

Frequent night-outs in the party season? Be sure to party right



Photographs: Yogesh Shah

T'S that time of year again! We're stuffed with Diwali sweets and Christmas and New Year is just round the corner. This means innumerable get-togethers, parties, weddings and dinners. And that means food and booze! You'll be surrounded by food loaded with calories and alcohol — a tough battle for even the most conscious dieter. For those of us who're trying to get that fat off, and more importantly, to keep it off, this time of year can be most stressful. You still have a few weeks to go before you can surf into the New Year safely. And of course, any extra time you may get might just be spent shopping, which is bound to knock any exercise routine right off its feet!

Survival Tips

Let's face it; the odds aren't exactly in your favour. Relax. With a little careful handling, and some amount of jugglery however, you can come out on top of this.

Have dinner before you go: If your dinner invitation says 8 pm., it probably means that dinner won't be served till it's time for Cinderella's coach to turn into a pumpkin. As the evening drags on, even your fingernails will start to look appetising. So, finally when the delicious table is laid out, you'll tend to really pack it in. But if you've nibbled before leaving the house — if you've had a sandwich, a salad or soup, you'll be just fine. It'll curb the temptation of eating all those deep fried kebabs and mini pizzas doused in melted cheese.

Get a grip (on yourself, not on your love handles!): Get real. You'll probably end up attending two to three parties per week over the next couple of weeks. Opt for wine instead of beer. A glass of wine (especially red) can lower your cholesterol level. If you drink too often to other people's health, you'll end up ruining your own! This, clubbed with nibbling on those appetizers, is going to leave you needing a new wardrobe at the end of the season, so go easy!

FIT TO PARTY

Stay in shape during the party season with Nawaz Modi Singhania's easy-to-follow tips...

Imitation is the best form of flattery: The best recipes are on the dinner table during parties. Super! The only problem is that your host expects you to actually eat all that food! In our society, cleaning your plate and going back for seconds and thirds is the only way to say you enjoyed the meal. Great for the cook's ego, suicidal for your hips! Instead, why don't you do the sneaky thing and ask your host for the recipe? Imitation is the best form of flattery. Your host will be thrilled that you loved the food so much, that you want to share it with others.

Tit bits: It's okay to try what looks yummy, but just take a bit, rather than going the whole hog. This way you'll cut down on the calories, but still please your taste buds.

Start With You

If you're not part of the solution, then you're part of the problem. At your own party, practise what you preach!

Limit the number of appetisers you serve, and make sure you keep them as healthy as possible.

Choose fresh veggies with light dips and slices of fruit, rather than deep-fried 'bhajjiyas' and cheese balls.

Serve dinner at a reasonable hour, and choose seafood or chicken (without the skin) rather than mutton, beef or pork.

If you're like a kitchen mouse, who likes nibbling away constantly while cooking, be smart about it. Keep healthy snacks like grapes or cucumber slices close at hand.

Mix Life And Exercise

Try to incorporate some additional activity to compensate for the hazards of the season. For instance, take the stairs instead of the elevator, or walk to work. If you've got even just a few minutes, you've got the time for a workout. **Where fitness is concerned, something is better than nothing.**

Short, effective workouts that combine cardiovascular activities and strength training can help raise energy levels, tone the body, alleviate stress and much more. Of course, if you have the time, then hit your local fitness centre. **Sweat it out** in the cardio studio, or target strength or resistance training.

If you don't want to do an organised workout, then engage in any activity that you enjoy. If you feel like doing the salsa, or climbing up and down stairs, that's fine too. Just enjoy whatever it is that you're doing. It's all about getting you activated!

Put on your blue suede shoes. If it's a dance party, then dance! **You'll burn calories and become a better dancer!** Practice makes perfect!

CUT IT OUT

Many standard recipes can be modified so that you can cut back on the fat, but not on the taste. Here are some ideas.

Instead of	Try using
Eggs	Egg whites only (two egg whites for every whole egg)
Cheese	Light cheese
Whole milk	No-fat milk
Sour cream	Light sour cream or low fat yogurt
Oil	Use less oil, and a non-stick pan
Chocolate	Cocoa
Meat	Use lean cuts. Use less, and cut them up into small bits.
Mayonnaise (in salads)	Lighter salad dressings like olive oil or vinaigrette
White bread	Whole grain bread

Remember that you're not alone. Everyone hopes to watch his or her weight through this season. It's just a matter of striking the right balance! So hey, happy partying!



Who says that a workout can't be fun? Dance those calories away!

Healthy Self-Image

Almost everyone seems to have a problem with the way they look! The thin think they're too thin, the fat think they're too fat, the short think they're too short, the tall think they're too tall — the list goes on! Paranoia seems to peak during the party season, where people feel that they are more on display than before. Go easy, and be good to yourself! After all, you're all you've got! Relax, and get comfortable with your body, and with who you are as a person. If you're overweight, stop wearing dark colours in the hope of looking thinner. You won't. You'll just look dreary and dull! Instead, focus on looking the curvaceous, wholesome woman that you are! Wear something that reflects your personality. Be the best that you can be, and be happy about it!