

Selecting Healthier Foods from Different Cuisines When You Have Diabetes

Good diabetes management means making healthier food choices. But just because you are making healthier food choices does not mean you have to always go to the same restaurants and get bored.

Just take some time to think about the choices you can make when you order. Here are a few examples.

“For restaurant dining, one of the things that can be helpful is to fill up on a first course that’s going to be a good choice and might be a shrimp cocktail or salad or something like that.”

When you choose an Italian restaurant, look for menu items that use a tomato sauce instead of a cream sauce.

To get healthy carbohydrates in your choices, ask for selections made with whole wheat pasta. And fill up on salad before your entrée so you can take half home for lunch tomorrow.

“For the entrée, especially if it’s a pasta restaurant or something where you’re getting a lot more of the starchy kind of stuff, to have thought ahead of time about perhaps asking them to only bring half and to take the other half home.”

If you prefer a Mexican restaurant there are also choices for you.

Choose black beans prepared in water instead of refried beans. Ask for a baked tortilla instead of having it fried.

Ask for cheese and sour cream toppings on the side. Guacamole may be added to your meal but only in limited portions.

Remember it is high in fat and although it’s a good fat, it’s high in calories. And you may be able to choose brown rice instead of white.

What about Chinese take-out? Order a broth-based soup to start. Ask for your vegetables steamed. And many Chinese food restaurants have great selections that include tofu and nuts; both healthier choices.

Choose steamed rice instead of the fried rice specials, but still watch your portion size.

Chinese food, like other restaurant choices, may be particularly high in sodium, or salt, so if you are watching your blood pressure pay attention to this when making your decisions.

If pizza is your choice, watch your toppings. Loading on vegetables instead of fatty meat toppings, like pepperoni or sausage, will lower fat while increasing nutrients. Try ordering half the cheese, vegan cheese, or maybe even no cheese.

Today some pizzerias offer whole wheat crust so ask what healthy options are available. Limit yourself to 1 or 2 slices. And skip the sides – unless it’s a salad.

Whether you choose to dine in or take out, ordering from restaurants of different cuisines does not mean you have to take a break from your healthy lifestyle.

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Just take a moment to think about the choices you can make for good diabetes management. And then choose healthy.