



Nutritional Effects of Alcohol - What's the Buzz?

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April is alcohol awareness month, an opportunity to increase understanding of alcohol addiction. In addition to the short and long-term health risks, excessive alcohol consumption can wreak havoc on our nutrition and weight loss goals.

It promotes overeating. At first glance this may seem confusing. After fat, alcohol is the second most calorically dense nutrient. Yet, rather than filling you up, drinking alcohol makes you hungrier. Research shows that alcohol affects the same area of the brain that controls hunger and thirst. So drinking heavily tricks your brain into thinking that you're starving. This might explain why binge drinking often leads to binge eating.

It changes the types of food that you crave. A study found that consuming the equivalent of just 1 1/2 drinks increased cravings and enjoyment of salty and fatty foods. Study participants increased consumption of salty and/or fatty foods by 24% as compared to a placebo group. That may explain why there are so few late-night salad bars!

It impacts the absorption of nutrients. Nutrients are mostly absorbed into the bloodstream through the small intestine. Alcohol can interfere with the absorption of vitamins A, B1, B12, C, D, E and folic acid, which can see them eliminated as waste rather than being used.

It leads to calorie overload. Reaching our weight goals may be challenging if you regularly drink alcohol. Alcohol has a fair share of calories and zero nutritional value.

How many calories are you drinking?		
Glass of white wine (5 oz) = Piece of bread  = 	Pint of beer (16 oz) = Bag of popcorn  = 	Pint of cider (16 oz) = Cheese pizza slice  = 
Margarita (10 oz) = Plain bagel  = 	Piña colada (10 oz) = French fries (4 oz)  = 	Mojito (10 oz) = Potato chips (1.75 oz)  = 

Source: My Fitness Pal; Calorie King; My Food Diary

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Your best options:

- Vodka and soda with lemon—96 calories
- Mojito minus the syrup—100 calories
- Light Bloody Mary—100 calories
- Rosé—120 calories
- Sea Breeze—165 calories
- Diet gin and tonic—120 calories

Mindful website

<https://mindful.sodexo.com/>

