

## Preventing Type 2 Diabetes When You're On-the-Go

by the [National Diabetes Education Program](#)



Summer vacation is the time for fun, relaxation, and a break from everyday life. But being on vacation doesn't mean you can forget your healthy eating habits and physical activity routine. If you're at risk for type 2 diabetes, plan how to fit physical activity and healthy eating into your travel plans. With a little effort, you can stay healthy while you're on the road. The key is small steps that lead to big rewards – you don't have to knock yourself out to prevent diabetes.

When you're not preparing your own food, it can be challenging to eat healthy and not be tempted by convenient fast food restaurants, family-style buffets, or large-portioned meals. For starters, take time to look over the menu and make a few healthy choices. Ask about portion sizes and check if the menu shows the calorie content of a meal. Don't be afraid to have your menu selections prepared with less salt and no added fat. A few more tips to make healthy choices include:

- Order first so others do not influence your choices.
- Order a small or half-portion meal or have an appetizer as a main meal.
- Order a salad to start and share a main dish.
- Choose steamed, grilled, or broiled foods instead of those that are fried or sautéed.
- Order salad dressing, gravy, sauces, or spreads "on the side" and eat a small amount.
- It's okay to share a dessert once in awhile. Pick healthy desserts like fruit or frozen yogurt.
- Drink water or skim or low-fat milk instead of sweetened juices or soda.
- If you drink alcohol, choose wine or light beer. Avoid mixed drinks.

When traveling, pack a small cooler of foods that are hard to find on the road, such as fresh fruit, sliced raw vegetables, and fat-free or low-fat yogurt. Also, pack a few bottles of water instead of sweetened soda or juice. Instead of stopping at rest stops, going to a fast-food drive-through, or eating at the airport, bring dried fruit, nuts, and seeds to snack on. Since these foods can be high in calories, measure out small portions (¼ cup) in advance.

There are also lots of things you can do to be active during vacation. You can choose a biking, camping, hiking, or canoeing trip to raise your activity level. If you're off to the beach, you can go for a swim, take a long walk, or play a beach game. When driving for long periods, include time for a walk every few hours. If you're staying in a hotel, check out the gym, walk a few extra blocks instead of taking a taxi, swim in the hotel pool, rent bikes for the day, hike a nature trail, or spend the evening dancing. Include at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

Being active and making healthy food choices while on vacation will help you stay on track to prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. To learn more about diabetes prevention and to order a free copy of *Your GAME PLAN to Prevent Type 2 Diabetes*, contact the National Diabetes Education Program at <http://www.ndep.nih.gov> or call 1-800-438-5383.

*The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' National Diabetes Education Program is jointly sponsored by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with the support of more than 200 partner organizations.*