



# Reduce Your Empty Calorie Intake

The term “empty calories” refers to foods and beverages that are high in solid fats and/or sugars. Foods and beverages that are high in empty calories oftentimes have little nutritional value (no vitamins or minerals). Empty calories are oftentimes a source of **excess calories** and therefore, they can contribute to weight gain.



Category	Empty Calorie Food / Beverage	Better Choice
Fats	Deep fried foods	Grilled/roasted meats (skinless); baked potato (plain)
	Bacon	Canadian ham, turkey bacon
	Hamburger (80% lean)	Hamburger ( $\geq 93\%$ lean), ground turkey ( $\geq 90\%$ lean)
	Mayonnaise	Mustard, low-fat mayonnaise
	Chips/high-fat popcorn	Fresh fruits or vegetables, low-fat popcorn
	Ice cream	Low-fat frozen yogurt, fresh fruit
	Whole milk	Low-fat milk (1% or skim)
	Butter, margarine	Light butter or margarine, salsa, hot-sauce
Sugar	Candy	Fresh fruit
	Bakery items (cakes, cookies, etc.)	Special occasion only
	Soda	Water, diet soda, light-lemonade, or $\frac{1}{4}$ part juice mixed with $\frac{3}{4}$ part seltzer water
	Sweetened coffee/tea	Unsweetened or made with low-fat milk and/or a sugar substitute (i.e. Stevia). Remove whipped cream from specialty coffee drinks and decrease the cup size.
	Fruit juice or Sport Drinks	Water, light-lemonade, or $\frac{1}{4}$ part juice mixed with $\frac{3}{4}$ part water
	Flavored Yogurt ( $\geq 21$ g sugar / serving)	Low-fat Greek yogurt - plain or flavored ( $\leq 20$ g sugar / serving)
Alcohol	Hard Liquor (mixed drinks)	Use low-calorie mixers (diet soda, seltzer water)
	Wine	Spritzer (1/4 part juice mixed with $\frac{3}{4}$ part seltzer water)
	Beer	Light beer
Refined Grains	White bread	100% whole wheat bread
	White rice	Brown rice, quinoa, or other whole grains
	White pasta	100% whole grain pasta
	Crackers	100% whole wheat crackers
	Cereal	Unsweetened whole grain cereal; plain oatmeal