

The ultimate nutritionist survival guide to festival fun

Whilst I may now be a well-respected nutritionist, it would hypocritical to deny that I haven't done my fair share of partying. Having lived my teenage years with gay abandon through the 1990's and drunk my own body weight in cosmopolitans at the Met bar during the early noughties, I will honestly confess to three day benders, raves in open fields and muddy festivals that were just part of the course during this era. Unlike your 'clean eating' millennials, I feel fully qualified to impart my forty years of knowledge on the best way to survive the festival season unscathed!

My first word of advice for anyone over the age of 25 is to forget trying to keep up with the teens. Those lucky buggers can do three days with a rucksack full of booze and get up fresh as a daisy after 2 hours' sleep, but let me tell you, this just doesn't work for the rest of us!

So, how do you survive Glastonbury and still look great in a pair of denim hot pants and Hunter wellies?

Preparation is key. For those 'clean eating' disciples, this a time to let yourself go and live in the moment as your search for a green juice and kale salad is likely to fall on deaf ears! The modern health hedonist thrives on burning the candle at both ends whilst still retaining their well-being with dignity and coolness.

Save some space in your luggage for key essentials and that means packing a few food items and supplements to give you the energy to wake up on day two and three, ready for the party ahead! It's rock and roll after all!

Essential festival survival kit

Best choice of drink

Well this is a difficult one and from experience I can only say that you should stick to one type of drink. I know it's tough in the throes of the moment but mixing drinks is a sure-fire way to end up with your head down a portaloos or confessing your darkest secrets to some unsuspecting stranger (we have all been there!). Don't frontload your fun and try watering down the booze as the coolest partygoer stands the test of time and still looks like sparkly into the early hours of the morning. Add fizzy water to wine or serve your

spirits with extra mixers. If you want to avoid the king of hangovers than my advice is to steer clear of red wine or brown spirits that are high in congeners, which are substances known to intensify the effects of a hangover.

Breakfast

It's important to eat regularly during the day to soak up the booze and there's no better way to start than a good breakfast. Whilst lunch and supper might involve less than healthy food (you may even skip these meals), breakfast is likely to be the only meal you're going to get to cook or prepare for yourself and is the easiest thing to pack.

Try and avoid the temptation of a greasy bacon and egg sandwich. Far be it from me to tell you what to eat but whilst this may offer instant gratification you're more than likely to be left feeling bloated and possibly suffering from a dodgy tummy for a few hours afterwards as your delicate stomach battles with the digestion of excess fats.

If you have access to boiling water then pack plenty of quick cook porridge sachets. You can boost their nutritional impact by topping with dried fruits that will help to balance blood sugar levels after a heavy night of drinking and dancing. Adding nuts and seeds will help to boost the prolonged energy supply by adding healthy fats and fibre.

You can also pack hard boiled eggs! I know this is a bit of effort but they will last a while once cooked. Eggs contain the amino acid, cysteine that helps the liver to breakdown alcohol. If you pack rye bread and avocado then teamed with sliced boiled eggs you have the breakfast of champions that will keep you going until lunch. Eggs and avocado also supply the body with B vitamins that are required to help the body breakdown alcohol and convert food into energy. This combo also looks pretty sophisticated as a hangover breakfast!

Healthy snacks

It's not a bad idea to chuck a few healthy snacks into your backpack before you leave the house. The easiest things are dried fruit and nut bars. You can make your own energy balls if you're feeling particularly

prepared. They're easy to take with you as you venture out into the crowd and can provide a valuable energy source and pick-me-up during your favourite band sets. Bananas offer a brilliant source of potassium, which is an electrolyte required for fluid balance and nuts are rich in another essential electrolyte, magnesium.

Nuts, seeds and fruit are also easy to pack and can be a great option to fill the gap between meals.

After party munchies

Depending on the weather and your ability to store food, cold meats and cheese teamed with pitta bread and crackers such as Ryvita (www.ryvita.co.uk) can offer a good nutritious meals when you get back to your tent. You can also pack dips such as hummus or even nut butters and dare I say Nutella (tastes amazing with sliced bananas after a few drinks!). Canned tuna and pulses can also be used to rustle up a quick nutritious meal after the party if you can navigate the can opener! Pack a few fresh herbs, lemons, extra virgin olive oil, salt and pepper to complete the meal.

Hydrate

It goes without saying that the most important thing after a heavy night is to re-hydrate. Try packing as much water as possible if you can't get it at the festival. Watery fruits are also great for the morning after. Melons are particularly cool as they have a high-water content and are rich in fruit sugars to balance out blood glucose levels. Sometimes after drinking, still water just doesn't hit the mark so try packing fruit and herbal teas as these can be a little easier to face as can a good old cup of builder's brew!

For the more refined party goer, packing fresh herbs and spices can make for an ace hangover cure. Fresh mint with lemon and a little honey works well. Mint helps to alleviate bloating and gas. Another brilliant combination is pouring boiling water over freshly squeezed lemons, ground turmeric, ground ginger and honey. This spicy combination works well to perk you up and the ginger can help settle delicate tummies.

Supplements

We're all aware of the mantra that food should come first but in some cases a supplement can work wonders when you know you're going to be drinking a lot of booze. Either an artichoke extract or milk thistle supplement taken before, during and after the festival can help your liver to cope with the excesses of partying. A good effervescent vitamin C tablet such as Healthspan Ruby Breakfast (£11.95 for 4x20 tablets) can help to replace this vitamin that is also required for the breakdown of alcohol. A good B vitamin complex may also help as this group are rapidly depleted in the presence of excess alcohol.

My ultimate hangover cure is Dioralyte (<https://www.dioralyte.co.uk>) as it helps to replace the electrolytes lost through excess sweating and unfortunate instances of overdoing it on the booze! In emergencies take before bed and when you wake up!

My hidden party animal urges you to make having fun top of your list at festivals but there's no need to suffer the next day. Make space for a few key foods and supplements that can help to keep you going and ease the pain the next day. Also, importantly, make sure you try to drink wisely and keep in close contact with your fellow partygoers to ensure you stay safe.

Food and supplement checklist

Porridge sachets

Bananas

Avocados

Herbal teas

Honey

Lemons

Ryvita

Nut butter

Extra virgin olive oil

Canned tuna

Canned pulses

Spices (turmeric, ginger)

Effervescent vitamin C tablets (supp)

Milk thistle (supp)

Artichoke extract (supp)

Diorolyte (supp)

Fresh mint

Melons

Dried fruit

Nuts

Seeds

Boiled eggs

Dried fruit and nut bars