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## Stop Summer Vacation Weight Gain

Summer vacations are a time to let loose and enjoy. But if your freewheeling holiday attitude teeters precariously close to overindulgence, your biggest souvenir may be the extra five pounds you bring home.

Warm carefree days make it hard to resist summer temptations like ice cream, tropical drinks and barbecued ribs, especially when you're at the mercy of restaurants and snack bars for every meal. But you can have your fun and stay slim too by following a few vacation-savvy strategies:

— **Take your own healthy snacks along.** Finding fresh fruit in an airport or gas station is like searching for a needle in a haystack. So take along your own stash. Pack fresh and dried fruits, unsalted nuts and low-fat, low-sugar nutrition bars. When hunger strikes, you won't give in to cookies and candy bars.

— **Drink lots of water.** Soft drinks, alcohol, iced mochas, etc., pack a big punch when it comes to calories. Make it a habit to drink water throughout the day and with each meal. You can still enjoy your favorite liquid refreshment, but you'll be more likely to stop after one serving.

— **Order smart.** To limit fat, choose entrees that are broiled, steamed, braised or roasted. Ask for your salad dressing on the side, and request a spritz of lemon on your vegetables rather than butter. If you're at a buffet, fill your plate first with fruits and vegetables. Add some lean meat, and use the remaining space for a bite or two of high-calorie favorites. Also, slow down when dining out! You're on vacation, remember? It takes 20 minutes for your brain to register satiety, so the slower you eat, the less likely you are to overeat.

— **Plan your splurges.** You deserve to have some fun; just don't overdo it. For example, make healthy choices at breakfast and lunch to compensate for that mid-afternoon ice cream sundae. And watch your portion sizes. If you absolutely have to have the mile-high chocolate cake, find someone to share it with!

— **Weave exercise into your day.** Use the hotel stairs rather than the elevator. Sightsee by foot. Play in the pool. And if you're really serious, you can research local health clubs and fitness programs before you go by visiting web sites like [fitnesszone.com](http://fitnesszone.com) or [jazzercise.com](http://jazzercise.com).