Eating Out on a Low Potassium, Low Phosphorus Diet

Your doctor may have told you to restrict the amount of potassium and phosphorus you eat. Even when following a special diet like this, you can still learn to have a relaxing, enjoyable meal. Use this handout to help you find foods and drinks that you can have while staying on your diet.

- Start by finding a restaurant that serves a variety of foods so that you have many dining choices.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions or make requests for how your food or beverages are made.
- Request 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 breaded or fried.
- Avoid appetizers unless you plan on having one for your main meal.

Beverages

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.

- As the foods you eat may have higher amounts of potassium and phosphorus, try to drink water. Other drinks to try are:
  - Non-cola soft drinks such as Sprite, ginger ale, or low-sodium club soda
  - Lemonade or iced tea
  - Coffee
  - Apple juice

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• Check with your doctor if you are allowed to drink alcohol.

• **Avoid these beverages:** cola soft drinks, high potassium fruit juice such as prune, orange, grapefruit or tomato juices, drinks with cola or fruit juice, milk and any creamy drinks.

**Breakfast**

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

- **Choose these breakfast foods:**
  - 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

- **Avoid these breakfast foods:** high sodium and cured meats, such as ham, sausage, bacon, Canadian bacon, lox or smoked fish. Also avoid cheese, hash browns, gravy, high potassium fruits and juices such as oranges, tomatoes or prunes, and whole grain products.

**Salad**

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

- **Choose these salad foods:**
  - 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
Avoid these foods: tomato, raw spinach, mushrooms, olives, pickles/relish, bacon bits, mushrooms, kidney/pinto/black beans, chickpeas, potato salad, seeds/nuts, croutons, dried fruit, kiwi, melon, oranges and bananas.

Side Dishes
Avoid high potassium vegetables or fried side dishes that come with your meals. Talk to your waiter or waitress about substitutions.

Choose these side dish foods:
- Rice or noodles, which are lower in potassium
- Vegetables: green beans, corn, asparagus, eggplant, peas, cooked carrots or cauliflower

Avoid these foods: spinach, tomatoes, potatoes, baked beans, winter squash, mushrooms, sauerkraut and any vegetables with sauce/gravy.

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.

Choose these appetizers for a main meal:
- Canned fruit cup with low potassium fruits
- Clams, shrimp or crabmeat
- Lower potassium vegetables, such as green beans, cooked carrots, corn, eggplant, kale, peppers or radish

Choose these main meal foods:
- 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)
Avoid these foods:

- **Appetizers** that can add too much salt or potassium: soups, potato skins, chips, crackers, squash, baked beans, beets, Brussels sprouts, tomato products and raw carrots
- **Mail meals** such as casserole-like items, battered and fried foods, breaded items, cured or salted meats, foods made with cheese, and foods covered sauces or gravies

**Desserts**

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

- **Choose these dessert foods:**
  - 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

- **Avoid these foods:** ice cream/items with ice cream, cheesecake, pudding, custard, items with chocolate, fruit and fruit pies with high potassium fruits (orange, rhubarb, and grapefruit) and cream/pumpkin/pecan pies.

Talk to your doctor or others on your health care team if you have questions. You may request more written information from the Library for Health Information at (614) 293-3707 or email: health-info@osu.edu.