choose:

- Spinach
- Tomatoes
- Potatoes
- Baked beans
- Winter squash
- Mushrooms
- Sauerkraut
- Any vegetables with sauce or gravy

Desserts

Allow yourself a treat! If you have diabetes, consider your diet needs for foods that are lower in sugar or sugar-free.

Dessert foods to choose:

- Sherbet or sorbet
- Plain cakes or cookies
- Fruit and fruit pies with low potassium fruits, such as peach, apple, pineapple, or strawberry
- Jell-O or gelatin

Dessert foods NOT to choose:

- Ice cream/items with ice cream
- Cheesecake
- Pudding or custard
- Items with chocolate
- Fruit and fruit pies with high potassium fruits (orange, rhubarb, or grapefruit)
- Cream, pumpkin, or pecan pie



This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

For more health information, go to wexnermedical.osu.edu/patiented or contact the Library for Health Information at 614-293-3707 or health-info@osu.edu.