

Best Restaurant Types for FCS Patients

Mediterranean / Middle Eastern (select items)

Often offers grilled proteins, legumes, vegetables, and rice that can be modified.

- Cava (very customizable bowls)
- Roti Mediterranean
- Local Mediterranean grills (ask for no oil, no sauces)
- Lebanese or Turkish restaurants (plain grilled chicken, lentil soup, rice)

Order tips:

Plain grilled chicken or fish, rice, lentils, vegetables; skip hummus, tahini, olive oil, pita.

Asian (especially Japanese, Vietnamese, Thai)

Japanese

- Sushi restaurants (very selective)
- Teriyaki restaurants (request no sauce)

Good options:

- Plain rice
- Sashimi (only if approved by care team)
- Steamed vegetables
- Miso soup (check fat content)

Avoid: tempura, mayo, eel sauce, fried items, peanut based sauces

Vietnamese

- Pho restaurants
- Vermicelli bowls without oil or peanuts

Good options:

- Pho with extra broth, lean protein
- Rice noodles, herbs, vegetables

Thai / Chinese (limited but possible)

- Steamed rice
- Steamed vegetables
- Broth-based soups
- Stir-fries cooked without oil (must be clearly requested)

Practical Notes for FCS Patients

- Always ask how food is cooked (oil, butter, shared grills).
- Request no oil, no butter, no sauce explicitly.
- Call ahead if possible.
- Chains with nutrition info are often safer.
- Avoid alcohol

Mexican (highly modified)

Surprisingly workable when stripped down.

- Chipotle (one of the best chain options)
- QDOBA (with modifications)
- Local taquerias willing to customize

Best orders:

- Rice
- Beans
- Fajita vegetables (no oil)
- Lettuce, salsa

Avoid: cheese, sour cream, guacamole, tortillas fried in oil.

American / Casual Dining (very selective)

Chains that allow plain, unseasoned prep:

- Panera Bread
- Sweetgreen
- Chopt
- CoreLife Eatery

Good options:

- Grain bowls with no dressing
- Plain grilled chicken or tofu
- Lentil or vegetable soups (verify fat)

Breakfast / Café-Style Spots

Often easier for low-fat eating.

- Diners
- Café chains

Good options:

- Oatmeal made with water
- Egg whites only
- Fruit
- Dry toast (if allowed)

Avoid: butter, oils, whole eggs, pastries.

Restaurants Usually NOT FCS-Friendly

(Unless extremely accommodating)

- Italian (heavy oils, cheese)
- BBQ
- Steakhouse
- Fried chicken
- Pizza
- Fast food burger chains

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FCS “Safe Orders” Cheat Sheet

Chipotle

Order:

- White or brown rice
- Black or pinto beans
- Fajita vegetables (ask: no oil)
- Tomato salsa, tomatillo salsa, lettuce

Avoid: cheese, sour cream, guacamole, queso, tortillas, chips

Say this: “Can you cook the vegetables without oil and keep everything plain—no fats or sauces?”

Sweetgreen

Order:

- Build-your-own bowl
- Base: rice, quinoa, greens
- Add: raw vegetables
- Protein (if used): plain chicken or tofu

Dressing: NONE (lemon wedges if available)

Avoid: all dressings, nuts, cheese, avocado, pesto

Panera Bread

Order:

- Plain oatmeal (made with water)
- Ten Vegetable Soup
- Low-fat or fat-free soups (verify)
- Fruit cups

Avoid: pastries, mac & cheese, creamy soups, baguette butter

Vietnamese (Pho Restaurants)

Order:

Often easier for low-fat eating.

- Pho with rice noodles
- Extra broth, herbs, vegetables
- Lean protein if approved

Avoid: fried toppings, hoisin in excess, peanut sauces

Say this: “Just broth, noodles, herbs, and vegetables—no added oil.”

Japanese / Sushi

Order:

- Plain rice
- Vegetable rolls (no mayo, no avocado)
- Miso soup
- Sashimi (only if approved by care team)

Avoid: tempura, spicy mayo, eel sauce, fried rolls

QDOBA

Order:

- Rice
- Beans
- Fajita vegetables (no oil)
- Pico de gallo, lettuce

Avoid: cheese, queso, guacamole, tortillas

Diners / Breakfast Spots

Order:

- Egg whites only (no butter)
- Oatmeal with fruit (water, not milk)
- Plain toast (dry)

Avoid: whole eggs, pancakes, bacon, butter, oils

Chopt

Order:

- Build-your-own salad
- Greens, grains, raw vegetables
- No dressing

Avoid: cheese, nuts, crispy toppings, dressings

Asian (Chinese / Thai – with caution)

Order:

- Steamed white rice
- Steamed vegetables
- Broth-based soups

Avoid: stir-fries unless oil-free, curries, coconut milk, fried items, peanut based sauces

Say this: “Can this be steamed with no oil or sauce at all?”

(Always confirm no oil, no butter, no sauce. Fat content varies by location.)