



## Do's and Don'ts of Holiday Beverages

By




Nicole Carlson RD, LD










Food is a big discussion topic around this time of year with all the celebrations happening. You might be asking yourself how you will steer clear of carbs at your work Christmas party coming up or how you will diet once the holiday season is over. One thing some of us forget is that many of the excessive calories we consume during this time of year do not come from food at all. The calories drunk rather than eaten can be the sneakiest. We often pair our meals or party treats with a glass of wine or cocktail but forget to account for those extra calories. Since alcohol is not an essential macronutrient for a healthy diet, there are no specific calorie recommendations. This causes calories from alcohol to often be overlooked. But the good news is there are plenty of helpful guidelines to go by.

The 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggest that women may have 1 alcoholic beverage per day and men may have 1-2 alcoholic beverages per day. According to research done by the USDA and US HHS, 50% of American adults are regular drinkers and 9% of men consume on average more than two drinks per day. In moderation alcohol can have positive effects such as lower cardiovascular

disease rates. In excess alcohol can have negative effects on health and can also increase calorie consumption. Alcohol contains 7 calories per gram, compared to carbohydrates and protein (4 calories per gram) and fat (9 calories per gram). Having two or more drinks per day can exponentially increase your calorie intake if you are not aware of what you are consuming. The main problem is that although your body does metabolize alcohol, it breaks down so quickly that no nutrients are provided to the body. With lack of nutrients, you are left hungry and you will soon reach for another drink or treats to fill you up. Too many of these empty calories can lead to weight gain, but being aware of the contents of your drinks can help you prevent this.

When going to your next holiday party, have a game plan. Try sticking with smaller portions with cocktails, beer or wine. If you choose to have a cocktail be mindful of the mixer, this tends to increase the amount of calories significantly. Choose a club or diet soda rather than something sugary such as juice or regular soda. Also be aware of the snacks you munch on while enjoying your wine or spirit. Most snacks at parties are high in fat and sugar which will also contribute to your calorie tab. Listed below are some 'do's and don'ts' of holiday beverages. Again, the key is moderation and remembering to count the calories from beverages too.

Alcoholic Beverage	Calories	 OR 
5 oz. White wine	121 calories	

12 oz. Guinness Extra Stout	176 calories	
10 oz. Bloody Mary	125 calories	
8 oz. Eggnog	394 calories	
4 oz. champagne	78 calories	
12 oz. Miller Lite	96 calories	
2 oz. rum 12 oz. coke	268 calories	
8 oz. Diet tonic and 1.5 oz. vodka with lime	95 calories	
8 oz. Hot buttered Rum	316 calories	
Chocolate Martini	318 calories	



Thanks for reading! Please send your feedback to [mymmealplan@insidertrainingfitness.com](mailto:mymmealplan@insidertrainingfitness.com).