

## Resist Food Pushers

Many clients have told me that they “had to eat” to avoid hurting someone’s feelings, even though they knew it meant straying from their diet. Some say they have to eat whatever is prepared for them, dinner at home, a dessert at a relative’s house or home baked goodies brought in by work colleagues. They thought that even a polite refusal of food would offend the other person

### If you think the same then you probably have two notions that get in the way:

- The first is that other people’s desire to have you eat their food is more important than your desire to lose weight
- The second is that it’s wrong to stick up for yourself especially if it means disappointing someone else.

### Now I’d like you to think about these ideas in a different way:

- You’re entitled to work toward your goal of losing weight as long as you’re not maliciously trying to make someone feel bad
- It’s okay to disappoint others. Disappointment is a normal part of life. Their disappointment most likely will be mild and fleeting.

### Ask yourself:

*Won’t I be disappointed if I accept the food and stray from my food plan?*

*Why is it more important for me to please them than it is to do what is best for me?*

## How to Say “NO”

Prepare now to turn down someone the next time you’re offered something to eat. Here’s how:

### Create a sense of entitlement about turning down requests to eat.

Look at “*My Cost Analysis of Eating Chart*” (attached). To fill it in, think of a specific situation where someone might offer you food.

### What are the costs to you of accepting the offer? It could make you:

- Get off your scheduled meal plan
- Eat more than you really want
- Feel subservient to others
- Feel out of control
- Stop losing or even gain weight
- Overeat or develop a craving
- Feel bad about yourself

Before you write down the costs to someone else, think about how you would react if people turned down food that you'd offered, particularly if you knew they were trying to lose weight. *How bad would you feel? How long would that negative feeling last?* I wonder if any reasonable person would have more than a temporary, mildly negative reaction.

### Prepare your initial response

#### What will you say the next time someone offers you food?

Write what you plan to say on a Response card. For many people *"No, thanks"* or *"No, thank you, it looks delicious, but I'm fine"* will probably suffice. You don't have to explain that you are trying to lose weight or watching what you are eating if you don't want to. If it's appropriate and if you want, you can always say. *"Thank you, it looks really good. Could I take a piece home for later?"*

#### Visualize your plan in action.

Who will most likely push food on you in the near future? Where will you be? Who else will be around? What foods will be involved? Try to imagine the scene. See them offering you the food. Hear yourself saying. *"No, thank you"* think about what this person might say next and how you might respond. See the person turn away and offer the food to someone else. Visualize giving yourself lots of credit and feeling proud of yourself for being politely assertive about your needs.

If you haven't had much practice in turning down food, you might get a little nervous the first time you try it. It'll definitely get easier to do over time, as you see that nothing terrible happens.

### What are you thinking?

**Sabotaging Thought:** I have to please others by eating, no matter what the cost is to me

**Helpful Response:** I have to work toward my goal, especially since the cost to others is momentary and minor. My not eating won't spoil their entire year. It's good for me to say no



## Decide about Drinking

Drinking alcohol is a personal choice. Many clients decide to have the occasional drink because they'd much prefer to spend their calories on food.

If you want to fit drinking into your diet, you need to plan your alcohol intake in advance, just as you do your food intake. This means limiting your consumption and making sure that alcohol doesn't loosen your inhibitions about eating.

### The Facts about Alcohol

#### Alcohol vs Carbs

Although alcohol is sometimes lumped in with carbohydrates, our bodies treat alcohol and carbohydrate differently. From a pure calorie standpoint, a gram of alcohol provides the body with 7 calories per gram, whereas carbohydrates have 4 calories per gram. Moreover, the body uses the calories from alcohol first for energy, before carbohydrate or fat.

I would recommend that while you are on Stage 1 of the programme, you avoid or at least limit your alcohol consumption as it can cause blood sugar to be erratic, depending upon the type, amount, and whether we have food in our stomachs. (Tip: Don't drink on an empty stomach.)

#### Where Do the Carbs Come From?

Fermented beverages, by definition, start as a high-carb plant, usually grapes or a grain. During the fermentation process, the yeasts eat up the carbohydrates, producing alcohol. Whatever sugars are left contributes to the carbohydrate in the beverage, which will vary from one to another. A dry wine has little residual sugar, whereas a sweet wine can have quite a bit. Liqueurs have sugar added, often quite a lot.

