

How to Avoid Social Weight Gain

Survival Guide

How do you possibly stick to your weight loss plans when trying to live your life, socialise and have a bit of fun? I hear this all the time from clients, friends and colleagues who are dedicated and enthusiastic for the first few weeks after deciding they want to lose weight and then life just 'gets in the way' and throws them off track.

Here's my Top 10 on how to avoid social weight gain....

1. **Remember, a social event is a DAY.** Don't spend it making up for all the chocolate cake and tasty canapés you've avoided the rest of the week. Have a slice and count this as your treat day then get back on your plan.
2. **Work out** (an obvious one I know). Don't make excuses. It will keep you focused and increase your motivation to select the healthy offerings so as not to jeopardise all your hard work.
3. **Be Prepared!** Have protein rich snacks on hand at work and nibble a few nuts or wholegrain crackers to stave off hunger before a party.
4. **Tea please!** When it comes to ordering a desert, make yours a fruity herbal variety. You won't sit there twiddling your thumbs and you'll achieve hydration and detox properties in one shot. Think how you're cleansing your system as others are clogging it up. Don't you feel good?
5. **Make a weight loss plan.** Plan your daily diet in the same way you do your daily work activities. Write out what and when you will eat to avoid impulse buys and constant 'picking'. And shop in advance for easy access to healthy snacks.
6. **Vegetables first.** Always eat the fibrous stuff on your plate first as this will fill you up and avoid you reaching for the starching carb offerings. Follow closely or combine with the lean protein options.
7. **Don't give in.** 'You must try this' says you so called friend who knows you are trying hard to lose weight, as she holds a melt in your mouth cheese canapé under your nose. Remember, you don't need to try anything. Once mouthful can be lethal and stimulate a strong desire for more. Decline politely and whip a crunchy hummus dipped carrot in your mouth.

8. **Clear the fridge.** You held the party and you're left with half eaten temptations in the fridge. Either send your guests home with party bags or ditch the stuff before it tempts you to ditch your diet.
9. **Get excited about exercise!** Chat to fellow party goers about their favourite activities, about what fun adventure you just must try. Fill your thoughts with adventure and opportunities during the conversation rather than keeping one eye on the carrot cake.
10. **Use a smaller plate at the buffet.** It holds less so you'll eat less. And the temptation to go back to the table for more is placated by worry over what people will say about you taking seconds!

By Caroline Pearce