5 Smart Life Tips for Surviving Summer BBQ's

Summer is here and so are backyard BBQ's, picnics, and pool parties. However, sometimes we find it harder to stay on track with the summer party menus, cocktails, and wine. Since we all like to join our family and friends in these fun outdoor parties, here are some Smart Life tips to help you stay on top of your intentions to stick to clean eating without packing on extra pounds.

1. **Don't show up hungry**: Eat something at home before you go to the BBQ or summer party. Getting satisfied on healthy foods before the festivities will make it less tempting to fill up later on things that will leave you feeling bad in the long run. Good choices for pre-party snacking are raw veggies with a little guacamole or hummus or a small wrap with veggies and avocado.
2. **Bring a dish**: Ask your host if it would be helpful and welcomed for you to bring a couple of dishes that will meet your clean eating goals and that you can also share with others. Find out what foods coordinate with what is being served so your dish will go along with the meal. It's quite likely that another guest will have some specific food needs if the party is large enough, so prepare foods that are as allergen-free as possible – i.e., gluten-free, dairy-free, sugar-free will cover a lot of people's needs these days. I included some great salad ideas in this newsletter that can be a great choice.
3. **If you do decide to have a drink**, eat something before you start to sip. Try to order a drink that is gluten free (i.e., gluten free vodka), cut with still or sparkling water, and ask that they have no simple sugar added. Vodka with lemon and sparkling water, or gin and

tonic are examples. Alternatively, stick to wine, no more than one glass, and sip slowly. Wine spritzers are also an excellent way to make one glass of wine, sipped as two. Finally, it is a drink or dessert, not both.

4. **Eat Naked:** It doesn’t matter how many raw veggies you eat, if you slather them in ranch dressing, you’re not cutting calories. Most salad at BBQs such as potato salad, coleslaw, and pasta salads contain high amounts of fat. Eating ‘naked’ means avoiding as many sauces as possible, that way you get to control how many calories you consume. Instead, look for fresh vegetable salads with dressing on the side, raw crudite veggies, and grilled vegetables.
5. **Stay hydrated with water** and avoid the extra calories that are easy to rack up with sugary soda drinks. Symptoms of dehydration mimic those of hunger. Both sun and alcohol (especially together) can take a toll on your body’s water levels, so it’s important to drink plenty of water.

But remember, real life happens and food is an important part of pleasure and community – so if you slip out of the 100% clean and healthy eating plan – it’s okay! Eating well 80% of the time gives you some latitude the other 20%.