



# Celebrating FOOD Diversity

## Adapting Low Carb Meals to Meet Your Preferences

It can be easier to make changes to your eating patterns and stick to them if they fit with your lifestyle, preferences, and family and cultural traditions.

Here are some ideas for low carb adaptations influenced by diverse global cuisines and regions. This resource only scratches the surface of cultural cuisines, and focuses on common ingredients found across the world. We hope that this will help spark ideas for adapting your favorite meals.



[michmed.org/Yk2rQ](https://michmed.org/Yk2rQ)



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## About MCT2D

Michigan Collaborative for Type 2 Diabetes (MCT2D) is a collaborative of healthcare providers whose goal is to improve the quality of care that patients with type 2 diabetes receive across the state. MCT2D is supported by Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) and work is coordinated by a team at the University of Michigan. MCT2D has three main initiatives:



Promoting guideline directed medication prescribing



Expanding use of continuous glucose monitoring devices



Supporting lower carbohydrate diets

## What is a low carb lifestyle?

Low Carbohydrate (Low Carb) Lifestyle or Meal Plan: A low carbohydrate lifestyle or meal plan limits your intake of carbohydrates (carbs) from foods like grains, starchy vegetables, fruit, sugary snacks, and beverages, and emphasizes proteins, non-starchy vegetables, and healthy fats. This generally means eating **less than 130g of carbohydrates per day**.



**Carbohydrates (carbs)** are food consisting of or containing a lot of sugars, starch, cellulose, or similar substances. **In this booklet, where carbs are mentioned it means total carbohydrates.**

**Pan-fry** is form of frying food characterized by the use of minimal cooking oil or fat, typically using just enough to lubricate the pan. In the case of a greasy food such as bacon, no oil or fats may need to be added.

**Roast** is a cooking method that uses dry heat where hot air covers the food, cooking it evenly on all sides with temperatures of at least 300 °F from an open flame, oven, or other heat source.

**Sauté** is to fry (food, such as small pieces of meat or vegetables) in a small amount of fat.

**Stew** is to cook solid food ingredients in liquid.

## Units of measure

- g = grams
- oz = ounces
- tbsp = tablespoons



## Additional Resources

MCT2D Low Carb Resources for Patients: [michmed.org/yqJek](http://michmed.org/yqJek)  
The Low Carb Jumpstart: [jumpstart.mct2d.org](http://jumpstart.mct2d.org)

## FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...

## ...BY TRYING THIS!

### CORNMEAL OR CORN FLOUR: .....

Cornbread, Grits

### Swap cornmeal with almond flour to make cornbread

Recipe for low carb cornbread from Wholesome Yum: [michmed.org/w874D](http://michmed.org/w874D)

Try this interesting spin on low carb grits using ground lupin beans from Keto Focus: Keto Grits Recipe (only 3g net carbs & NUT FREE): [michmed.org/3x2Gw](http://michmed.org/3x2Gw)

### MAC AND CHEESE.....

### Swap pasta with cut up cauliflower

Recipe for cauliflower mac and cheese from Wholesome Yum: [michmed.org/RRJBr](http://michmed.org/RRJBr)

### POTATO DISHES LIKE:.....

Potato salad, Mashed potatoes, Fried potatoes

### Swap potatoes for these other vegetables

Cauliflower (Creamy mash/"potato" salad)  
Kohlrabi (Roast/pan-fry/stew)  
Daikon radish (Roast/pan-fry/stew)  
Jicama (Roast/pan-fry/stew)  
Turnip (Roast/pan-fry/stew)

### SWEET BBQ SAUCE ON:.....

Grilled meat, Meatloaf

### Add sugar-free flavor to your meats

Dry spice rubs or marinades  
Sugar-free BBQ sauce (e.g., G Hughes BBQ sauce)



## Examples of low carb Southern United States cuisine:

Note: All carb counts are estimations and may vary depending on ingredients used.