Distilled spirits (vodka, rum, whiskey, etc.) have nothing left but the alcohol, so are zero carb. However, mixers are often sugary, so watch for this. Just two ounces (1/4 cup) of "sweet and sour mix," often used for whiskey sours, daiquiris and margaritas, has 17 grams of carbohydrate. As an alternative, you can ask for lemon or lime juice, and add your own sweetener.

Liqueurs such as Amaretto or Creme de Menthe almost always have sugar added, and sometimes a lot. Be sure to check the list below before drinking a liqueur.

## Carbohydrate Content in Alcohol

**Note:** *There is a great deal of variability with beers and wines, as many factors will contribute to the carbohydrate of the final product. The following are averages only.*

### Carb Counts – Beer – Per 12 Ounce Serving

**Regular Beer:** average is about 12 grams carb

**Light Beer:** check the label -- most are 3 to 7 grams

**Ale:** most are 5 to 9 grams

**Stout:** variable -- about 20 grams

### Carb Counts – Wine – per 5 Ounce Serving

**Dry Champagne:** ~2.5 to 4.5 grams

**Dry White (e.g. Sauvignon Blanc, Chardonnay):** ~3 grams

**”Off Dry” (e.g. Reisling, Chenin Blanc):** ~5 to 6 grams

**Muscat:** ~8 grams

**Dry Red (e.g. Syrah, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sav.):** ~3.5 to 4 grams

**Zinfandel:** 4.2 grams

**Dessert Wines:** 12 to 14 grams

**Sweet Late Harvest Wine:** 20 grams

### Carb Counts – Liqueurs – per jigger = 1.5 fl oz

**Amaretto:** 25 grams

**Bailey’s Irish Cream:** 11 grams

**Campari:** 12 grams

**Coffee Liqueur (e.g. Kahlua):** up to 24 grams

**Cointreau:** 15 grams

**Creme de Cacao:** 22 grams

**Creme de Cassis:** 17 grams

**Creme de Menthe:** 21 grams

**Grand Marnier:** 10 grams

**Kirsch:** 9 grams

**Ouzo:** 16 grams

**Sambuca:** 17 grams

You might think it’s okay to make spontaneous decisions to drink. But just as you’ve had to learn to eliminate spontaneous eating and stick to your food plan, you have to learn to eliminate spontaneous drinking. Otherwise, you put yourself at risk, sooner or later, for gaining weight. You need to make decisions about whether and how much to drink today, before you find yourself presented with the question. Otherwise, you’re likely to drink too much.

**TIP:**

When you drink, notice and enjoy every sip. Drink slowly so it'll last longer. As soon as you've finished your drink, order a low calorie drink such as Slimline Tonic so you won't be tempted to order another alcoholic beverage

If you are out with friends, and it's your round. Skip the alcohol in your drink and just get the mixer, you'll hardly notice the difference and neither will they.

**How Much, How Often?**

Think about your choices. You can decide not to drink at all, or you can set some kind of limit. For example, you might decide to have one drink a day, a week, a month, or somewhere in between. Or you might have a drink just on special occasions. If you choose to drink, you'll need to figure out how to fit it in without taking in too many calories. Ask yourself, *Do I really want to spend my calories this way? Would I rather eat some of my favourite foods instead?*

If you struggle with this decision, write out a list of the advantages and disadvantages of drinking and talk about your decision with your weight loss coach.

**Disadvantages to consider:**

Alcohol is a toxin - When somebody consumes an alcoholic drink, their liver has to filter out the alcohol, a toxin, from their blood. Hence the word "intoxicated." We absorb alcohol much more quickly than food - alcohol gets to our bloodstream much faster. However, the liver can only process a limited amount of alcohol; roughly one standard drink per hour - and there's no way you can speed this up!

Alcohol is also known as a depressant, contrary to what many think that it makes them "feel better." Try drinking when you are sad or depressed and see how much worse, you often end up feeling.

**What are you thinking?**

**Sabotaging Thought:** I can't have fun unless I drink as much as I want

**Helpful Response:** It isn't all or nothing. I can still enjoy myself socially – like millions of other people who don't drink or don't drink much

**Sabotaging Thought:** The people I'm with will think I'm no fun if I don't drink

**Helpful Response:** That may or may not be true. What's more important to me, anyway: what they think or whether I'm doing what it takes to lose weight?