

Roots
Fitness Coaching

Can you drink alcohol while dieting?



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roots-fitness.co.uk

Please see my Instagram post which was the precursor to this article:

https://www.instagram.com/p/Bo7QjpKhEW6/?taken-by=roots_performance

Alcohol. Most of us drink it, most of us have felt the numerous negative effects associated with it, yet we still drink it! This article serves as a guide to explain how to minimise the damage to your diet, I in no way condone the use of alcohol and my best recommendation is to stop drinking full stop. However...

We aren't all saints and as you know at Roots we encourage you to live a normal, enjoyable life, without worrying too much about your diet but rather just being mindful of it. Flexibility and moderation are key to a happy healthy life; as such if alcohol must be a part of yours then so be it. We can at least advise you on how you can keep progressing in the gym and indeed out of the gym with your physique whilst still drinking alcohol occasionally.

Moderation

Everyone knows all too well how easy it can be to head out for one drink and end up waking up at 12pm the next day with a stinking hangover and a less than happy bank balance. If this sounds familiar then you must learn how to drink in moderation. A good tip is to only take enough money out for one or two drinks, that way you can't actually afford to spend any more; this means leaving the debit card at home (you'll thank me for this). Another tip is to take the car and not drink at all, have a soda water and enjoy speaking with your friends, you may even find you have a better time whilst keeping your diet on track!

Preparation

I always recommend pre-empting a night out, or even a big meal out. What I mean by this is to take your daily calories and try to reduce them for a couple of days before your night out, not dramatically but perhaps drop them by 10% or so. You will go over your calories (especially if you are eating as well) purely because there are so many of them in alcohol! Of course you could do this for a couple of days after drinking instead, it personal preference.

Make lower calorie drink choices!

If it's a special occasion and you want to go 'out out' then do it, but don't drink litres of calorie dense beer, cocktails, cider, or alcopops. Try sticking with single measure spirits and a low calorie mixer, such as gin and slimline tonic or vodka and diet lemonade. Check out the table below showing the amount of calories in popular drinks; you may be shocked at your favourite tittle!

Don't hit the pizza shop!

While it may be tempting to see a night out as a 'write off' in terms of calories and just go the whole hog and eat everything in sight after your night out, and indeed the next day too, wise up! Yes you will probably go over your calorie intake for that day, but have you gone over it for the week? Doubtful, especially if you prepare for it! Before you go out head to the supermarket and buy yourself something high in protein and low in calories for when you get home. A personal favourite is pre-cooked meat and a wrap. If you know you have food for when you're hungry at the end of the night you're less likely to head to the local pizza shop. This can make a huge difference in terms of caloric intake for the day, pizza shop pizza tends to be very greasy with a ton of cheese, same goes for kebabs and fast food places.

The morning after the night before...

When you're at the supermarket buying food for the post night out hunger you should also buy food for the next day, otherwise you'll end up pigging out on crisps and takeaways again. Make sure you get some micronutrients in from fruits and veggies, you already poisoned your poor body, give it something good! Try to get back on the wagon, one day can make a huge difference to your weekly calorie balance!

Don't rot at home!

The next day you may feel like sleeping on the sofa watching crap on the TV all day, this is the last thing you should do. Get up and get outside! Going for a walk and getting some fresh air will do you a world of good. Don't waste your day lying around feeling sorry for yourself, then getting the Sunday evening anxiety pangs before work on Monday. Even if you don't feel up to training you can at least get some steps done (I have horrible hangovers, if I can do it so can you). Here's a maths problem for you to think about:

Loads of calories worth of alcohol drunk + Takeaway before bed + rubbish food the following day + skipped gym session + lying inactive on the sofa all day = an absolute fucking disaster for your diet.

In summary (TL;DR)

- Moderate your drinking
- Reduce calories by 10% for a couple of days prior to drinking
- Don't drink cocktails
- Buy food for when you get home drunk!
- Eat good, micronutrient dense food the day after
- Get out for a walk, hit the gym if you can!

Drinks calorie guide

Kcals quoted here are approximate

Beer (pint) - 235 Kcal

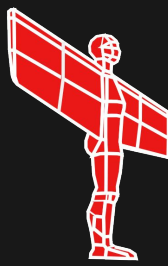
Cider (pint) - 280 Kcal

Wine (175 ml glass) - 150 Kcal

Champagne/Sparkling Wine (120 ml flute) - 135 Kcal

Spirits (25ml measure) - 60-120 Kcal

Cocktails (various) - 150-400 Kcal



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Author

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Hi I'm Andy. I'm head coach and co-founder of Roots Fitness.

My goal is to create a private and personal training facility which is accessible and affordable to as many people as possible. A place where small groups of like minded people will receive high quality personal training sessions at a fraction of the price.

I aim to teach you how to not only achieve your fitness goals but also give you the tools required to keep them long-term.

If you are interested in learning more about a sustainable, fitter and healthier lifestyle be sure to check out our offerings at www.roots-fitness.co.uk. Or simply get in touch on Instagram or Facebook (links below).

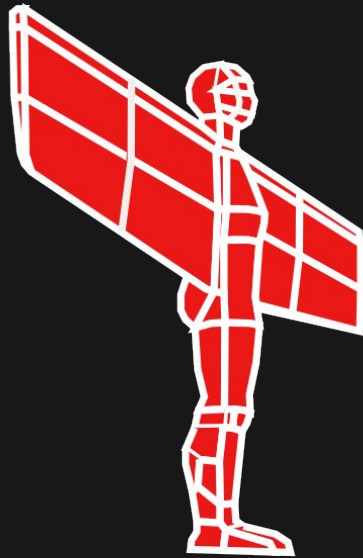


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