\*Enjoy in moderation based on your carb goal

<b>Beef brisket or slow cooked pork (1 cup)</b>	<b>2g carbs</b>
<b>Tomato and okra stew (½ cup)</b>	<b>6.5g carbs</b>
<b>Cooked greens (1 cup)</b> <i>(collards, turnips, mustard greens)</i>	<b>7.5g carbs</b>
<b>Southern-style green beans (1 cup)</b>	<b>10g carbs</b>
<b>Southern-style bean stew* (½ cup)</b> <i>(lima beans, pinto beans, black-eyed peas)</i>	<b>~25g carbs</b>

**Baked sweet potatoes\* (½ cup)**

**29g carbs**



## FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...

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**ARROZ ROJO** .....  
(seasoned 'red rice')

**Swap rice with these ingredients**

Make cauliflower rice. Bonus tip: mix cauliflower rice with some quinoa for a protein boost. Try this recipe from Pass the Plants: [michmed.org/vJqQd](http://michmed.org/vJqQd)

Sauté some vegetables (onions, bell peppers, zucchini, cauliflower, broccoli etc.)

**TORTILLAS** .....  
(corn or flour)

**Swap tortillas with low carb tortillas**

Recipe from Diet Doctor: [michmed.org/2VM88](http://michmed.org/2VM88)

Make it a bowl using a base of salad or cauliflower rice and add all your favorite toppings

**MASA HARINA** .....  
(corn meal)

**Swap cornmeal with a blend of almond flour and psyllium husk powder (recipes vary)**

Tamales, Arepas,  
Gorditas, Empanadas

Here's a recipe for low carb tamales from Castle in the Mountains: [michmed.org/MMZDy](http://michmed.org/MMZDy)

**POZOLE** .....  
(hominy soup)

**Reduce hominy and replace with extra vegetables**

Try diced radish, kohlrabi, or cauliflower

## Examples of low-carb cuisine influenced by Latin America:

Note: All carb counts are estimations and may vary depending on ingredients used.

Churrasco (3 oz)	0-2g carbs
Latin America style meats and seafood (3 oz)	0-2g carbs
<i>Carnitas/carne asada/barbacoa/al pastor/chorizo</i>	
Salsas (2 tbsp)	2g carbs
Guacamole (2 tbsp)	2.5g carbs
Pico de gallo (½ cup)	4.5g carbs
Ceviche (½ cup)	4.5g carbs
Calabacita (1 cup)	6g carbs
<i>(zucchini stew)</i>	

Chicken with mole sauce (1 cup)

8g carbs

Huevos rancheros (without tortilla) (1 cup)

12g carbs





## FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...

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**MAKLOUBA** .....  
*(seasoned rice with meat and vegetables)*

**Swap rice with these ingredients**

Replace rice with mixture of quinoa and cauliflower rice

**WARAQ ENAB/DOLMA** .....  
*(stuffed grape leaves)*

**Swap rice with these ingredients**

Replace rice with cauliflower rice or prepare with mixture of ground meat, herbs, and spices

**KIBBEH** .....  
*(bulgur wheat patties)*

**Swap with these ingredients**

A blend of almond flour, eggs, ground meat, and spices

**PITA BREAD** .....

**Swap out wheat flour with these alternatives**

Try this low carb bread recipe using almond flour from Wholesome Yum: [michmed.org/xNYrX](http://michmed.org/xNYrX)

Try low carb wraps or egg wraps from Egglife [michmed.org/7N3Nx](http://michmed.org/7N3Nx)

**HUMMUS** .....  
*(chickpea dip)*

**Swap with these an alternatives**

Here is a chickpea free hummus recipe from Wholesome Yum: [michmed.org/KqxDq](http://michmed.org/KqxDq)

Tahini sauce. Try this recipe from The Spruce Eats: [michmed.org/nmG5A](http://michmed.org/nmG5A)

Baba Ghanoush (eggplant dip). Try this recipe from The Mediterranean Dish: [michmed.org/bmMQK](http://michmed.org/bmMQK)

