

You've made it to Week 5! You're on a roll!

So far we've focused on food, but most of what we drink also contains calories so it's a good idea to make sure you're keeping a close eye on those liquid calories.

If you've ever wondered why you've not been losing weight even after sticking to a strict eating regime, now's the time to see if that regular latte, flavoured water or evening tippie is sabotaging your best efforts to lose weight.

- Track your drinking.
- If you're a cappuccino or latte drinker, try switching to a black or white coffee
- Try skimmed milk instead of semi skimmed milk for a week
- Stick to your calorie limit – 1,400kcal for women and 1,900kcal for men
- You should be doing 150 minutes of activity by now. If not, get some inspiration from a personal trainer.

The key to weight loss success is not to expect too much, too soon. Make changes to your diet and activity levels you can live with. If your changes are too drastic, it will feel like a struggle. If you fall off the wagon, you may return to old habits and regain weight.

Did you know a standard glass of wine contains as many calories as a small chocolate and a pint of lager has as many calories as a packet of crisps? The problem is, most of us just don't think of alcohol as being calorific. So, while we might go easy on the single cream when eating desserts, we wouldn't think twice about knocking back a couple of pints. In fact, the calorie content of two pints is similar to that of a full glass of single cream.

With this in mind, it's easy to understand how excess alcohol intake can easily contribute to gaining weight. Two large glasses of white wine, totalling 360kcal, will provide a woman with nearly a fifth of her daily calorie allowance. A beer-drinker knocking back just five pints a week would add a whopping 44,200kcal over a year, equivalent to 221 doughnuts.

Alcohol contains lots of calories – seven calories a gram in fact, almost as many as a gram of fat. And, of course, additional calories can be present in added mixer drinks. Many drinkers add to their liquid calorie count by having snacks, such as crisps, nuts or pork scratchings, with their tippie, not to mention a hangover induced fry-up the morning after, which can add an extra 450kcal.

Tips to avoid weight gain

- Stick to your daily recommended units. Men shouldn't regularly drink more than 3-4 units of alcohol a day. Women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units a day. As a guide, a pint of lager and a 250ml glass of wine both contain 3 units of alcohol.
- Alternate an alcoholic drink with a diet soft drink or water – this will help to prevent you becoming dehydrated.
- Choose drinks with a lower ABV (alcohol by volume) instead of your usual tippie. There's an increasing range of lower alcohol choices available and most also have fewer calories.
- Don't drink on an empty stomach, as this can lead to snacking. If you do snack while drinking, avoid high-calorie snacks such as crisps, pork scratchings chips. Try lighter options such as pretzels, plain popcorn or oven-baked crisps.
- Drinking in rounds can mean you end up drinking more than you intended. Opt out and drink at your own pace.
- Try cutting down with a friend, as you'll be more likely to stick to it with moral support.
- Eat a healthier dinner before you start drinking. Order or cook before you start drinking so you're not tempted to go for the less healthy options.
- Avoid 'binge drinking'. Drinking a large amount of alcohol over a short period of time may be significantly worse for your health than frequently drinking small quantities.

How calorific is your tippie?

- A pint of 5% strength beer = a packet of McCoys salted crisps (170kcal)
- A standard glass (175ml) of 12% wine = one Cadbury Heroes miniature bar (126kcal)
- A double measure (50ml) of 17.5% fortified wine = one Asda bourbon biscuit (65kcal)
- A glass (50ml) of (17%) cream liqueur = a Milky Way bar (118kcal)
- A standard bottle (330ml) of 5% alcopop = three Lees teacakes (237kcal)

Drink swaps

- SWAP a pina colada FOR a mojito and save 326kcal
- SWAP a pint of lager FOR lager shandy and save 100kcal
- SWAP double rum & coke FOR single vodka, lime & soda and save 107kcal
- SWAP a large glass of white wine FOR a white wine spritzer with soda and save 35kcal

Think before you drink it's not just alcohol, non-alcoholic drinks from lattes to colas can also lead your calorie count to creep up.

What you drink should not be overlooked when trying to lose weight.

Drinking too many sugar-sweetened drinks can contribute to weight gain.

So what are the common offenders and where could you be going wrong?

Coffee: Getting a caffeine fix could give you 193kcal or more in one hit if you opt for cappuccino or mocha. Switch to black or white coffee instead.

Fruit juice and smoothies: You might feel virtuous guzzling these but watch out. A small glass of cranberry or apple juice racks up nearly 100kcal and a small 250ml yoghurt based smoothie can be about 136kcal. Go for fruit-only smoothies instead.

Although fruit juice counts towards your 5 A DAY, you may find eating pieces of fruit more filling.

Fizzy drinks: Lemonade or cola is not only bad for our teeth but it can provide 140kcal in just one can. Switch to diet versions and think of it as a one-off treat.

Experimenting with some interesting flavour combinations can help make it feel less like you're depriving yourself so you'll stick with it – research shows that our taste buds can be retrained over time to enjoy far less sugar in drinks (or no sugar at all).

Burn calories, lose weight and feel great with a 10-minute home cardio workout routine. An ideal workout if you're short on time and need to fit in a bit of exercise without too much fuss.