



Guide to PKU

Dining Out



Can I dine out with PKU?

Yes, you can. Following a diet low in whole protein does not mean you have to skip dining out. Eating out can give you new food and seasoning ideas to keep your PKU diet fresh and exciting.

How should I choose where to eat?

Start by checking the type of food the restaurant serves. Often you can view the menu online and call ahead with questions. Get to know the staff when you find a local place that you enjoy and go to often. Once you are comfortable, tell them about your dietary needs. They may allow you to bring low protein foods from home for the chef to make special for you.

How can I explain PKU to a server?

Dining out does not need to be a science lesson for your server, but you should explain that you need to avoid protein. Sometimes it may be easiest to tell your server that you have something similar to a food allergy and cannot have protein. Be ready for questions as your server tries to get a better understanding of your needs.

Tip: Create a card that lists the foods you must avoid, especially high protein foods, including all meat, poultry, fish, cheese, eggs, beans, soy protein (tofu), seeds and nuts. Simply give the card to your server to share with the kitchen staff.

Plan ahead for your meal

When dining out, plan ahead and leave enough phenylalanine (PHE), protein or exchanges for your meal. If dinner is going to be your meal out, write down and track what you ate for breakfast and lunch. Now you will know exactly how much whole protein or PHE you can have.

TIP: Drink formula with or before the meal to help you feel full and prevent overeating.



Eating at a friend's house?

Remind your friend about your special diet and find out what food is being served ahead of time. Ask for any high protein foods or toppings on vegetables to be served on the side. You can also bring a low protein dish for everyone to share.

Ask questions!

Most restaurants will be happy to make a special dish or change ingredients. If you are not sure about a specific ingredient, do not be afraid to ask. If your server does not know, simply ask them to check with the kitchen staff. You always want to be sure to know what is in your food.

Ingredients with hidden protein and phenylalanine (PHE):

INGREDIENT	MAY CONTAIN
Miso Paste	Soybeans
Tahini Sauce	Sesame Seeds
Caesar Salad Dressing	Anchovies
Soup Broth & Gravies	Poultry and Meat
Soy Sauce	Soybeans
Aspartame	Phenylalanine

Think Outside The “Menu”

Be Creative When Dining Out

You are only limited by your imagination. Restaurants have a variety of sides and entrées that can be customized to meet your needs.

American Fare

Visiting your local diner or other typical American-style restaurant offers a large menu variety.

Menu selection tips:

- Baked potato topped with vegetables
- Steamed vegetables or veggie stir-fry
- Garden salad topped with grilled vegetables
- Vegetarian vegetable soup



Chinese Food

Take out or dine in, Chinese food offers a big selection of fresh vegetables. You can request sauce on the side and create your own dish.

Menu selection tips:

- Stir-fried green beans with garlic sauce
- Steamed mixed vegetables over low protein rice
- Vegetable eggroll (with or without wrapper depending on protein allowance)
- Chinese soup with vegetable broth

Mexican Food

Mexican dining can be an exciting way to eat. Rich flavors and seasonings will add spark to vegetarian dishes.

Menu selection tips:

- Vegetable fajitas (bring your own low protein tortilla)
- Salad topped with salsa
- Sautéed peppers and onions over greens
- Fresh vegetables with Mexican dipping sauces

Italian Food

Italian food is often made to order and can be cooked with vegetables. Request sauce on the side. Bring your own low protein pasta and ask the chef to make you a special dish with your favorite vegetables.

Menu selection tips:

- Low protein pasta with broccoli, garlic and oil
- Grilled vegetable antipasto salad
- Vegetable du jour sautéed with garlic and onions
- Sliced tomato and basil with a balsamic drizzle



Japanese Cuisine

Japanese food includes a big selection of fruits and vegetables. Food is usually made fresh to order.

Menu selection tips:

Vegetable-based sushi rolls

- Sizzling vegetable platter
- Cucumber salad
- Greens topped with mango (or other fruit available)



Buffets

Buffets can be a great place to explore new foods. Buffets often have a variety of healthy low protein foods to choose from such as salad, vegetable soup, fresh fruit and a selection of vegetables. Remember to control your portion size; it is easy to overeat at a buffet.

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All featured products are medical foods for the dietary management of proven Phenylketonuria (PKU) and must be used under medical supervision.