



A Tour of the Family Reunion Buffet Table Tips for People with Diabetes

The holidays represent a special time for gathering with family and friends. If you have diabetes, this two-month period can pose special challenges, because of the foods we eat to celebrate the holiday season. How can you stay healthy and still enjoy those traditional meals? You can do it—by planning ahead, choosing wisely and watching how much you eat. So, grab your plate and head for the buffet table.

Choose traditional food dishes that are high in fiber, vitamins and minerals, and low in fat. Great choices are beans, peas, tofu, bean sprouts and dark green vegetables such as Chinese broccoli, choy sum, watercress, Chinese chives, Chinese yard-long beans and amaranth also known as Chinese spinach. Other Chinese vegetables that are rich in iron are Chinese mushroom, seaweed and black fungus. Go for the mung beans (green gram beans), yellow bean and black bean dishes for soup or desserts with artificial sweetener. Sweet potatoes are also high in fiber and very nutritious which can be boiled or made into dessert with taro and tapioca using artificial sweetener. Whole wheat and rye bread and cornbread are good sources of fiber and are good for everyone.

Watch out for dishes loaded with lard such as moon cakes. Also watch out foods that are loaded with fat and cholesterol such as Chinese sausages that are made with pork loin or pork or duck liver and roasted pigs or pork or ducks. Lastly, watch out for foods that are high in salt such as salty duck eggs and salty fish. For some people who like dim sum, choose steamed dumplings instead of fried dumplings and should limit to 5-6 servings for brunch. Choose fresh vegetables that are steamed or stir-fried with light vegetable oil or simmer into soup.

Vegetables and grains should fill up most of your plate, but leave room for some lean meat, poultry or fish. Be sure to choose stir-fried chicken with dark green vegetables—and remove the skin—instead of the fried variety. For something different, try steamed fish with garlic and scallion in light vegetable oil and salt.

What's for dessert? It's hard to beat a fresh fruit salad, papaya, pears, apples, oranges, Chinese plums, mango, logan and litchi. Fruit is an excellent source of fiber, vitamins and minerals, and has zero fat. Everyone, including people with diabetes, should eat three to four servings of fruit a day. Moon cakes are high in fat and cholesterol and durian fruit is high in saturated fat. If you can't resist, have a small serving.

It's best to drink water, unsweetened tea or Chinese tea or diet soda. Add a wedge of lemon for flavor. Popular drinks such as tea with tapioca, or fruit with tapioca, or red bean with tapioca should be avoided unless made with artificial sweetener. If you choose to drink alcoholic beverages, limit your intake to no more than one drink a day for women, two for men, and drink only with a meal.

Eating the right foods to control your blood sugar means being prepared and planning ahead. If you need help putting together a meal plan, ask your doctor or nurse to refer you to a dietitian or diabetes educator. For more information about controlling your diabetes,

call the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations (AAPCHO) at 510-272-9536 or the National Diabetes Education Program at 1-800-438-5383 or visit the program's web site at <http://ndep.nih.gov> for information on planning a diabetes-healthy family reunion.

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