

# Moderate your alcohol intake if you want to lose weight.

Excess alcohol intake has been associated with increased belly fat ([research](#)). One study in the *European Journal of Nutrition* found that men who had more than three drinks a day were more likely to have excess abdominal fat than those who drank very little or in moderation. Another study, published in the *Journal of Nutrition*, found that the more drinks you have per day, the more abdominal fat you're likely to have. Observational studies link heavy alcohol consumption to a significantly increased risk of developing excess fat storage around the waist. See why below. If you're trying to lose weight, consider drinking alcohol in moderation or abstaining completely. Remember belly fat is the worst kind of fat. Cutting back on alcohol may help reduce your waist size. You don't need to give it up completely, but limiting the amount you drink in a single day can help. One study on alcohol use involved more than 2,000 people. Results showed those who drank alcohol daily but averaged less than one drink per day had less belly fat than those who drank less frequently but consumed more alcohol on the days they drank. According to the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans, it's recommended to limit alcohol intake to two drinks or fewer per day for men and one drink or fewer per day for women. Women process alcohol differently than men ([see our article](#)). [See more about alcohol here.](#) [How Does Alcohol Affect Weight?](#)

**Did you know a standard glass of wine can contain as many calories as a piece of chocolate, and a pint of lager has about the same number of calories as a packet of chips and some IPAs have over 300 calories?**

**Enjoy some of these 100-calorie options instead:**

1. Vodka  
Calories: 100 calories in 1.5 ounces of distilled 80-proof vodka  
Alternative cocktail: Choose low-calories mixers such as club soda and avoid overly sugary juices.
2. Whiskey  
Calories: 100 calories in 1.5 ounces of 86-proof whiskey  
Alternative cocktail: Ditch the cola and take your whiskey on the rocks for a low-calorie alternative.
3. Gin  
Calories: 115 calories in 1.5 ounces of 90-proof gin  
Alternative cocktail: Aim for something simple, such as a martini — and don't skip the olives, they contain beneficial antioxidants such as vitamin E.
4. Tequila  
Calories: 100 calories in 1.5 ounces of tequila  
Alternative cocktail: The best part about tequila is that the customary tequila "shot" is just salt, tequila, and lime.
5. Brandy  
Calories: 100 calories in 1.5 ounces of brandy  
Alternative cocktail: This drink is best served as an after-dinner digestif and a good brandy should be enjoyed slowly to savor the subtle fruity sweetness.

**WHY?:** When alcohol is consumed, it's burned first as a fuel source before your body uses anything else. This includes glucose from carbohydrates or lipids from fats. When your body is using alcohol as a primary source of energy, the excess glucose and lipids end up, unfortunately for us, as adipose tissue, or fat.



## Tips to avoid weight gain from Alcohol from NHS

- Alternate an alcoholic drink with a glass of water – this will help to prevent you becoming dehydrated.
- Do not drink on an empty stomach. If you do reach for snacks while drinking, choose a healthier option.
- Drinking in rounds can mean you end up drinking more than you intended. Instead, 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 healthy dinner before you start drinking so you're not tempted to go for less healthy options later in the evening.
- Pace yourself by taking small sips.
- Avoid "binge drinking" – it's not advisable to "save up" your units to splurge at the weekend.
- If you're drinking white wine or hard alcohol, why not add a soda water to help the same number of units last longer?