

eating out with rheumatoid arthritis

Enjoying a meal out while following a specific eating pattern can sometimes be a challenge. Use the following suggestions as a guide to help you confidently navigate any menu and dine out with ease.

Set yourself up for success by following these simple tips and techniques:

BEFORE DINING

Check The Menu Online

- Research the restaurant's menu online 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.

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 saturated fat.
- Avoid menu item descriptors such as 'fried', 'extra crispy', 'smothered', or 'creamy'. These words indicate the item was prepared with a high amount of saturated fat.
- Aim to incorporate a lean source of protein such as chicken, fish, or beans.

Balance the Plate

- Choose fruit or vegetable side dishes to pair with the entrée.
- Explore the salad bar for opportunities to incorporate more fruits or vegetables into your meal.

Hydrate Your Body

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

Dine For (A Healthier) 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 was the item prepared?
- Can the sauce or dressing be served on the side?
- Can a high FODMAP food item be swapped for a low FODMAP option?
- Is the item gluten-free, or can it be prepared gluten-free?

Don't be afraid to bring your own RA-friendly utensils—forks, spoons, knives, plates, or cups that best fit your needs. Eating out should be an enjoyable experience.