

Navigating the summer weight gain traps

Summer vacation! Keeping weight off during the summer sounds easy, but there are potential pitfalls ahead.

Your routine is different; you may have more free time and flexibility, maybe more time in the house and in closer proximity to food. Travel away from home may mean much more eating out than usual. Whatever the case, **a little planning will go a long way!**

- Try to **keep to a regular schedule** for meals.
- **Skip take-out and fast food:** Use your grill or make entrée salads for quick meals that don't heat up the house. Pack healthy lunches if you'll be out.
- One recommendation is to **"close your kitchen."** Move meals into the yard or picnic at a local park.

Going out for ice cream may be a summer tradition but make it an occasional event, not an everyday thing. Try these ideas for keeping the calorie count down:

- Try sorbets, which contain no cream or milk. Ice cream and sherbet contain milk or cream. Sherbet has less fat but more sugar than ice cream. Frozen yogurt may be lower in fat and calories than ice cream; check the nutrition facts.
- Avoid high calorie sauces and other toppings.

- Ask for a "kiddie" size!
- Bring a cooler and ice packs with you, order your treat in a cup with a lid, and bring home at least half of the ice cream to eat at a later time.

Celebrations, frequent parties and hot weather may lead you to drink more alcohol than usual.

Alcohol has no nutritional value and worse, it can interfere with weight loss efforts by stimulating appetite, affecting the way food is digested and reducing willpower and inhibitions about overeating. Here are some strategies to limit alcohol portions:

- Mix a fruity wine with seltzer or water.
- Drink a glass of water between cocktails. Garnish water with fruit to keep it interesting.
- Wine is the lowest calorie choice, followed by hard liquor, then beer. Liquors have the highest alcohol content and calories.

On the other side of the equation, use the longer days and warmer weather to **be more active** this summer!

From sparkpeople.com, Weight Watchers Magazine and the Diet Detective.

Recipe of the Week : Aunt B's summer salad

Serves 8 adapted from *The Victory Garden Cookbook* by Marian Morash

1 pound cucumbers
1 pound zucchini
1 ½ tsp. salt
¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 ½ pounds tomatoes
¾ cup onions, chopped
2 Tbls. olive oil
2 Tbls. fresh mint, chopped
¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped

- Wash, peel, and remove seeds from cucumbers, then chop. Wash and chop the zucchini. Put in large bowl. Add salt and vinegar. Toss well. Let sit 30 minutes, then drain. Discard liquid.
- Cut tomatoes in half and squeeze to remove

juice and seeds (*see note below for peeling tomatoes*). Chop the seeded tomatoes.

- Add tomatoes and onions to the cucumbers and zucchini. If you wish, add a little vinegar and oil. Season with salt and pepper. Add chopped mint and parsley.

To peel tomatoes: Drop tomatoes in boiling water for 10 seconds (up to 30 seconds for less ripe tomatoes) take out of water and put immediately into cold water. Tomato skin peels off easily.

Nutrition Information:

Calories: 66	Total Fat: 3.5g
Saturated Fat: 0.5g	Carbohydrates: 7.0g
Total Fiber: 2.2g	Protein: 1.8g

Tip of the Week: No lounging in a chair while the kids run around! Play Frisbee or tag, set up a backyard obstacle course, or learn to play badminton together.

-- Meg Meeker, M.D. in *Weight Watchers' Magazine*, July/August 2011.