

# Can I Drink Alcohol and Still Lose Weight?

Coming into festive season, a few cheeky wines after work or some vodka soda on the weekend is not uncommon. But what about the weight loss goals you are wanting to achieve before Christmas. Well the good news is, you can have alcohol and still lose weight. But there are rules. I am definitely not going to tell you you have to give up a refreshing rosè on a Saturday afternoon, or some beers with friends on a Sunday. Keep these rules in mind and you can have a drink and still reach your goals in time for Christmas.

**Rule #1 – Calories in vs calorie out...** This one is the golden rule. As long as you can consume less calories than you burn on a daily basis, you will lose weight. That includes alcohol. That doesn't mean you should eat nothing all day and then have 2 bottles of wine to replace those calories. It means instead of having the big breakfast with bacon, eggs, sausages and toast that you were going to have for breakfast, try having a lower calorie meal, knowing you will consume calories later. It also means do some exercise that day, to help burn some extra calorie in preparation for the extras you will consume. You cannot out exercise a bad diet, but it does help. And remember that one bad day won't break your goals. But doing it 3 consecutive days in a row is when things start to turn pear shaped. So enjoy your drinks one day, then back on track the next.

**Rule #2 - Ditch the high calorie mixers...** Think gin and tonic, rum and coke, vodka lemonade, cocktails made with 17 different juices, all of these mixers add extra sugar and extra calories you just don't need. Try gin and diet tonic or club soda, rum and sugar free coke, vodka and soda, use fresh lemon and lime juices rather than cordials, and if you must have a cocktail, go a simple cocktail made with less juice. This is a very easy way to cut the calories down. Side note: Lighter alcohols have less calories so try for the vodkas and gins over the rums and bourbons.

**Rule #3 – Moderate and hydrate...** Depending on the occasion, moderating is not always the aim, I am aware of that. BUT, more often than not, make the choice to moderate how much you drink. There are so many reasons this will work better for your weight loss goals. Less drinks = less calories. Less drunk = less likely to indulge in that late night, high calorie pizza. Less hungover = less likely to spend the next day eating all the bad food to make you feel better. You can wake up and get right back on track with your healthy eating habits instead. Hydrating with a glass of water between drinks will also help with these things, so always have some water around while your drinking.

**Rule #4 – Plan ahead...** You have a birthday on Saturday where there will be drinks served, so save the Wednesday evening glass of wine for then. Or you know that festive season is in full swing with lots of parties, gathering and functions, see keep your diet on track from day to day, knowing that the extra calories will most likely be coming from alcohol the next few weeks.

If you are one to enjoy a nice cold one on a summer afternoon, go right ahead. Enjoy it, without the guilt. But remember these rules to ensure you stay on track and heading in the right direction to still see the results you are striving for. Everything in life is about balance, alcohol is no exception. And if you want to take this literally, try some bend & beer yoga to test your balance and enjoy a beer at the same time 😊