## Examples of low-carb cuisine influenced by The Middle East:

*Note: All carb counts are estimations and may vary depending on ingredients used.*

*\*Enjoy in moderation based on your carb goal.*

<b>Grilled meats (3 oz)</b> <i>kebab, shish tawook etc.</i>	<b>0-2g carbs</b>
<b>Mulukhiyah soup (1 cup)</b> <i>jute mallow soup</i>	<b>5g carbs</b>
<b>Tabbouleh salad (½ cup)</b>	<b>7g carbs</b>

<b>Shakshuka (½ cup)</b> <i>eggs cooked in tomato stew</i>	<b>8-10g carbs</b>
<b>Fassoulia (1 cup)</b> <i>green bean and tomato stew</i>	<b>10g carbs</b>
<b>Bamiya (1 cup)</b> <i>okra and tomato stew</i>	<b>12g carbs</b>
<b>Foul medames* (½ cup)</b> <i>stewed navy beans</i>	<b>18g carbs</b>
<b>Lentil soup* (1 cup)</b>	<b>20g carbs</b>

## FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...

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**BIRYANI**.....  
(spiced rice and meat dish)

**Swap rice with cauliflower rice**

Here is a recipe for low carb chicken biryani from Two Sleepers: [michmed.org/XwnW8](http://michmed.org/XwnW8)

**ALOO GOBI**.....  
(potato and cauliflower curry)

**Swap potatoes with any of these ingredients:**

Aloo matar, Aloo palak,  
Aloo baingan

Diced cauliflower, radish, turnip, and zucchini  
Try this recipe from Carb Manager: [michmed.org/r8Be3](http://michmed.org/r8Be3)

**NAAN**.....  
(bread)

**Swap wheat flour with coconut flour**

Here is a recipe for low carb naan from Headbangers Kitchen: [michmed.org/9Aj3g](http://michmed.org/9Aj3g)

**DOSA**.....  
(indian style crepe)

**Swap rice/lentil flour with almond and coconut flour**

Here is a recipe for low carb dosa from Indian Veggie Delight: [michmed.org/VJGn7](http://michmed.org/VJGn7)

**UPMA**.....  
(semolina breakfast dish)

**Swap semolina flour with cauliflower rice**

Here is a recipe for low carb upma from Indian Veggie Delight: [michmed.org/57ZkW](http://michmed.org/57ZkW)

## Examples of low-carb cuisine influenced by South Asia:

Note: All carb counts are estimations and may vary depending on ingredients used.

\*Enjoy in moderation based on carb goal.

Grilled meat and kebabs (3 oz)	0-2g carbs
Tandoori chicken (3 oz)	1-2g carbs
Chutneys (2 tbsp) (e.g. onion chutney)	2g carbs
Paneer (3 oz) (cheese curd)	2-3g carbs
Egg bhurji (1 cup) (egg and vegetable scramble)	2-3g carbs

<b>Curries (1 cup)</b> Palak paneer (spinach and paneer curry), Lauki Sabji (bitter gourd curry), Kheema curry (spicy meat curry), Rogan Josh (mutton/lamb curry)	<b>8-11g carbs</b>
<b>Chana masala* (½ cup)</b> (chickpea curry)	<b>15g carbs</b>
<b>Rajma* (½ cup)</b> (red bean curry)	<b>19g carbs</b>

Here are some additional resources where you can find low carb and very low carb recipes:

Indian Veggie Delight: [michmed.org/kQPqZ](http://michmed.org/kQPqZ)  
Headbanger's Kitchen: [michmed.org/47vez](http://michmed.org/47vez)



## FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...

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### NOODLE DISHES

Wheat noodles, Buckwheat noodles, Rice noodles, Potato starch noodles

### Swap noodles with these alternatives:

Shirataki noodles, hearts of palm noodles, or try Healthy Noodle by Kibun: [michmed.org/BABz2](http://michmed.org/BABz2)

