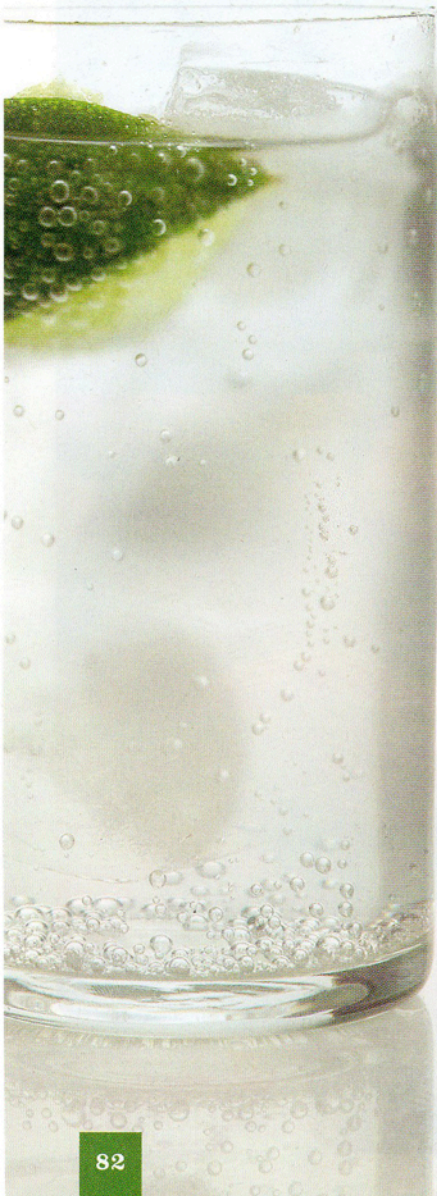


HEALTHWISE Q&A



Q: *How can I avoid gaining weight during the holidays?*

A: A party-packed schedule is what makes this time of year so merry, but it can also contribute to extra pounds. To celebrate the season smartly, don't skip meals to save calories for special occasions: Arrive hungry and you'll be more likely to overeat heavy party fare. Instead, enjoy a wholesome breakfast, like oatmeal with milk and fruit, and a 300- to 400-calorie lunch. At the party, start with a satiating snack, such as heart-healthy nuts: 30 pistachios have just 100 calories, plus protein and fiber to keep your appetite in check. Drinks are a sneaky source of calories; the best choices are wine (120 calories) or vodka and soda (100 calories). Have a nonalcoholic drink like seltzer between cocktails. If you're going to indulge, skip sugar cookies and other treats you can get anytime, and eat small portions of holiday foods you look forward to all year, such as your aunt's famous fudge.

Patricia Bannan, a registered dietitian in Los Angeles, is the author of Eat Right When Time Is Tight.

ASK THE EXPERTS

E-mail your questions about nutrition to healthwise@marthastewart.com.