What is the Healthy Dining Program?

The St. David’s HealthCare (SDH) Healthy Dining Program was designed to create awareness among persons in Austin and the surrounding areas about the importance of healthy eating. Many restaurants feature healthy dining options on their menus, making it easier than ever for people to make sound choices even when dining out.

Risk factors that contribute to overall health include abnormal blood cholesterol; high glucose (blood sugar); high blood pressure and obesity. Healthy eating habits can significantly reduce these risk factors.

SDH is dedicated to increasing the awareness of healthy eating and the importance of prevention in our community by partnering with local restaurants to promote their healthy menu items.

What are the healthy menu item guidelines?

- No “fake” foods (i.e. flavors, sweeteners, preservatives)
- Any grains used should be whole grain with a serving size of no more than one-half cup (cooked quantity should equal 3 to 4 ounces)
- If the item is an entrée, at least half should be comprised of vegetables (corn and potatoes do not qualify as the vegetable half of the dish)
- No trans-fat or hydrogenated oils or deep fried foods (nuts, seeds and avocado fats are recommended as a substitute)
- Incorporate lean-, low- or reduced-fat protein sources, such as plant-based proteins, nuts, meat and dairy, with a serving size equaling the approximate size of a deck of cards
- No refined sugar or sweeteners — non-concentrated juices are recommended as a substitute. Exceptions are made for one teaspoon of honey or molasses per serving.
- No more than 600 milligrams or a 1/4 teaspoon of sodium in an entrée
- The plate should be colorful, which is achieved by a variety of fruits and vegetables

Once the item passes the guidelines, a St. David’s HealthCare dietitian will contact you to schedule a visit to your restaurant for a sampling and Q & A. If the item fits within our necessary guidelines and passes the visual and taste test, it is deemed “a healthy menu item” by St. David’s HealthCare. This designation will be followed up on regularly to make sure that the recipe or preparation has not changed. (If the item’s ingredients, serving size or preparation changes without notice it may be removed from our list until further evaluation.) The restaurant staff will then work with St. David’s web and marketing team to let the community know that the restaurant is part of the program.

Options for participation:

1. Designation of this item on the menu with a symbol “ST” with a plate graphic. The icon will appear at the bottom of the menu as “Designated Healthy Dining Option by St. David’s HealthCare Dietitians.” This could be a sticker or may be printed on the menu.
2. Placement of a graphic on the restaurant website indicating it is a partner with the SDH Healthy Dining Program. There would be a link to SDH with program information and a list of partnering restaurants.
3. Table tents on the restaurant’s tables with a list of approved menu items or the designation.
4. Poster or signage about the program may be displayed in the restaurant.
5. If a restaurant does not want to adjust its menu, it could display a sign stating that SDH Designated Healthy Dining Options are available and that the server can provide more information.
6. St. David’s HealthCare dietitians may also blog or post reviews of your healthy item on our website. Additionally, they will distribute a list of partnered restaurants to patients in search of healthy dining options.

How does a restaurant become a St. David’s HealthCare Healthy Dining Partner?

- There is no cost.
- Your restaurant will submit a recipe of a current or new menu item for review.
- A St. David’s HealthCare registered dietitian will analyze the recipe using nutritional guidelines that were developed by the Mayor’s Health and Fitness Council along with St. David’s HealthCare dietitians.
St. David’s HealthCare
Healthy Dining Program

Why partner with SDH?
With more than 60 sites across Central Texas, St. David’s HealthCare includes seven of the area’s leading hospitals and is one of the largest health systems in Texas. Known for compassionate, high-quality care, the organization has been recognized with the Texas Award for Performance Excellence, the highest honor bestowed by the State of Texas based upon world-class quality measures. In January 2012, St. David’s HealthCare was recognized as one of the top 15 health systems in the U.S. by Thomson Reuters. Perennially ranked as the top Austin-area employer among large companies by the Austin Business Journal’s annual “Best Places to Work” survey, St. David’s HealthCare is the third-largest private employer in the Austin area, with approximately 7,500 employees.

A few more notable mentions…
- Since 2001, Heart Hospital of Austin (a campus of St. David’s Medical Center) has provided life-saving heart screenings for Central Texas youth and has screened the hearts of 5,086 high school students.
- St. David’s HealthCare is an official healthcare provider of The University of Texas at Austin Athletics.
- St. David’s Medical Center, St. David’s North Austin Medical Center and St. David’s Round Rock Medical Center were named to the nation’s 100 Top Hospitals® 2012 by Thomson Reuters, a leading provider of information and solutions to improve the cost and quality of healthcare. This award recognizes hospitals that have achieved excellence in clinical outcomes, patient safety, patient satisfaction, financial performance and operational efficiency, among others. This is the third consecutive year that St. David’s Medical Center has earned this recognition.

How will partnering with SDH benefit a restaurant?
- Becoming a part of the program promotes the restaurant as an establishment that offers healthy menu items. SDH will promote the restaurant on its website, via social media and to its patients, physicians and visitors.
- Increased exposure via the dietitian’s list that will be provided to patients.
- Increase in customers.
- Partnership with a reputable healthcare organization.
- Increased consumer knowledge that the restaurant values healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle.

I want to become a restaurant partner today. What should I do next?... Contact Tes Sawyer, Director of Marketing at St. David’s Medical Center, for an initial consultation: (512) 544-4264, tes.sawyer@stdavids.com

StDavids.com/Healthy

Special thanks to the Mayor’s Health and Fitness Council for their contribution to the nutritional guideline development.