

Party tips for teetotalers

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(HealthDay)—You love social gatherings, but you're not a social drinker.

Peer pressure can make it harder when you want to abstain for health or

religious reasons, for instance. And while you might be OK telling one or two people about your reasons for not drinking, you probably don't want to repeat it multiple times at a party or share it with a business associate for fear of being looked at as a party pooper—especially at holiday season time.

So, what's the answer?

Many non-drinkers have developed a range of strategies that you can try to avoid drawing attention to yourself when the liquor is flowing, according to research done at North Carolina State University.

A lot of people say they find it easier to skirt the issue, especially when they're with a client or business acquaintance, so that the other person doesn't feel uncomfortable about having a drink. One strategy is to offer a non-negotiable reason for not [drinking](#) like, "I've got an early morning appointment," or "I'm skipping the calories to lose 10 pounds."

Another tactic is to order a drink, but not actually drink it. Or get a non-alcoholic drink that can easily pass for one, like a Virgin Mary or an all-juice Cosmopolitan.

Successful excuses can vary with the situation, from stating that you're a designated driver to saying that you're on medication that can't be taken with alcohol or are fighting off a migraine—all of which were used by the North Carolina research participants.

Finally, if you're a whiz at small talk or enjoy telling stories, no one will ever notice that there's no drink in your hand.

More information: The U.S. National Institutes of Health has a special section on rethinking drinking that anyone can use to [build their drink refusal skills](#).

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