### SPRING ROLLS AND WRAPS

Vietnamese spring rolls

### Swap rice paper or flour-based wrappers with:

Jicama wraps, cabbage wraps and lettuce wraps or try egg wraps by Egglife: [michmed.org/7N3Nx](http://michmed.org/7N3Nx)

### NASI LEMAK

(and other rice-based dishes)

### Swap rice with cauliflower rice

Here is a recipe for Malaysian-inspired low-carb Nasi lemak by Ruled.me: [michmed.org/47v7z](http://michmed.org/47v7z)

### DUMPLINGS

### Swap flour-based dumpling wrappers with:

Cabbage rolls or egg wrapper rolls. Here is a recipe for low-carb cabbage dumplings by Delish: [michmed.org/yqKqK](http://michmed.org/yqKqK)

## Examples of low-carb cuisine influenced by East and Southeast Asia:

Note: All carb counts are estimations and may vary depending on ingredients used.

<b>Sashimi (3 oz)</b> (sliced raw fish)	0g carbs
<b>Kai lan/bok choy stir fry (1 cup)</b> (sauteed Asian greens)	3g carbs
<b>Goya champuru (1 cup)</b> (sauteed bitter gourd)	3g carbs
<b>Tom yum soup (1 cup)</b> (spicy seafood soup)	4g carbs
<b>Chawan-mushi (1 cup)</b> (savory egg custard)	6g carbs
<b>Mapo tofu (1 cup)</b> (spicy tofu stew)	7g carbs

<b>Chicken curry (1 cup)</b>	7.5g carbs
<b>Fish curry (1 cup)</b>	8g carbs
<b>Beef rendang (1 cup)</b> (beef curry)	10g carbs

Here are some additional resources where you can find Asian inspired low carb and very low carb recipes:

Low Carbing Asian: [michmed.org/Ykzkx](http://michmed.org/Ykzkx)





## FIND AN ALTERNATIVE FOR...

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**FUFU/UGALI/NSIMA/SIMA** .....  
*(dough made from corn meal, millet, sorghum, or cassava flour)*

**Swap out the cornmeal and flours with cauliflower, almond flour, or coconut flour**

Here is a recipe for low carb cauliflower fufu from Low Carb Africa: [michmed.org/yqK5K](http://michmed.org/yqK5K)

**NIGERIAN JOLLOF RICE**.....

**Swap out the rice with cauliflower rice**

Here is a recipe for Cauliflower Jollof by Low Carb Africa: [michmed.org/7N3kx](http://michmed.org/7N3kx)

**MATOKE**.....  
*(plantain stew)*

**Swap out the plantain with turnips, kohlrabi, or cauliflower chunks**

Here is a recipe for Matoke: [michmed.org/Ykz3x](http://michmed.org/Ykz3x)  
 Substitute the green bananas in the recipe for turnips, kohlrabi, or cauliflower

**BLACK EYED PEAS, HONEY BEANS, AND COWPEAS**.....

**Swap out beans for a different protein source like fish, shellfish, poultry, meat, tofu and tempeh**

Try this popular African peanut stew called Maafe from Low Carb Africa: [michmed.org/8NwzG](http://michmed.org/8NwzG)

## Examples of low-carb cuisine influenced by East and West Africa:

*Note: All carb counts are estimations and may vary depending on ingredients used.*

<b>Nyama choma (3 oz)</b> <i>(barbequed meat)</i>	<b>0-1g carbs</b>
<b>Boiled peanuts (1 oz shelled)</b>	<b>6g carbs</b>
<b>Ofe Onugbu (1 cup)</b> <i>(bitter leaf soup)</i>	<b>8g carbs</b>
<b>Egusi soup (1 cup)</b> <i>(melon seed soup)</i>	<b>10g carbs</b>
<b>Doro wat (1 cup)</b> <i>(chicken stew)</i>	<b>10g carbs</b>
<b>Okra soup (1 cup)</b>	<b>10g carbs</b>

Here are some additional resources where you can find African-inspired low carb and very low carb recipes:

Low Carb Africa: [michmed.org/GyJKJ](http://michmed.org/GyJKJ)

