



# No sugar, no starches, no wine?

I get asked so often in my initial conversation with a new HCG'er - 'When can I have a glass of wine again?'. They are usually ecstatic to hear that Phase 3 allows for alcohol in moderation. But what is moderation and how can I enjoy a little alcohol and still continue to maintain my weight? Below are some insights into alcohol and how it behaves in the body and what we should account for during the weeks of Stabilisation (Phase 3) of the HCG protocol, without it being detrimental to our efforts during Phase 2.

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## Alcohol - the non essential nutrient

Alcohol is not essential to our body and provides 7 cal per gram ingested - up there with fats which provide 9cal/g (carbs and proteins are 4cal/g). However, it has been shown that alcohol has a negative caloric load due to the way your body goes into hyperdrive to use it. Like most nutrients, it is absorbed through your gut which means the absence of food will increase and speed up this process. It is then metabolised by our liver. Our body will switch to burning off the alcohol for energy as soon as it is detected in place of other macronutrients. So it is not the calories from alcohol that matter, it's the effect it has on your metabolism that counts.

## Dr Simeon's advice

In his manuscript 'Pounds and Inches' we know that Dr Simeon's allows a glass of wine to be enjoyed occasionally during stabilisation with a meal. Let's take this into context with where he was living and practicing - Italy. The Italians in Italy, use wine with a meal as an compliment to add to the flavour and enhancement of the meal. So it is common for a half a glass to be enjoyed occasionally with Dinner.

I believe this is where Dr Simeon's starts and ends his inclusion of alcohol in phase 3. Low consumption of wine with a meal, preferably red, is okay.

## Alcohol and Stabilisation

It is advisable to allow the body to stabilise for at least one week or so before introducing alcohol and then it should be consumed in moderation throughout the remainder of Phase 3. There are a few reasons for this:

1. The body will switch to burning alcohol first when detected. Therefore your body will not allow you to burn any other calories except the alcohol. This means that calories from carbohydrates and fats are more likely to be stored.
2. Alcohol reduces actually fat burning sometimes for up to 48 hours. Fat storage = weight gain.
3. Being on essentially a low carb and lower calorie diet during Phase 3, means we are more susceptible to the intoxication effects on our brain function and nervous system. A little will go a long way ....
4. As alcohol relaxes your inhibitions, you may be more likely to indulge in unapproved Phase 3 foods which may lead to a weight gain and a dreaded 'Steak Day'.
5. Alcohol dehydrates the body. So, one may be put into a false sense of security in terms of what the scales are telling you. For example, you may still believe you are within your last dose weight range when in fact your body is just dehydrated and fat storage has occurred.



A standard drink is ...

6. The byproducts of alcohol in the body are toxins. After the lovely detox that occurs during Phase 2, do we really want to overload our body with toxins so quickly?

If you wish to have the standard moderation of alcohol recommended which is 1-2 measured drinks, you do have a couple of tricks up your sleeve to ensure stabilisation.

1. If you are counting calories, then you could allow for the calories of the drinks wanting to be consumed as part of that day's intake.
2. If counting macronutrients, you may allow for the calories drunk to come from your carb grams for that day.
3. Keep your fat intake low
4. You could also eat first, then have a couple of drinks 2-3 hours after that meal.

Good choices include white wine, red wine, low carb beer, Vodka, Tequila, Gin, White Rum. Keep mixers to soda water, fresh lime juice and at a stretch diet soda.



In the United States, one "standard" drink contains 14 grams of pure alcohol, which is found in 12 ounces of regular beer, which is usually about 5% alcohol. 5 ounces of wine, which is typically about 12% alcohol. 1.5 ounces of distilled spirits, which is about 40% alcohol.

Always drink responsibly.

### **Stevi-Mojito Drink**

Add 1.5fl.oz. of tequila in a tall glass with the juice of one lime. Top with soda water, ice and a few drops of liquid stevia. Decorate with mint leaves ... and a fancy straw is always nice.