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THE ALCOHOL CHEAT SHEET



Alcohol doesn't have to be off-limits when you're trying to lose or maintain your weight, but it's definitely not something you want to consume a lot of.

Most people like a drink during social events with friends, but be wary, the alcohol calories can add up and fast! Watch the alcohol. It's easy to overdo the drinking on the weekend. Between dinner out, meeting friends for drinks, or perhaps a party or two, you're likely going to be faced with many alcoholic beverages. Your best bet? Swap one or two alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic ones. Trust me – you'll be happy when you don't have a hangover the next morning.

However, by making some substitutions to what we drink, we can save a huge amount of calories and still enjoy the social aspect of the events we find ourselves in.

Cocktails can typically exceed an entire chocolate bar in calories, you should view these as a 'treat' rather than a daily occurrence, you wouldn't sit and have 5 or 6 chocolate bars in a row.

If you are drinking, choose single alcohols with non-caloric mixers like soda water, tonic water or diet soda. If you have wine, make it a spritzer to expand the volume without extra calories and they are typically a much better option than many of the fancy alternatives.

When socialising, your liver often has to deal with questionable diet choices, changes in body weight, dwindling activity levels and excess alcohol. We can help protect our livers and make this new stress easier on the body.

CHOOSE WISELY

If you know your going out drinking later in the day, make sure to keep yourself hydrated during the day. Try to start the day with a pint of water as it helps cleanse the digestive system and prepare it for the day.

Yes, alcohol can dehydrate you.

Alcohol is a diuretic. It causes your body to remove fluids from your blood through your renal system, which includes the kidneys, ureters, and bladder, at a much quicker rate than other liquids.

If you don't drink enough water with alcohol, you can become dehydrated quickly.

So what can you do to make sure you don't get that infamous hangover headache caused by dehydration? Let's find out and get a little background on why alcohol dehydrates you in the first place.

Why does alcohol dehydrate?

Here are some ways that alcohol affects your body, and some reasons you may become dehydrated more quickly:

You're drinking on an empty stomach

After you take a drink, both the liquid and alcohol contents of the beverage pass through your stomach lining and small intestine into the bloodstream.

If you drink on an empty stomach, alcohol can be absorbed into the bloodstream within minutes. But if you drink water or eat while you consume alcohol, it may take much longer.

HYDRATION

Alcohol gets slowly metabolised by the body

Your body's metabolism can turn some components of alcohol into nutrients and energy. This happens at a rate of about one beer, a small glass of wine, or one shot of liquor per hour.

Alcohol is converted in the liver and begins acting as a diuretic when its processed by enzymes in the liver, alcohol is converted into a large amount of acetaldehyde. This common substance can become toxic in high doses. In order to break this substance down and remove it from the body, your liver does most of the work of turning it into acetate.

Alcohol also reduces how much vasopressin your body makes. Vasopressin is an antidiuretic hormone. It causes the body to hold onto water, which typically limits how much urine your kidneys make.

The action of suppressing this hormone exacerbates the diuretic effect and leads to dehydration.



HYDRATION

An average pint contains around 200-300 calories, by having only a handful of drinks we make a huge dent in our total daily calorie requirements. Compare that to a gin and slimline tonic or a vodka and diet coke, which only contain around 60 or 70 calories, and we save over 100 calories per drink, which will make a huge difference across the course of a night.

Spirits often have the biggest bang for your buck: Just a shot of whiskey, gin or rum is likely to give you a buzz faster than downing beer or wine. They also are the lightest and lowest carbohydrate drinks of the group: A standard shot of whiskey, tequila, vodka, gin, or rum has between 60-90 calories.

Wine isn't the lowest calorie winner but does have some science-backed benefits when consumed moderately. Drinking a glass or two of red wine boosts healthy gut bacteria, which may help reduce cholesterol levels and could even help with, obesity, some research shows.

Along with your Malbec, you can also benefit from a flood of antioxidants or polyphenols derived from grape skins. Polyphenols can help protect the lining of the heart. White wine isn't as helpful health-wise as red wine, but it still has some cardio-protective benefits, research shows.

Ultimately, overwhelming research suggests alcohol may do more harm than good. If we're being real with ourselves, the best way to get fit or maintain a healthy lifestyle is by drinking water or soda water.

Still, if you want to drink on a diet, some drinks are definitely healthier than others. Having a drink is like having a dessert – if you can safely drink it's a treat, but one that should be enjoyed in moderation.

CALORIES

0-300 Calories

300-500 Calories

+500 Calories

Draught Beer

	Calories (k/cal)	Protein (g)	Total Carbohydrates (g)	Total Fat (g)
Becks - Draught - 1 Pint	222	2.8	15.3	0
Stella - Draught - 1 Pint	227	2.0	17.6	0
Heineken - Draught - 1 Pint	227	2.3	19.9	0
Budweiser - Draught - 1 Pint	210	2.0	7.1	0
Peroni Nastro Azzurro - Draught - 1 Pint	239	1.7	18.2	0
Carling- Draught - 1 Pint	187	2.1	12.7	0

Bottled Beer

Becks - 275ml	105	1.4	7.2	0
Stella - 330ml	132	1.3	10.2	0
Heineken - 330ml	132	1.3	11.6	0
Budweiser - 330ml	129	0.9	9.3	0
Peroni Nastro Azzurro - 330ml	139	1.3	10.6	0
Estrella - 330ml	132	1.0	9.9	0

Alcohol Free Beer

Becks 0 % - 330ml	76	1.0	16.5	0
Heineken 0 % - 330ml	69	0	15.8	0
Budweiser 0 % - 330ml	46	0.3	10.9	0

BEER

0-300 Calories

300-500 Calories

+500 Calories

Wine

	Calories (k/cal)	Protein (g)	Total Carbohydrates (g)	Total Fat (g)
Red Wine - 125ml	95	0.1	0.2	2
Red Wine - 175ml	133	0.2	0.3	1
Red Wine - 250ml	190	0.2	0.5	1
White Wine - 125ml	94	0.1	0.8	0
White Wine - 175ml	131	0.2	1.0	1
White Wine - 250ml	188	0.2	1.5	1
Prosecco - 125ml	93	0.4	1.8	1



WINE

0-300 Calories

300-500 Calories

+500 Calories

Cocktails

	Calories (k/cal)	Protein (g)	Total Carbohydrates (g)	Total Fat (g)
Espresso Martini	174	0.8	13.8	3.6
Sex On The Beach	234	0.7	22	0.2
Strawberry Daiquiri	157	0	20.9	0.4
Cosmopolitan	195	0.1	9.0	0.1
Aperol Spritz	136	0	12.8	0
Mojito	127	0.1	4.5	0.2
Long Island Iced Tea	152	0	9.8	0

Spirits

Vodka	52	0	0	0
Gin	52	0	0	0
Whisky	56	0.3	10.9	0



COCKTAILS & SPIRITS

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