

Party Survival Tips

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Family get-togethers, neighborhood parties, work celebrations: eat, drink, eat, drink, eat, eat, eat. It seems that all parties revolve around FOOD! And typically, party fare isn't necessarily healthy fare. But even the busiest "Party Animals" can survive without disaster if you follow these simple party survival tips.



Plan ahead

Eat a low-fat breakfast and lunch to save up a few extra fat grams to spend at the party. However, do NOT arrive at the party overly hungry either! In fact, eating a small snack before you go is a good idea.

Include exercise before you go

Let's face it, parties generally mean a few more calories than you usually eat. Overindulge on a day you don't exercise and your fat cells will grow all night long! To prevent this from happening, be sure to exercise before you go.



Mingle AWAY from the food

Standing beside a big bowl of cashews or Spanish peanuts can really throw a monkey wrench into your weight-loss efforts. Think I'm kidding? Just try to stand or sit near an enticing bowl of nuts and NOT unconsciously eat a little handful here, another handful there. Although you swear it wasn't much, it was an unconscious downing of 10 grams of fat per handful!

Suggestion: Take out 5 whole cashews (equivalent to 5 grams of fat) and line them up on your napkin or plate. Enjoy them one by one, with lots of time in between. Take a break and enjoy other foods like raw vegetables and fruit. Repeat with 5 more if you really want them. Decide that you're finished and move away from them!

Use a plate

One thing that puts on weight is eating more than you're aware of. Anytime you nibble on things directly from the bowl, you can end up eating more than if you put all the food on a plate. Therefore, create a healthful boundary for yourself: Everything goes on a plate. Make it a small plate for even better results!



P.S. There's freedom within boundaries.

Put foods to the "pinch, slip and shine" test

One way to scout out fat is to perform what I call the "pinch, slip and shine test."

The test is simple. If upon pinching the item, you see a lot of "slip and shine," that tells you there is a lot of fat.

The following are appetizers that will undoubtedly give you a positive slip and shine reading, therefore alerting you to limit them.

- Egg Rolls
- Buttery crackers
- Potato chips
- Chicken wings
- Meatballs
- Pigs-in-a-blanket
- Anything wrapped in bacon



Remember, while fat is enemy number one, number two is too many carbohydrates. Smart selections and portion control are what you need for success.

Halve it and you can have it!

When faced with an assortment of yummy dips, gooey sweets, or irresistible fried treats, think, “Halve it and you can have it.” This strategy works anytime, anywhere and will keep you from feeling deprived while halving the calories you would normally eat.

Avoid drinking all your calories

“But I hardly ate a thing all holiday season! How did I gain weight?”

Think before you drink:

- Egg Nog (4 oz.): 355 calories
- Wine (3 oz.): 85 calories
- Beer, regular (12 oz.): 150 calories
- Beer, light (12 oz.): 100 calories
- Cider (12 oz.): 180 calories
- Fruit punch (12 oz.): 180 calories
- Piña colada (6 oz.): 325 calories



Opt for: Club soda or sparkling water to dilute punch or fruit juice; mineral water, low-calorie soda or diet tonic water. Or better yet, add a slice of lemon or lime to a refreshing glass of pure water!

Keep your focus away from the food

While good food is certainly an important part of an enjoyable party, be sure you keep it in perspective. Appreciate the other great things: Socializing, the beautiful decorations, music, games and activities.

Stop Eating Early

Even if you stay late, decide when you will quit eating and do just that: Quit eating. This strategy can do wonders to prevent that continuous “just because it’s there” munching, saving you hundreds of calories.

No matter what, stay positive

Even if you did overdo it at the party, keep things in perspective. You do not need to be “perfect” all the time, and one event does not make you an overweight person or give you high cholesterol. Say, “It’s no big deal,” and start your next day back on your healthy fitness regime.

