

Stealth?

Calories

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Someone once said, 'the occasional indulgence is good for the soul' – and most of us would agree. You keep a close eye on your diet most of the time, to allow for a splurge here and there. After all, you tell yourself, these occasional indulgences can't be that bad. And, probably not bad enough to negate all of your hard work at the gym, right?

Unfortunately, that's not necessarily true.

Here are some tips to keep in mind for those times you want to treat yourself – just to be sure you don't blow all the hard work you've committed to staying fit.

Dilemma #1: Party Invite

It's an afternoon event – not really lunch or dinner, more like snack time. You watch it closely, and only have a little bit of your favorites:

- Handful of nuts – they're the good fats, right?
- Small plate of Caesar Salad – it's salad, can't be THAT bad
- Chunks of spicy sausage – just 3 throughout the party
- 1 slice crisp garlicky cheese bread – only one slice, not too bad
- 6 chips in a Mexican black bean dip – did good, stopping at six!
- Goopy homemade brownie – just one – homemade, gotta have it!

The Damage: 1,370 calories!

How did this happen? This is actually a GOOD party behavior for many people! The small stuff really adds up quickly, if you're not careful:

That handful of nuts is easily an ounce – packing 170 calories into each handful!

Caesar dressing has about 100 calories for every tablespoon. And, there's easily 2 tbsp in a plateful of salad.

Sausage – a one-inch cube of sausage is about an ounce – delivering 100 calories per bite.

The bread's not too bad – usually about 100 calories for a standard slice. But, the butter adds another 100 calories... and shredded cheese another 100...

6 chips with dip racks up about 200 calories – effortlessly!

That goopy homemade brownie finishes off your party with another 200 calories.



The Remedy:

Know what foods are highest in calories. Then, enjoy just those that are REALLY worth the caloric investment. Gotta have the brownie? Then pass on the cheese bread. Want the sausage? Avoid on the nuts. If that's easier said than done, try having a light pre-event snack to prevent mindless noshing at the party.

Dilemma #2: Upscale Restaurant Dinner

Tonight you have dinner reservations at your favorite steakhouse. But, you've planned ahead, making a concerted effort to control calories. You have:

- A glass of wine – just one glass
- Fried crab cakes – split with a friend
- Chopped salad
- Petite filet – smallest entrée on the menu
- Loaded baked potato – but only half of it, since you want dessert, too
- Cheesecake – but you know it's heavy, so you split this, too

The Damage: 1,860 calories!

How did it get this high? And, you didn't even touch the breadbasket! That glass of wine is 160 calories, and the petite filet 350 calories – just a drop in the bucket so far. Those crab cakes were about 600 calories – so splitting it still tacks on 300 pre-meal calories. Most chopped salads are loaded with bacon, eggs, bleu cheese, croutons, and dressing – packing at least 400 calories – a meal in itself! The loaded potato is packed with high-cal butter and cheese, adding 350 calories for just half. And, the biggest shocker of all – the cheesecake – at 600+ calories a slice, it's still a meal-breaker, even when you split it.

The Remedy:

First of all, consider skipping the appetizers. Or, if you must have

one, try a shrimp cocktail. And, try a mixed green salad, but without all the high-cal extras, and get your dressing on the side (for a 300-calorie savings.) Also, definitely stick with the filet – it's one of the smaller cuts of steak, and is generally very lean, and very filling. Try grilled or steamed veggies in place of that potato to slash another 300 calories. And, remember most restaurant desserts have AT LEAST 600 calories each – so really think about it before ordering, and decide if it's REALLY worth it to you!

Dilemma #3: Running Errands and Not Planning Ahead

It's the eternal dilemma – fitting too much in with too little time. And, not thinking ahead about healthy snacks.

So you run in to the neighborhood coffee shop for a grande frozen coffee, a bagel with light cream cheese, and a chocolate chunk cookie to go – for later that afternoon!

The Damage: 1,130 calories!

The damage started with that 260-calorie frozen coffee. And, although the light cream cheese is less than 100 calories, you're adding it to a 300-calorie bagel and little fiber. Then, that afterthought of a cookie cost a whopping 470 calories – for just one cookie!

The Remedy:

Although there are a few exceptions, most coffee drinks really rack up the calories. Your best bets include a regular coffee or tea, iced coffee, or café au lait – which all are 100 calories or less. The best low-cal coffee shop treat? Biscotti – at 110 calories each, they're the perfect compliment to your java!

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